



Essay Tips & Topics

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APPLICATION ESSAY TOPICS

Below are Essay topic examples for different Universities for your reference.



COALITION FOR COLLEGE:

UF – University of Florida; FSU – Florida State University

USF – University of South Florida (but no essay required); plus many other colleges

The essay prompts for the 2021-22 application year were as follows (500-650 words):

- Tell a story from your life, describing an experience that either demonstrates your character or helped to shape it.
 - Describe a time when you made a meaningful contribution to others in which the greater good was your focus. Discuss the challenges and rewards of making your contribution.
 - Has there been a time when you've had a long-cherished or accepted belief challenged? How did you respond? How did the challenge affect your beliefs?
 - What is the hardest part of being a student now? What's the best part? What advice would you give a younger sibling or friend (assuming they would listen to you)?
 - Submit an essay on a topic of your choice.
-

FSU CARE – CARE Summer Bridge Program in 2022 (4 short answer response questions):

Complete all CARE short answer responses (each response is limited to 300 words each):

1. Difficult life challenges can disrupt the academic journey of a student. Please identify a time when you overcame adversity and share strategies that supported you on your personal and/or educational journey.
2. What did you do about yourself in high school that will be useful to your success at Florida State University?
3. CARE expects students to commit to meeting departmental requirements. Describe a personal circumstance where you exhibited commitment and dedication to meeting expectations.
4. CARE provides students with a strong network of support and engagement opportunities while at FSU. Why is this additional support from CARE necessary for you to achieve your college degree?

Source: <https://care.fsu.edu/apply> (please recheck link in August, prompts have changed last 2 years!)

These short answer responses for CARE are **IN ADDITION TO** one of the 5 essay topics listed above.

UCF – University of Central Florida



Although optional, the essay assists the Admissions Committee in knowing you as an individual, independent of test scores and other objective data. We ask that you respond to **two of the topics** below. Your responses should be no longer than a total of 500 words or 7,000 characters.

- If there has been some obstacle or bump in the road in your academic or personal life, please explain the circumstances.
- How has your family history, culture or environment influenced who you are?
- Why did you choose to apply to UCF?
- What qualities or unique characteristics do you possess that will allow you to contribute to the UCF community?

APPLICATION ESSAY TOPICS

Below are Essay topic examples for different Universities for your reference.



COMMON APPLICATION (FAU, FGCU, Florida Polytechnic, FSU, New College of Florida, UCF, UF, UNF, USF, and many other private and public universities around the country)

2022-23 Essay Prompts:

- Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
- The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
- Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
- Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you.
- Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
- Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
- Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

No essay required:

USF – University of South Florida

FIU – Florida International University

FAU – Florida Atlantic University

FGCU – Florida Gulf Coast University

UNF – University of North Florida

UWF – University of West Florida

FAMU – Florida A & M University

Florida Polytechnic University



STEPS TO A GREAT COLLEGE ESSAY

Below are some pointers on the Essay Writing Process for reference.



YOUR FIRST PARAGRAPH SHOULD GRAB THE READER:

The college essay has to grab the attention of an admission's reader. It is imperative that the introduction to the college essay captures the reader's attention and make the reader want to read more. There are different ways to grab a reader.

- Try starting with a question.
 - Begin with a bold statement.
 - Use an interesting quote.
 - Put the reader in medias res, that is, in the middle of things. Place the reader in the middle of something happening or in the middle of a conversation.
 - Challenge the reader by speaking directly to him/her.
 - Tell the reader what you do NOT want to do in your writing.
 - Sometimes even a single word that stands as a paragraph can make the reader wonder and read on.
-

APPROACH THE ESSAY FROM A DIFFERENT ANGLE:

If you look at things a little differently from others you stand out. In answering an essay prompt, you need not always do it the most normal way.

- What if you were to take the negative approach to answer the prompt? What are your hopes? Maybe you can tell what your hopes are by writing what you do not hope for.
 - Perhaps you can create a little mystery by not answering the prompt immediately. What do you want to study? Maybe you could reveal that in the last sentence of your prompt after telling about all the little things that have some relevance to your area of study. For example, you might describe many natural flora, observe fauna, then list feelings you have about nature to lead up to writing that you want to study biology.
 - You might even bury your answer to a prompt in a story or in a moral tale or even in a description.
-

LEAVE YOUR READER WITH A LASTING IMPRESSION:

People remember last things first or, at least, best. As Alan Alda said in a commencement address he delivered to his daughter's graduating college class, the most important things are said on the way out the door. His last words in that speech were, "I love you."

In the same way, you should end your college essay with something that not only summarizes the most important aspects of you but that is also memorable. Memorable endings are poignant, making the reader feel an emotion. Or, they capture a several-line conclusion in one pithy, well-worded phrase or sentence. Or, maybe they end with a simple, clean truth written from the heart.



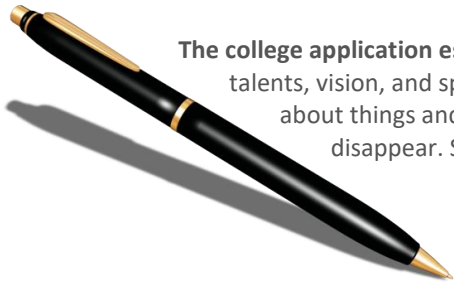
More information on writing college essays can be found at
www.collegebasics.com/applying-to-college/admissions-essays.

STEPS TO A GREAT COLLEGE ESSAY

Below are some pointers on the Essay Writing Process for reference.



You, in 500 Words or Less



The college application essay is a chance to explain yourself, to open your personality, charm, talents, vision, and spirit to the admissions committee. It's a chance to show you can think about things and that you can write clearly about your thoughts. Don't let the chance disappear. Stand up straight and believe in yourself!

The Essay Writing Process

Okay, boot up your computer and let's get to it. To write a college essay, use the exact same three-step process you'd use to write an essay for class: first prewrite, then draft, and finally, edit. This process will help you identify a focus for your essay, and gather the details you'll need to support it.

A. Prewriting

To begin, you must first collect and organize potential ideas for your essay's focus. Since all essay questions are attempts to learn about you, begin with? Yourself.

