common app

Are you Common App ready?

Meredith Lombardi, *Outreach and Education*

July 2022

What we'll cover

- Common App community
- Approaching the application
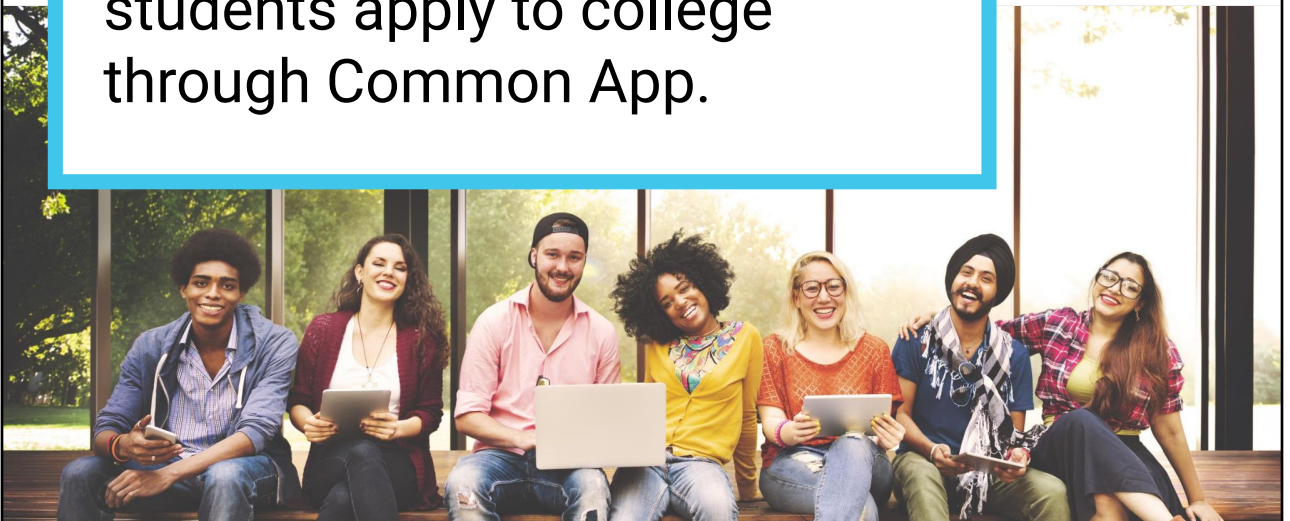- Tools you can use
- Your questions

What excites you about going to college?

Common App community

Each year, more than 1 million students apply to college through Common App.

Common App

979 Members

50 U.S. States, DC, & PR

63 International Members

19 Countries outside the U.S.

Your future starts here

More than one million students each year trust Common App to explore and apply to over 900 member colleges and universities worldwide.

INTERNATIONAL

2021–2022 MEMBERS
Find up-to-date information about each member institution at commonapp.org

INDEX
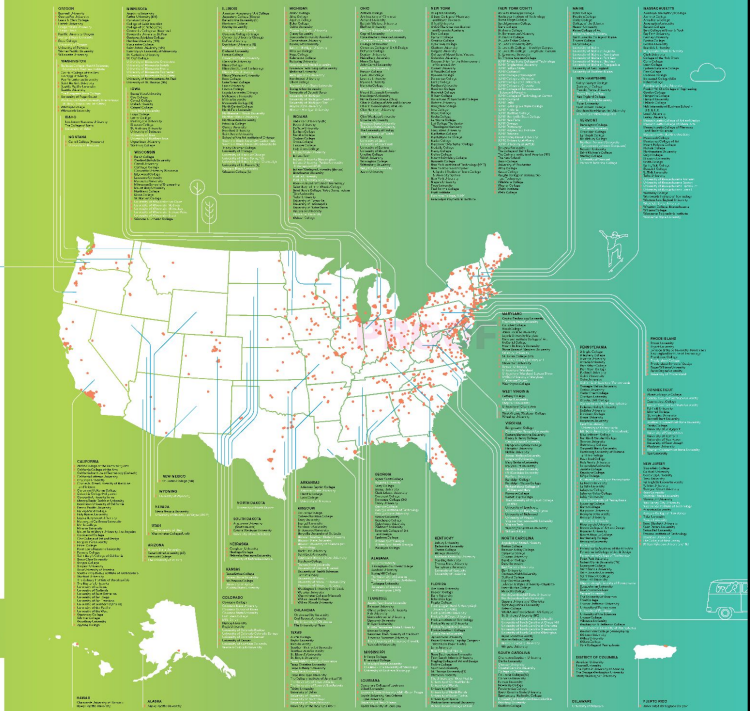
2022–2023 new members

65+ New members

22 U.S. states

27 public institutions

- Ball State University (IN)
- Central Washington University (WA)
- Concord University (WV)
- Eastern Oregon University (OR)
- Eastern Washington University (WA)
- Elizabeth City State University (NC)
- Fitchburg State University (MA)
- Florida International University (FL)
- Grand Valley State University (MI)
- Indiana University Northwest (IN)
- Jackson State University (MS)
- Kennesaw State University (GA)
- Miami Dade College (FL)
- Michigan Technological University (MI)
- North Carolina Central University (NC)
- Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)
- Tarleton State University (TX)
- Texas A&M University (TX)
- The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina (SC)
- The University of Memphis (TN)
- The University of Texas at Austin (TX)
- Thomas Edison State University (NJ)
- UNC Pembroke (NC)
- University of Washington Bothell (WA)
- University of Washington Tacoma (WA)
- University of Wisconsin - River Falls (WI)
- Western Washington University (WA)

