

# SENIOR YEAR COLLEGE/FINANCIAL AID CHECKLIST

## At any point - ask for help

- From your high school counselor
- From College OPTIONS (245-1845)
- From the college you applied to; don't hesitate to call the Admissions, Financial Aid or Housing office—they want to help!

## September

- Attend the Financial Aid Information Night at your school. (check with your counselor for your school's date) [www.collegeoptions.org](http://www.collegeoptions.org)
- Attend a Cash for College workshop (check with your counselor for your school's date) for free help completing the FAFSA or the CA DREAM Application. [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org)
- Estimate your Expected Family Contribution <https://www.ecmc.org/students/my-EFC-calculator.html>
- US Citizens and eligible non-citizens: Complete the FAFSA on the Web Worksheet, at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) You and one of your parents should each create a Federal Student Aid ID so you can e-sign the FAFSA for faster processing. <https://fsaid.ed.gov>
- DREAM Application worksheet at [www.caldreamact.org](http://www.caldreamact.org)
- Create a personalized electronic or paper calendar of deadlines for college admission and financial aid applications.
- Start drafting essays for college and scholarship applications.
- Sign up for the SAT and/or ACT ([www.sat.collegeboard.com](http://www.sat.collegeboard.com) or [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) if you haven't taken them.
- Memorize your Social Security number. If you do not have a Social Security number, talk to your counselor.

- Apply for a driver's license or state ID card if you don't already have one. You may need one for financial aid verification purposes.
- Research career options thoroughly; the better informed you are, the more effective your college search will be. [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)

- Research colleges online. [www.californiacolleges.edu](http://www.californiacolleges.edu) [www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator](http://www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator)

- Attend local college fairs and meet college representatives visiting your school.
- Ask teachers, counselors, employers, and/or coaches for letters of recommendation (at least 2 weeks before a deadline).
- Your e-mail address should be appropriate for communicating with colleges, lenders & employers. Example: firstnamelastname@\_\_\_\_\_.com

## October

- Oct 1:** FAFSA and CA Dream Applications are available online ([www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) or [www.caldreamact.org](http://www.caldreamact.org)). Submit the appropriate application as early as possible. Be sure and use the DRT (Data Retrieval Tool) from FAFSA to report your reported income from the IRS. Provide required e-signatures and email address for faster processing. Due March 2 if you want to be considered for Cal Grant.
- The College Board's CSS PROFILE is an additional financial aid application that some private colleges require. Research if you need to complete this application. [profileonline.collegeboard.org](http://profileonline.collegeboard.org)
- Oct 1** CSU & UC applications available. Check other colleges for app availability.
- Visit colleges or take a virtual tour online.
- Planning to live on-campus? Research what your potential colleges' housing application processes are; some have application deadlines as early as October.

## November

- Nov 30** CSU & UC applications due. Check other colleges for deadlines. Priority application deadline for CSU campuses' Educational Opportunity Program (EOP).
- Start researching and applying for scholarships. Some have early deadlines.
- Review your FAFSA Student Aid Report and make corrections at [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) if necessary. If you don't receive your report within three weeks of submitting your FAFSA, call toll free 800-433-3243.

## December

- Confirm official SAT/ACT scores were sent to colleges.
- Apply for scholarships at the colleges you have applied to; some deadlines are as early as December.

## January

- Check your online portal at each college you applied to and your email on a **weekly basis**. Respond to colleges' requests for information promptly.
- Ask your counselor how your high school submits seniors' Cal Grant GPA (paper forms or electronic upload). If paper, fill out a paper Cal Grant GPA Verification form and turn it in to your counseling office by March 2nd. [www.calgrants.org](http://www.calgrants.org)
- Keep a copy of everything you submit (paper or electronic copy).
- Watch for application confirmation emails from your college(s); create a "portal" for each college you applied to. Monitor each portal for admissions decisions.
- Apply for scholarships!

## February

- Manage your Cal Grant status online using WebGrants for Students at [www.webgrants4students.org](http://www.webgrants4students.org)