- **Brainstorm:** Set a timer for 15 minutes and make a list of your strengths and outstanding characteristics. Focus on strengths of personality, not things you've done. For example, you are responsible (not an "Eagle Scout") or committed (not "played basketball"). If you keep drifting toward events rather than characteristics, make a second list of the things you've done, places you've been, accomplishments you're proud of; use them for the activities section of your application.
- **Discover Your Strengths:** Do a little research about yourself: ask parents, friends, and teachers what your strengths are.
- **Create a Self-Outline:** Now, next to each trait, list five or six pieces of evidence from your life??" Things you've been or done??" that proves your point.
- **Find Patterns and Connections:** Look for patterns in the material you've brainstormed. Group similar ideas and events together. For example, does your passion for numbers show up in your performance in the state math competition and your summer job at the computer store? Was basketball about sports or about friendships? When else have you stuck with the hard work to be with people who matter to you?

B. Drafting

Now it's time to get down to the actual writing. Write your essay in three basic parts: introduction, body, and conclusion.

- The introduction gives your reader an idea of your essay's content. It can shrink when you need to be concise. One vivid sentence might do: "The favorite science project was a complete failure."
- The body presents the evidence that supports your main idea. Use narration and incident to show rather than tell.
- The conclusion can be brief as well, a few sentences to nail down the meaning of the events and incidents you've described.

An application essay doesn't need to read like an essay about The Bluest Eye or the Congress of Vienna, but thinking in terms of these three traditional parts is a good way to organize your main points.

STEPS TO A GREAT COLLEGE ESSAY

Below are some pointers on the Essay Writing Process for reference.



There are three basic essay styles you should consider:

1. **Standard Essay:** Take two or three points from your self-outline, give a paragraph to each, and make sure you provide plenty of evidence. Choose things not apparent from the rest of your application or light up some of the activities and experiences listed there.
2. **Less-Is-More Essay:** In this format, you focus on a single interesting point about yourself. It works well for brief essays of a paragraph or half a page.
3. **Narrative Essay:** A narrative essay tells a short and vivid story. Omit the introduction; write one or two narrative paragraphs that grab and engage the reader's attention, then explain what this little tale reveals about you.

C. Editing

When you have a good draft, it's time to make final improvements to your draft, find and correct any errors, and get someone else to give you feedback. Remember, you are your best editor. No one can speak for you; your own words and ideas are your best bet.

- **Let It Cool:** Take a break from your work and come back to it in a few days. Does your main idea come across clearly? Do you prove your points with specific details? Is your essay easy to read aloud?
- **Feedback Time:** Have someone you like and trust (but someone likely to tell you the truth) read your essay. Ask them to tell you what they think you're trying to convey. Did they get it right?
- **Edit Down:** Your language should be simple, direct, and clear. This is a personal essay, not a term paper. Make every word count (e.g., if you wrote "in society today," consider changing that to "now").
- **Proofread Two More Times:** Careless spelling or grammatical errors, awkward language, or fuzzy logic will make your essay memorable???" in a bad way.



This article is based on information found in The College Application Essay, by Sarah Myers McGinty.

THE COLLEGE ESSAY

CREATING YOUR STORY...



List any challenges you have faced and overcome, especially experiences which gave you strong survival skills and demonstrated your ability to continue your education despite setbacks and difficulties. If you have an experience like this, describe the situation in detail.

List any childhood experiences that demonstrated an early ability to learn or a dedication to academic subjects. You may also indicate here your family's experience with education, traveling, or any summer camp or volunteer experiences that tell a story about who you are.

List any languages and cultures you know outside of your current home. If you have come from another country, talk about the challenge of competing with native speakers and achieving at a high level nonetheless. Any experience with travel abroad (Experiment in International Living, family trips) or an acquaintance with another culture should be described.

What experiences make you unique, or set you apart from other candidates? These experiences can come from any aspect of your life – your family, your academics, your extracurricular activities, your work, etc.

PROOF READ CHECKLIST

Have at least two persons proof-read/critique your essay. Suggestions include: Student Mentor, English Teacher and College Success Coach. Turn in form to your College Success Coach when completed and signed.

Questions to Ask	Comments	N/A
1. Did my opening paragraph capture the reader's attention?		
2. Is the statement as a whole interesting?		
3. Is it well written?		
4. Is the statement positive and upbeat?		
5. Does it reflect well on me and my qualifications?		
6. Is it an honest and forthright presentation of me?		
7. Does it answer key questions posed in the applications?		
8. Was relevant material omitted?		
9. Is there inappropriate or irrelevant material in the statement?		
10. Does the reader gain insight from reading the statements?		
11. Is it free of typos or other errors?		
12. Has the statement distinguished me from other applications?		

Signature

Title

Date Reviewed

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Essay Samples

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The only thing my brother, Jonathan, loved more than playing games was demolishing me at them.

Mancala was a particularly passionate competition. The faint sound of multi-colored marbles hitting the wooden board initiated mental preparation for the upcoming tournament. Sitting on the floor with the board between us, my brother initiated the game, mischievously smirking, “You go first.”... then adding, “You need it more than I do.” Watching my brother’s pile of stones increasing exponentially whilst my designated pit for points remained barren, we played until he grew tired of winning; then, he would suggest Monopoly.

One day I decided to win; I studied. Sitting in my room with the wooden block in front of me, I proceeded to try every possible combination of moves to figure out which one pit out of the twelve would put the optimal amount of marbles into my mancala. I worked out all of the possible moves he could make in response and then determined how I should respond to his response. I committed all of these moves to memory and he was never the wiser. Success! I finally won my first match. I beat my brother. I was endlessly proud of my victory. In hindsight, I am now proudest of my resolve.

I did not graciously accept all of the losses prior to my triumph. There were days that I wanted to grab all of the marbles and throw them at his smug face. Fortunately, a similarity between Mancala and life is that the games weren’t finished until we chose to be finished. When I was nominated to be Monroe County’s Girl’s State representative I was ecstatic, but when I was notified that I wasn’t selected I was miserable. However, like the endless rematches there was going to be another opportunity for me to excel. When I was nominated to be the Sunshine State Scholar of my county, I decided to win. I spent the entire twenty-four hours before a family trip to Cuba drafting and editing my application. Returning home, I was the official Sunshine State Scholar of Monroe County.

I hope to never let fear of failure hold me back. Even after I destroyed my brother, he did not easily relinquish his title of “Master of the Marbles.” In spite of my study, my skills didn’t keep me from falling short of conquest. This didn’t stop me from playing.

The second day of band camp, we spent the entire morning sweating while marching back and forth on a field. It wasn’t until we were inside, enjoying the air conditioning, that I fainted. I returned to consciousness mortified, not because my body temporarily shut down, but because I ate carpet in front of everyone. I skipped the third day of camp out of terror of further humiliation. The fourth day I dragged myself back to that field; my need to persist outweighed my fears. I am now a band officer and can proudly boast that I haven’t missed another day.