commonapp.org/blog

Common App in Maryland

7 public institutions

- Capitol Technology University
- *Frostburg State University*
- Goucher College
- Hood College
- Johns Hopkins University
- Loyola University Maryland
- Maryland Institute College of Art
- McDaniel College
- Morgan State University
- Mount St. Mary's University
- Notre Dame of Maryland University
- *Salisbury University*
- St. John's College (MD)
- *St. Mary's College of Maryland*
- Stevenson University
- *Towson University*
- *University of Maryland, Baltimore County*
- *University of Maryland, College Park*
- *University of Maryland Eastern Shore*
- Washington College

20 members
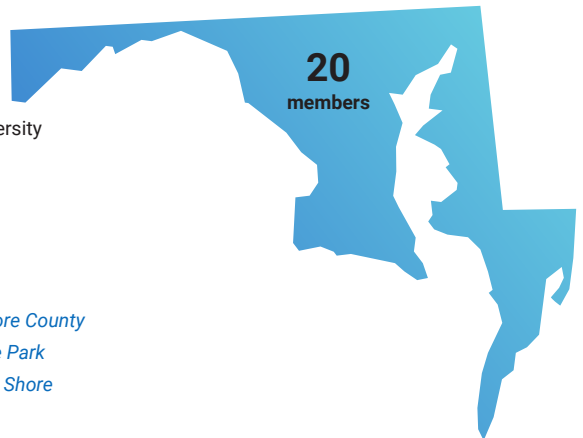
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Explore colleges

- Expanded filter options
  - Public / private
  - Enrollment size
  - Campus setting
  - Merit / need-based aid
  - Specialized mission
  - Test-optional
  - Accepts self-reported test scores
- Map views of colleges
- PDF export of college lists
- College profiles
- Virtual tours and image galleries
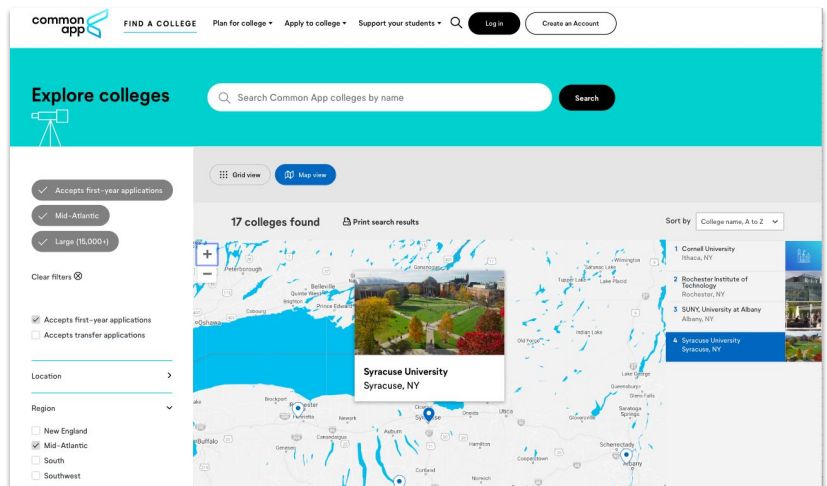
commonapp.org/explore

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Approaching the application

common app

EXPLORE   PLAN   APPLY   Counselors and recommenders ▾   Members ▾   Q   Log in   Create an Account
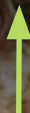
Your future starts here

Whether you're applying to college for the first time or looking to complete your degree, Common App will help you reach new heights.

Apply now
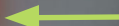
commonapp.org

Mobile app available

Common App for mobile provides the same secure, streamlined application experience as the Common App online, all from the convenience of a mobile device.