Without losses in life and Mancala, I never would have achieved anything truly valuable. I know that my future failures will probably outnumber my successes, but at least I have one consolation to get me through: I’m pretty good at Mancala.

When we are children we have a firm, unwavering belief that our parents are invincible. We believe that any problem magically evaporates with a smile and a reassuring hug. We don't notice the tight lips that form the smile and the slight shake of the arms that act as our shield. We choose to believe, for a little longer, that they can make everything good again and we cloak ourselves with the false security; unable to imagine a world where our parents are as helpless as us. Throughout my childhood I have consistently faced off with obstacles that challenged this belief.

I was eight-years-old, walking in on my mother crying, the word divorce hanging in the space between us. I was thirteen-years-old, standing in the line outside of a church, holding her hand as we waited in the cold for free groceries. I was fifteen-years-old, listening to her explain that we had to leave our house, the look in her eyes ripping off the protective cloak I had tried so desperately to cling onto.

Everything will be okay. Everything will be okay. Everything will be okay. Everything is not okay.

After spending most of my life moving around, one would think I had become accustomed to saying goodbye to my home, but it is different when that goodbye is unwilling, when it comes out of nowhere, shaking the foundations of the barricades you have put up against the fear of money. I was forced to come to the realization that my mother was not an unbeatable force, she was human.

In the midst of all the chaos and stress, I turned to the one thing that made me feel like I had control, like I was invincible. My education. It became my release, and it gave me hope and a future to look forward to. A future that no one in my family had yet experienced.

In school I did not falter, I redirected my anger and my stress into motivation to succeed. In the classroom, the financial situation of my family didn't matter. What mattered was my brain, my thoughts, ideas and most of all my desire to learn and grow as a student. Success in school boosted my confidence that for so long had been tainted by finances. My hope was that one day my mother or my future family could rely on me as much as my younger self had relied on my parents. This resulted in a fire that burned inside of me, one that could not be extinguished by a fear of money or crushed childhood beliefs.

My family's difficulties, in a way, stole my adolescence from me. I no longer believe that parents are superhuman. At fifteen I resented this enlightenment that I had reached. I wanted to believe that nothing could truly harm me as long as my mother sheltered me from the awful parts of life. However, our struggles have averted my beliefs to something stronger. I believe in the importance of resilience in the face of adversity. I believe that while not invincible, my mother is an unrelenting force and that I too can achieve this through persistence and the hope and desire that:

Everything will be okay.

“I think the best thing for you to do is resign.”

Those words crushed me; I was speechless. Tears stung my eyes as I heard my squadron commander tell me that he didn't think I was good, all because of my deputy flight sergeants' performance. After a moment of silence, I cleared my throat, took in a deep breath, and said, “I can't do that sir, I'm already this far in, and I refuse to give up now.” With a sigh, he agreed and dismissed to barracks. In the barracks, I got into the shower and began reviewing my three days at encampment up until that moment.

I was a cadet captain in the civil air patrol. For two years, I'd coordinated squadron meetings and oversaw a group of staff members. I worked my way up to my position, but now I was at encampment, a week-long boot camp to introduce new cadets to the Civil Air Patrol Cadet life. I was a newcomer to the staff and needed to make a name for myself. That should've been easy, but when I was placed in an all-male run squadron with a male flight sergeant at my side, things became more complicated. As flight commander, it was my responsibility to take in ten new cadets and train them throughout the week to graduate encampment. However, my flight sergeant – my second in command – was derailing my work. Although this young man was strong, respectful, and seemed a good fit for the staff position, his attitude became a detriment. Soon, he had blatant enmity for both my orders and for me. I found that my directions were being changed, or not passed along. Disrespect was rampant. I could see my frustration mirrored in the faces of my cadets. When I brought these vexations to my squadron commander, he was ready to pull the plug.

I turned the water off in the shower. Tomorrow was a new day, and I wasn't going to give up that easily.

At four thirty the next morning, I completed the mile run from the female barracks to my flight's barracks to help begin exercises. My flight sergeant didn't arrive to do his duty. Stepping up, I ran all physical training activities, sounding off as loud as possible when singing Jodie's – chants that the flight performs together - and made sure that there was no time for morale to falter. I had hydration checks and marched my flight on my own; my flight sergeant arrived late and watched from the back of the marching formation.

I was on my own in leading my flight from that moment on. I made sure that all time was useful time. I taught my cadets how to shine their boots, fix their racks, and clean the barracks. They had to be prepared to function without me, as I would no longer be allowed in the barracks due to the male and female separation at nightfall. Despite constant disrespect from the flight sergeant, my flight was on point, and always did their best to be.

At the end of the week, I was ecstatic. Even with discord among the officers, every member of our flight was able to graduate: a testament to leadership. Throughout the week, I had been dragged to the medical tent twice, literally been kicked in the face, and had been beaten down with schedules and paperwork. Yet, I could see the value of my work in the faces of my cadets.

Talking to the parents, I realized how incredible their performances were throughout the week... how much they'd grown. As it turned out, I'd grown up too. Before I could return home triumphant, my squadron commander spoke to me:

“I think the best thing for you to do is come back next year.”

April 7, 2014, was the day my life changed forever. This was the day Paige won the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) Diva's Championship.

Initially, women in WWE – Divas – were not taken seriously. These strong young women were nothing but a beautiful sideshow: never given a chance to showcase their skills but instead charged with holding score cards for the men's main event. As a young Hindu girl, I was taught to act like one of these original Divas; I was taught that my place in the world was on the sidelines, that I did not need to be talented, passionate, or strong. Not knowing any better, I kept this mindset for too many years.

Then on April 7, 2014, the TV mimicked a mirror and pride swelled in my chest as a young black-haired girl fiercely hoisted the Diva's Championship. She screamed with confidence and passion, and I was in awe. Although it was only her first day in WWE, Paige made it clear she had no intention of continuing the tradition of sitting on the sidelines: Paige was determined to be the main event.

Seeing Paige victorious, I began to envision a different outcome for my life – one where I could hold a championship over my head. Inspired, I began to wrestle for my future.

Through wrestling, I found my passion. Captivated by the way WWE would keep me on the edge of my seat for hours, I signed up for my school's Television Productions class, not knowing anything about cinema. I imagined Paige's isolation turned triumph as I wrote my first screenplay, *Paradise*, about a boy who gets stranded on an island. This debut circuited the All-American and Palm Beach International Film Festivals, Florida Scholastic Press Association, and the Tropic Cinema. Paige's entrance music bellowed through my mind as I learned how to produce my own music to accompany my films. WWE helped me realize that I had a passion and talent that I should explore rather than hide.

Through wrestling, I found the world. For five years, I followed Paige's journey as she went from a small-town girl to defending her championship all over the planet. It didn't matter what language they spoke, religion they followed, or race they were: Paige was always willing to tag-team with any wrestler and put on the "Match-of-the-Night." For years, I admired her openness to collaborate with others and learn about the world. I decided to further develop my proficiency in Hindi, Spanish, and American Sign Language so I, too, could engage with others from around the world. I decided to take more opportunities to travel and learn about new cultures, from Argentina to the United Arab Emirates. The more I experienced, the more I realized that I had much to learn. I also began to develop a new sense of acceptance and understanding.

Through wrestling, I found my strength. Growing up overweight, teetering on obesity, I was not able to do the things kids are supposed to do. I couldn't run, jump, or play. How I looked was reflected in how I felt about myself. My lack of confidence prevented me from going to the beach or pool parties and from taking pictures of myself with others. That all changed when I delved into WWE. I wanted to be as strong as Paige. I started Crossfit, weightlifting, and kickboxing, and my burdens didn't feel so heavy anymore. Just as Paige stuns the audience each time she walks to the ring, I walk the hallways with confidence and flare.

April 7, 2014, wasn't just the day Paige won the Diva's Championship. It was also the day I embarked on my own journey to be a champion. Throughout my adolescence, WWE taught me to challenge myself, find my passion, and expand my horizons. I'm not sure what opponents I'll face next but, no matter what, I'm ready and excited for them all.

I have spent my whole life drifting between shades of mania and depression. I cannot fathom another way of processing. I question myself on how normal that is. A few years ago, I was certain that my teenage brain had to be the weirdest one out there. I did not think I would be here typing this out, applying to college, and planning for my future. I did not think I would graduate high school. Reading that, one would most likely assume I thought I was not smart or determined enough. That was not entirely the truth though. I was closed off to any thoughts of my future because I believed I would not be alive long enough to worry about it. I was convinced that my mental illness would bury me alive.

I always had trouble explaining what goes on in my mind. After years of avoiding questions and explanations, I finally found a way to scratch the surface. I think of my life so far as a huge tunnel. Every time I made a bad choice or gave into self-destructive thoughts, my clear path would fill with rubble. Eventually I started to function with my eyes shut, not wanting to face what I was doing to myself and to the people around me. There were fleeting moments where I could not help myself from taking a peek. In those small glances, I saw the rubble completely obstructing my path. I accepted that soon enough, I would run out of oxygen. I stopped walking and I continued my destructive behavior without much thought. Each mistake started its own personal attack on me. Nevertheless, human nature brought me to adapt. The rubble that had caused me so much pain became my coffin. It was my entrapment and my protection. The coffin caused me to become numb to consequences, making this time of indifference extremely dangerous for me. My family saw that I could not navigate on my own, so they brought me to see a therapist. It was not easy, but I managed to meet a woman that I made an incredible connection with. She guided me until I could find a small crack in the rubble. I pressed my face against the cold wall of my coffin. I could not make anything out, but through the small crack, I could see something I had not thought of in a while: light, possibilities, dreams and aspirations. With the realization that my whole life was still in my grasp, I fought until my hands physically wore the pain I felt all those years. It was only then I could push through all the weight, and escape my early grave. I was out, but I still had a lot of work to do. Each day was filled with moving the rubble aside so my path would reveal itself once again. With time, I was able to start walking again. Walking then turned to running. I practically sprinted to where I am now, at the end of the tunnel. Now I await to embark on the rest of my journey, exploring all the backroads, streets, and highways of my future.

I will always have bipolar disorder. It is a part of myself that I can never erase. However, I am done with letting it define me. My life has never been conventional. I slipped up more times than I can count, but through that I can say that I learned so much. No mistake is worth my future. One day all of my struggle and all of my hard work will turn into something beautiful that I can forever be grateful for. Until then, there is only one thing I know about what I would like to accomplish along the way. I know that I want to help kids like myself. I am going to spend my life helping others realize that there is always a way out and that they are worth more than the rubble they have collected.

Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

I've stayed up countless nights, perused through way too many books, and ultimately I think I've found it. Such a vague question as "why are we here?" A question that dates back to the earliest philosophers, and yet, even today there is no definite answer. If you ask a hundred people "what is the meaning of life?" You will get a hundred varied answers. The solution is as simple as a two word answer: just being.

As I've gone through life this question has always been at the back of my mind, gnawing at my conscious. At first I thought it was all meaningless, we're here by chance and all we can do is enjoy the ride. At times I attempted to ignore the existentialism of it all. What I've learned is that ignorance is in fact not bliss, being clueless only makes the thoughts more tenacious. Studying philosophers and scientists only made it all the more confusing as all they agreed upon was disagreeing.

The solution came to me at a time when I was not searching for answers. I was visiting Mexico to see my relatives; most importantly my grandparents. As I was sitting in my grandmas cramped kitchen, the smell of coffee filling the air, I closed my eyes and felt a feeling of ease wash over me. This was what I spent countless hours searching for. It wasn't specifically the coffee or the kitsch table decorations, but the feeling of being. Looking out the window and counting the cars that pass by and realizing every single person in those cars has their own life, their own abode, their own consciousness. The revelation that there is no real wrong answer to the question that had been tormenting me for as long as I could remember. All my life I had searched for a clear cut answer when in reality, all I had to do was step back and let the answer find me.

It might be perplexing to think about why I placed such an emphasis on this question. The numerous times I have questioned myself as to why I place such a great amount of importance to this question has led me to one conclusion: the uncertainty of existence. No one is promised tomorrow. Every breath you take, every time you speak, you never know when it'll be your last. It is crucial to live in the moment because the only thing promised is the present. Everyone is so caught up on tomorrow's problems that no one seems to acknowledge today's problems.

In the end, I cannot convince everyone that my answer is the right answer. It is in human nature to disagree. However, the key to finding out the meaning of life is to step back, strip away all the stressors of everyday life, and just be. When life is too much, all you can do is to close your eyes and just be. Breathe in, breathe out, and just be.

FSU CARE #1 (MHS 2020)

Life is filled with challenges, whether it be emotional struggles, finances, or health. Throughout my life I have faced plenty of obstacles, some more challenging than others. As life went on I realized how important it was to have money because money is our life's driving force. You have to have it to pay bills, buy food, clothing and go to college. Growing up I never had expensive shoes, clothes, or even school supplies. We were always on a budget. My mom worked 16 hours a day most of the year, most of that money going into house repairs because I live in a trailer park. My home was always hard to maintain in good shape when it slowly continued to fall apart in random places. My mom was constantly trying to put food on our table, clothes on our backs, and as she said "una cobija, para que estes calientita en la noche," or a blanket to keep you warm at night. Even though we didn't have everything, she made sure to always have some money in the end for fun.

Money has always been an issue, but this has taught me to value what I have, do not fuss! My upbringing has pushed me farther, to work harder, so in the future I can return the favor to my mom. Thinking of the goal of one day buying her a house is what motivates me to put more effort on essays, projects, tests. Everything that could possibly bring me closer to helping my mom for every drop of sweat she has put into making me the person I am today. She constantly complains of body pain, yet she fights each day, to get my brother and me the best materials we can have for school.

FSU CARE #2

As I matured, I began to realize the importance of valuing what you have, not to take things for granted. At any point in life things can just disappear. I learned to have patience, to remain calm, because in the end things will be okay as long as you have faith and work hard. At Florida State University, I would have the mindset of working nonstop and I would continue pushing myself no matter how tough the day may have been. I believe that knowing that my mom went through so much is only an inspiration to continue working persistently throughout college to achieve my goals of my true potential. This life lesson will allow me to motivate myself to be successful while in school, it would transform me into an outgoing student. If there is anything my mother's struggle has taught me, it would be, that things happen for a reason, accept it.

My mother's lifestyle has showed me to accept and learn from whatever is thrown at me, any obstacle or challenge. No matter how complicated things may be, if I pour every drop of sweat into my work at Florida State University I will become an extraordinary student who would never let her professors down. I would continuously fight and continue to create my own path to become the best I can possibly be.

FSU CARE #3

As a first generation student, I hope to experience the whole college dorm adventure. I want to see how it feels to be independent and to do as I please to enjoy myself while I am away from home. Mostly, I want to experience the classrooms, the vast array of choices and the campus. College life sounds so interesting

when students speak about the sizes of the classes, how a class can be so big that there is the chance of being in a class with up to 200+ students, where a professor sometimes would not even remember your name. This would introduce me into a large diverse group of people, where they all meet and learn about one another's background and personality.

Along with the new perspective of cultural identities, I would have the exciting lifestyle of walking to class in a new environment. An area filled with trees, nature and just people talking amongst themselves. Especially when winter finally arrives to Florida, the air gets colder and friends get closer. While bringing a special feeling to my heart, it would remind me of home when my mom gave me a mug of hot chocolate, "tenga, para que no te me enfermes", she would always say, "here, so you don't get sick." The surroundings would make me feel at home while being away from home.

FSU CARE #4

While at Florida State University, I believe that the campus itself provides a sense of relaxation and calmness just with its environment. This would allow me, as a student to find areas on campus to calmly and successfully study for tests and get my work done. Having the support from the FSU CARE program would guide me through the college experience, step by step. Being a first generation student can make it difficult to find out how to do things correctly, as well as even knowing the right person to ask the hundreds of questions that I will surely have. The CARE program would be like my guardian angel, always there in my time of need. I know CARE would absolutely keep me on track, keep me up to date with advice and solutions even when my issues may not just be academic. Florida State CARE would provide for me during the most stressful of times, starting college! The staff and fellow students would help me maintain the pace I need to be at, supporting me to stay ahead of the game.

In our youth, we start with innocence and a positive outlook on life. As we begin to mature, our perspective modifies along with our understanding and acceptance of our future path. Throughout my childhood I was always focused and determined to achieve good grades and nothing more. My mother's expectations were perfect attendance, and grades no less than A's and B's. Ever since elementary school I always met and even exceeded my mom's standards, I never let her down. Well not until 8th grade, when I got a boyfriend. This guy who I had always liked, since 2nd grade finally became part of my life. I thought it was the best thing to ever happen to me. As usual in relationships, we began happy and nothing but that. We would always be together in school, never out because I had not told my mom yet. I was only 13 at the time, young and innocent. He was 14, a bit more mature, but in ways that did not involve growing into a responsible and caring man. Our relationship to me was great, strong even, yet there were always issues on his side. None which were necessary to deal with because of our age. As months passed he began to ask for things, things I was not really ready for.

One night in September 2015 I was forced to do what my mom always warned me about. With a shaken up mind and tears down my cheeks, he said everything would be alright, I would always be safe if I was with him. Being so young, I was struck with relief, as I believed the things he told me, which he said to keep me by his side and do as he pleased. I had also believed that no harm would come to me if I gave him what he wanted, even though he threatened to hurt me. Months passed by and now he started to tell me how fat and ugly I was, how much of a slut I was for even talking to a guy. I was not allowed to speak to any guys, no social media, or contact of any kind with anyone who he thought was a "threat". He constantly told me that no one would ever want me, I was lucky to have him. Every time I tried to fight back or even defend myself, I would end up with more and more bruises. My mom saw them, yet I lied and said they were from sports. I repeatedly told myself that everything he did and said to me I deserved. I was the one to always apologize because in his eyes I was the one in the wrong.

Every day he brought me down more and more. In 2016, I met a new friend who I eventually got extremely close with and I ended up telling everything to her. She listened to everything I had to possibly say, stood up and stated that I had to speak up. With more and more tears and pain each day, I finally decided to say something. My mom, along with the whole school, found out what happened. I was ashamed, yet I felt free, the pressure was off my shoulders. As time went by, I began to realize how much of myself I had lost, and started working to regain my confidence and my happiness. Recovering each and every day, I am forever thankful for my friend, for being by my side.

I have grown in my own eyes, becoming a strong and independent young woman who believes she is capable of so much. This shaped me into believing I deserve more, to accept and fight whatever life throws at me because I am nothing but extraordinary. I will bring my determination and passion to FSU and do everything in my power to be the best Seminole I can be.

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Applications

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Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL
Admissions: (850)644-6200

University of Northern Florida
Jacksonville, FL
Admissions: (904)620-5555



University of West Florida
Pensacola, FL
Admissions: (850)474-2230



University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL
Admissions: (407)823-3000



Florida A & M University
Tallahassee, FL
Admissions: (850)599-3796

A Map of Public Florida Universities

University of Florida
Gainesville, FL
Admissions: (352)392-1365



Florida Polytechnic University
Lakeland, FL
Admissions: (863)874-4774



University of South Florida
Tampa, FL
Admissions: (813)974-3350



Florida Gulf Coast University
Ft. Myers, FL
Admissions: (239)590-7878



Florida Atlantic University
Boca Raton, FL
Admissions: (561)297-3040



New College of Florida
Sarasota, FL
Admissions: (941)487-5000



Florida International University
Miami, FL
Admissions: (305)348-7000

Florida Colleges

1. Broward College – Fort Lauderdale
2. Chipola College – Marianna
3. College of Central Florida – Ocala
4. Daytona State College – Daytona Beach
5. Eastern Florida State College – Cocoa
6. Florida Gateway College – Lake City
7. Florida Keys Community College – Key West
8. Florida SouthWestern State College – Fort Myers
9. Florida State College at Jacksonville – Jacksonville
10. Gulf Coast State College – Panama City
11. Hillsborough Community College – Tampa
12. Indian River State College – Fort Pierce
13. Lake-Sumter State College – Sumterville
14. Miami Dade College – Miami
15. North Florida Community College – Madison
16. Northwest Florida State College – Niceville
17. Palm Beach State College – Lake Worth
18. Pasco-Hernando State College – New Port Richey
19. Pensacola State College – Pensacola
20. Polk State College – Winter Haven
21. Santa Fe College – Gainesville
22. Seminole State College – Sanford
23. South Florida State College – Avon Park
24. St. Petersburg College – St. Petersburg
25. St. Johns River State College – Palatka
26. State College of Florida – Manatee-Sarasota
27. Tallahassee Community College – Tallahassee
28. Valencia College – Orlando



For more information on where your Florida Pre-Paid plan can be used, visit the following website for colleges, technical, and vocational schools.

<https://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/existing-customers/schools/>



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)
Florida Public Universities

These dates may change. ALWAYS verify dates on the university websites!

Florida A&M University (FAMU)		
KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
June 15 – Application Opens-Apply early Oct 15-Deadline to apply to receive Nov. 2 decision March 1-Deadline for Aid/Scholarships & for summer term-Check scholarship page for individual details May 1-Deadline for Fall term	Institutional Application ➤ http://admissions.famu.edu/	Rolling Admissions Decision dates based on timing of application Essay –Required 2 letters of recommendation-Required SSAR – Required ➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com Summer Bridge Program-By invitation only ➤ FAMU Access & Opportunity-Click here!
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)		
KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
August 1 – Application Opens-Apply early January 14 – FAU Scholarship Deadline March 1-Deadline for Summer term April 1-Deadline for Fall term May 1 - Deposit Deadline (\$200)Pell Grant may qualify student for a waiver May 1 – Housing deadline	Institutional Application ➤ https://www.fau.edu/apply/ Common Application ➤ apply.commonapp.org	Rolling Admissions, Decisions 4 weeks after all application materials are submitted and considered complete SSAR – Required ➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com Summer Bridge Program- ➤ FAU Success Pathway-Click Here!



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)
Florida Public Universities

Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU)	
KEY DATES	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
<p>August 1 – Application Opens</p> <p>November 1 – Early Action/Scholarship Deadline (decisions in December)</p> <p>March 1 – Deadline to apply</p> <p>May 1 – Deposit Deadline(\$200)</p>	<p>Priority Deadline, Rolling Admissions notification after SSAR /Transcripts (Link will appear IN your Eagle Account)</p> <p>➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com</p> <p>Summer Bridge Program</p> <p>FCGU SSS Program-Click Here!</p> <p>FGCU-Eagle Advantage Program-Click Here!</p>
<p>Ways to Apply</p> <p>Institutional Application</p> <p>➤ https://www.fgcu.edu/admissionsandaid/undergraduateadmissions/</p> <p>Common Application</p> <p>➤ apply.commonapp.org</p>	
Florida International University (FIU)	
KEY DATES	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
<p>July - Application Opens</p> <p>November 1-Priority Deadline</p> <p>November 12 – Scholarship Application Deadline</p> <p>May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)</p>	<p>Rolling Admissions</p> <p>Create an account https://www.raise.me/ (FIU specific scholarships)</p> <p>Essay – Not Required</p> <p>SSAR – Not Required</p> <p>Holistic Review Option: good test scores, lower GPA – Essay Requirement for consideration</p> <p>Summer Bridge Program</p> <p>FIU Golden Scholars-Click Here!</p>
<p>Ways to Apply</p> <p>Institutional Application</p> <p>➤ https://admissions.fiu.edu</p> <p>Application Fee Waiver can be found in College board</p>	



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)

Florida Public Universities

Florida Polytechnic University (FLPOLY)

KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
August 1 – Application Opens November 1 – Priority Deadline December 15 – Decisions go out for Priority > Rolling decisions go out starting January 2 for applications received after November 1 May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)	Institutional Application > https://floridapoly.force.com/Apply Common Application > apply.commonapp.org	Priority Deadline moves to Rolling Admission Point-Click-Send: send Test Scores and Grades via picture; Or can use SSAR > https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com Essay – Required Letters of Recommendation (1-3) – Required

Florida State University (FSU)

KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
November 1 – Deadline for all Applications November 1 – CARE Program Deadline February 17 – Decisions go out May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)	Institutional Application > https://admissions.fsu.edu/ Coalition Application > https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/ Common Application > apply.commonapp.org	Priority Deadline, Single Decision Date Essay – Required SSAR – Required > https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com FSU CARE SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM, must indicate interest on application! Summer Bridge Program FSU CARE Program-Click Here!

New College (NCF)

KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
November 1 – Priority Deadline January 30 – Decisions May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200) July 1-Final Deadline	Institutional Application > https://apply.ncf.edu/apply/ Common Application > apply.commonapp.org	Priority Deadline moves to Rolling Admission (Limited) Essay – Required SSAR – Required > https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com Recommendations-optional



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)
Florida Public Universities

University of Central Florida (UCF)	
KEY DATES	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
<p>August 1 – Application Opens APPLY EARLY, by September is preferred! November 1-Priority Deadline December 1- FAFSA/Scholarship Deadline January 15 – Top 10 Knights App. Deadline May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ways to Apply</p> <p>Institutional Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ https://www.ucf.edu/admissions/undergraduate/apply/ <p>Common Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ apply.commonapp.org <p>Rolling Admissions Essay – Required (website says its optional, it is required) SPARK Form-this is in place of SSAR Housing – Apply as soon as you get admitted to UCF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Space is limited, goes quickly <p>Top 10 Knights –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ https://www.ucf.edu/admissions/undergraduate/top-ten-knights/ <p>Summer Bridge Program(By Invite Only) UCF Access Program-Click Here!</p>
University of Florida (UF)	
KEY DATES	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
<p>August 1 – Application Opens November 1 – Deadline for ALL applications December 1 – SSAR Deadline February (last Friday) – Decisions go out May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ways to Apply</p> <p>Coalition Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/ <p>Common Application</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ apply.commonapp.org <p>Essay – Required SSAR – Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com <p>Honors Program – opt in “yes” + 2 supplemental essays PACE Program - https://admissions.ufl.edu/apply/freshman/pace Housing – Apply as soon as you submit your UF Application Special programs: UF Machen Scholars, must be invited to apply based on family income AFTER being accepted! UF Machen Scholar-Click Here!</p>



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)

Florida Public Universities

University of North Florida (UNF)		
KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
June 1 – Application Opens October 15 – Scholarship Deadline November 1 – Priority Deadline May 1 – Deposit Deadline	Institutional Application ➤ https://www.unf.edu/admissions/ Common Application ➤ apply.commonapp.org	Rolling Admissions ➤ Once an application is complete with all required documents, UNF Admissions will review applications on a 2-4 week turn-around Essay – Not Required SSAR – Required ➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com Orientation – no deposit due

University of South Florida (USF)		
KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
June 1 – Application Opens November 1 – Priority Deadline January 1 – Priority Financial Aid Deadline January 15 – Scholarship Deadline March 1 – Final Application Deadline May 1 – Deposit Deadline (\$200)	Institutional Application ➤ https://admissions.usf.edu/application Coalition Application ➤ https://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/	Essay – Not Required SSAR – Not Required Summer Student Support Services (Limited Access – SSS) ➤ Students who are low income, first generation are offered this opportunity if your application meets certain criteria (you cannot apply for the program yourself). Summer Bridge Program USF SSS Program-Click Here!



College Application Deadlines - Class of 2023

(Expected dates and procedures based on Class of 2022)

Florida Public Universities

University of West Florida (UWF)		
KEY DATES	Ways to Apply	IMPORTANT INFO/LINKS
December 1 – Priority/Scholarship Deadline December 1 – Housing contracts open May 1 – Confirmation Deadline (no deposit)	Institutional Application ➤ https://uwf.edu/admissions/ Common Application ➤ apply.commonapp.org	Priority Deadline moves to Rolling Admission Essay – Optional SSAR – Required ➤ https://ssar.selfreportedtranscript.com ZeeMee Profile – All applicants encouraged to create profile Summer Bridge Program UWF Grit Pathway-Click Here!

Self-reported Student Academic Record (SSAR)

Frequently Asked Questions

<https://admissions.fsu.edu/freshman/ssar/videos/>

What is the Self-reported Student Academic Record (SSAR)?

SSAR is a self-reported student academic record that lists all courses and associated grades that have been attempted, or will be attempted, for high school and/or college credit. Since accuracy is critical, you must have a copy of your high school transcript available to use as a reference when you create your SSAR. Be sure to indicate any courses taken through an online school.

Where do I create my SSAR?

The SSAR is created at the [Self-reported Student Academic Record](#) website. Upon completion of the SSAR, you will be given a SSAR ID Number that must be provided to your college to allow us to retrieve your SSAR.

When do I complete the SSAR?

We recommend that you complete the SSAR before submitting your application for admission. Your application for admission will not be reviewed until your application fee, SSAR, and self-reported test scores have been received.

In State Tuition/Residency

<https://admissions.fsu.edu/residency/>

Dependent Student

A student, whether or not living with his or her parent, who is eligible to be claimed by his or her parent under the federal income tax code shall be classified as a dependent student.

Parent

“Parent” means either or both parents of a student, any guardian of a student, or any person in a parental relationship to the student.”

A Florida “resident for tuition purposes” is a person who has, or a dependent person whose parent or legal guardian has, established and maintained legal residence in Florida for at least twelve months. Residence in Florida must be as a bonafide domicile rather than for the purpose of maintaining a residence incident to enrollment at an institution of higher education. To qualify as a Florida resident for tuition purposes, you must be a U.S. Citizen, permanent resident alien, or legal alien granted indefinite stay by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Other persons meeting the twelve-month legal residence requirement may be classified as Florida residents for tuition purposes only if they fall into one of the limited special categories authorized by the Florida Legislature and Florida Board of Education. All other

persons are ineligible for classification as a Florida “resident for tuition purposes.” Living in or attending school in Florida will not, in itself, establish legal residence. Students who depend on out-of-state parents for support are presumed to be legal residents of the same state as their parents.

The determination of dependent or independent status is important because it is the basis for whether the student has to submit his/her own documentation of residency (as an independent) or his/her parent’s or guardian’s documentation of residency (as a dependent).

Required Documentation

At least one item must be from this list:

- A Florida voter’s registration card.
- A Florida driver’s license.
- A State of Florida identification card.
- A Florida vehicle registration.
- Proof of a permanent home in Florida which is occupied as a primary residence by the individual or by the individual’s parent if the individual is a dependent child.
- Proof of a homestead exemption in Florida.
- Transcripts from a Florida high school for multiple years (2 or more years) if the Florida high school diploma or GED was earned within the last 12 months.
- Proof of permanent full-time employment in Florida for at least 30 hours per week for a consecutive 12-month period.

Items listed below may be used in conjunction with one document from the above list:

- A declaration of domicile in Florida.
- A Florida professional or occupational license.
- Florida incorporation.
- A document evidencing verifiable family ties to a Florida resident, as defined by tuition purposes.
- Proof of membership in a Florida-based charitable or professional organization.
- Any other documentation that supports the student’s request for resident status, including, but not limited to, utility bills and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; a lease agreement and proof of 12 consecutive months of payments; or an official state, federal, or court document evidencing legal ties to Florida.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS



DO.....

- ✓ Read all directions carefully. **ALWAYS FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OUTLINED BY THE COLLEGE YOU ARE APPLYING TO.** Each college has different requirements for applications. If you are confused about the requirements, contact the college directly to clarify.
- ✓ **START EARLY!** You should be working on your essays and applications during the summer before your senior year.
- ✓ **APPLY ONLINE**, create user names, PIN numbers and passwords that you'll remember easily. **WRITE THEM DOWN AND KEEP THEM IN A SAFE PLACE.**
- ✓ **APPLY TO 4-8 COLLEGES**, some colleges should be a "stretch", others perhaps "safety" schools where you feel confident you will be admitted, but they all should be places you can see yourself attending.
- ✓ **HAVE SOMEONE READ AND PROOFREAD BEFORE YOU SUBMIT** – look at all parts of your application to avoid typos and information being "cut off" in text boxes. Two sets of eyes are always better than one!
- ✓ **USE YOUR SAT COLLEGE APPLICATION FEE WAIVERS**, if applicable.
- ✓ Where possible, use your essay as a chance to show admission officers your unique interests and qualities beyond academic skills. Your essay is your personal story NOT a repeat of your resume. **AGAIN, HAVE SOMEONE READ AND PROOFREAD BEFORE YOU SUBMIT.**
- ✓ Include anything that makes you stand out from the crowd, such as honors, awards, or special talents.
- ✓ **REVIEW YOUR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT** before you send it to colleges, making sure that it accurately reflects your courses, activities, awards, and grades.
- ✓ Find out if the college accepts special materials, such as a sample of your artwork.
- ✓ **MAKE COPIES OF EVERYTHING** you send, if applicable.
- ✓ **SUBMIT APPLICATION AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE.** There have been cases where college web sites get overloaded on the last day and you cannot submit your application – this will be YOUR loss, not theirs. Colleges never extend their deadlines.
- ✓ **PRINT AND SAVE A COPY OF THE CONFIRMATION PAGE**, if applicable, or record any ID numbers or account numbers assigned by the university, so that you'll have a record of your application ID number or receipt number.
- ✓ Tell your TSIC College Success Coach and your Guidance Counselor about every application you submit. This is critical because some applications, such as The Coalition and The Common App, require your counselor to upload your transcript and any other material the college may require.

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS



- ✓ Check online status on the college web sites to see if your application is complete and they have received all of your documents.
- ✓ **READ YOUR E-MAIL DAILY**, and follow up to submit or complete any missing items.
- ✓ **CALL OR E-MAIL THE COLLEGE** if you haven't received an e-mail confirmation of receipt within 48 hours. Online submissions do get lost occasionally.

DON'T.....

- ✗ **PROCRASTINATE.**
- ✗ **LIE OR EXAGGERATE** with any information you provide.
- ✗ **LEAVE OUT IMPORTANT DETAILS.** For example, if you play in the school band, include what instrument you play.
- ✗ **SUBMIT A SLOPPY APPLICATION.**
- ✗ **BORROW IDEAS FOR YOUR ESSAYS**, whether from a friend or a website.
- ✗ **GO OVER THE COLLEGE'S LENGTH LIMIT FOR AN ESSAY.** Admissions officers have limited time and many essays to review.
- ✗ **FORGET TO FOLLOW UP** once your application was sent. Write "thank you" letters to counselors, teachers, friends, or family who provided you with letters of recommendation.
- ✗ **TREAT AN APPLICATION CASUALLY** – it's an important document that reflects on you.
- ✗ **BE TOO QUICK TO CLICK.** Take your time, follow all directions and complete each step with care. Scroll each page from top to bottom and read every pop-up to be sure you don't miss any information.
- ✗ **FORGET TO PERIODICALLY SAVE YOUR WORK.** You might get "timed out" if you don't enter anything for a while (usually 30 minutes). If you need to take a break, use the save/log-out feature to store your application, and then log back in.
- ✗ **COMPOSE YOUR ESSAY OR PERSONAL STATEMENT IN THE SPACE ALLOTTED ONLINE.** Draft (and redraft) these separately in a word-processing application, such as Microsoft Word, then copy and paste the final draft into the online application.
- ✗ **APPLY ONLINE RIGHT BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE.** Because of high volume, application Web sites tend to get slow and cranky at this time. It's also the most likely time for a system failure. Most colleges only accept applications online so plan ahead.

COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Application Checklist	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5
NAME OF COLLEGE					
APPLICATIONS					
Obtain or access application					
Regular application Deadline					
Early Application Deadline					
GRADES					
Request high school transcript sent					
Request midyear grade reports send					
Request College of the FL Keys transcript (if app.)					
TEST SCORES					
SAT® /ACT test required?					
SAT Subject Tests™ required?					
Send ACT scores					
Send SAT scores (and Subject Tests if applicable)					
Send AP® scores					
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION					
Request recommendations					
Send thank-you notes					
ESSAYS					
Draft initial essays					
Proofread essays for spelling and grammar					
Have 2 people read your essays (person 1)					
Have 2 people read your essays (person 2)					
Revise your essays					
Proofread your revisions					
SSAR (Self-Reported Student Academic Record)					
Enter all courses, using Unofficial Transcript					
Review courses with TSIC Coach					
Submit (after TSIC Coach approval)					
Update after 1 st Semester grades are posted					
INTERVIEWS					
Interview at college campuses					
Alumni interview					
Send thank-you notes to interviewers					
SEND AND TRACK YOUR APPLICATION					
Make copies of all application materials					
Tell school counselor that you applied and give copy					
Pay applications fee (or use Fee Waiver)					
Sign application and send					
Confirm receipt of application materials					
Send supplemental material, if needed					

COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

FINANCIAL AID FORMS					
Priority financial aid deadline					
Regular financial aid deadline					
Submit FAFSA					
Submit PROFILE, if needed					
Submit institutional aid form, if needed					
Submit state aid form, if needed					
AFTER YOU SEND YOUR APPLICATION					
Check online status to be sure all materials received					
Receive letter from office of admission					
Receive financial aid award letter					
Meet deadline to accept admission & send deposit					
Accept financial aid offer					
Notify the other colleges you will not attend					

NOTES:



College Application Fee Waivers

A Guide to FREE College Application Fee Waivers!

Using a College Application Fee Waiver from the College Board:

- If you have registered for the SAT using a fee waiver through the College Board, you are eligible to receive 4 college application fee waivers!

When will you receive your application fee waivers?

- Once you take the SAT and receive your scores you will receive your application fee waivers. If you are a junior, you will receive them in the fall of your senior year, according to the College Board website. Log into your account to retrieve them. (<https://www.collegeboard.org/?navId=aru-cb>)

How many fee waivers can I use?

- You may use up to 4 college application fee waivers for colleges that require you to submit the actual College Board waiver document.
- Some college applications automatically apply the fee waiver to your application based on your answers to certain questions, so overall, you may be able to apply to MORE than 4 colleges for free!

What colleges accept application fee waivers?

- All Florida Public Universities
- Some Florida Colleges
- Many Private Universities around the US



Unsure? Contact the school directly or go to the school website for confirmation.

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