The mobile app seamlessly integrates with the desktop experience – allowing students to apply to college, research financial aid, and get advice from counselors – virtually anytime, anywhere.
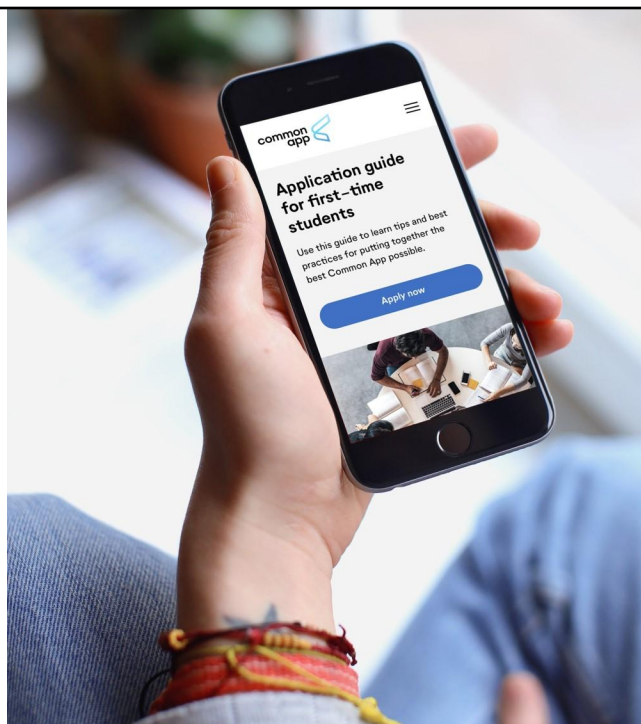
Application fees should not prevent students from pursuing higher education.

Students with financial need can easily request a fee waiver in the application.

Examples of eligibility criteria:

- ACT/SAT fee waiver
- Free or Reduced Price Lunch Program
- Annual family income within eligibility guidelines
- Federal, state, or local program (e.g. AVID, GEAR UP, TRIO)
- Family receives public assistance
- Living in public housing, a foster home, or homeless
- Ward of the state or an orphan
- Can provide a supporting statement

commonapp.org/evolvingtheapp

400+ colleges with no application fee

$100M+ fee waivers granted

Students can search for colleges that charge no application fee in the application and on commonapp.org/explore

Account rollover

The Common App launches on August 1 each year, but students don't have to wait until then.

Username & password

Remain the same

What rolls over?

A student's college list and answers to questions on the Common App tab

- Profile
- Family
- Education
- Testing
- Activities
- Writing
- Courses & Grades

What does not roll over?

Anything on the My Colleges tab, including:

- Answers to college-specific questions
- FERPA release authorization
- Recommender invitations

Navigating the first-year application

Search filters and a Requirements Grid help you easily find schools along with deadlines, fees, and application requirements

Navigating the application

My Colleges includes detailed information and requirements for each college on your list.

- Answer college-specific questions
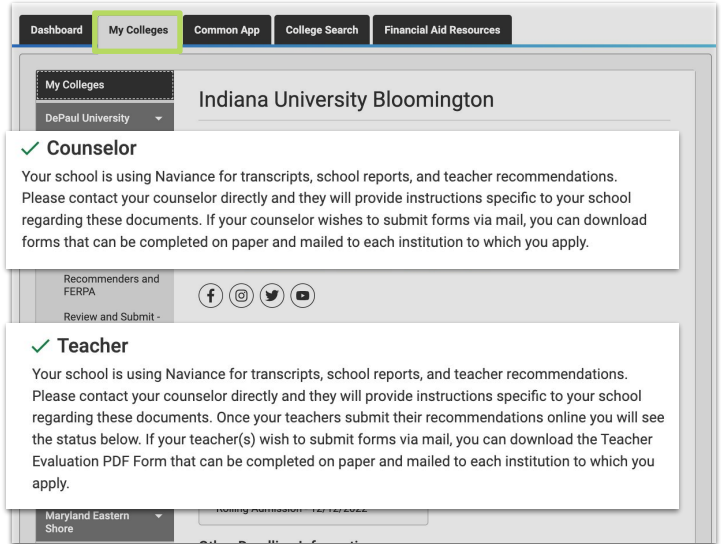- Complete the FERPA Release Authorization
- Invite and assign recommenders *
- Submit application
- Submit writing supplements, if applicable

When students attend a school using Naviance to submit school forms, their Common App will prevent them from inviting their counselor and teacher recommenders. **Students will do this in Naviance.**

You are still able to invite 'other recommenders' from your Common App account.

| Dashboard | My Colleges | Common App | College Search | Financial Aid Resources |

My Colleges
DePaul University ▾

Indiana University Bloomington

✓ **Counselor**
Your school is using Naviance for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. If your counselor wishes to submit forms via mail, you can download forms that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

Recommenders and FERPA
Review and Submit -

✓ **Teacher**
Your school is using Naviance for transcripts, school reports, and teacher recommendations. Please contact your counselor directly and they will provide instructions specific to your school regarding these documents. Once your teachers submit their recommendations online you will see the status below. If your teacher(s) wish to submit forms via mail, you can download the Teacher Evaluation PDF Form that can be completed on paper and mailed to each institution to which you apply.

Maryland Eastern Shore

Rolling Admission - 12/12/2022

Recommender types

Counselor

- Completes school forms and sends transcript
- Writes letter of recommendation **(35% require)**

Teacher

- No school requires more than 2
- Completes teacher evaluation and writes letter of recommendation **(30% require)**

Other recommender

- **Optional**
- Examples include
  - Arts teacher outside of school
  - Clergy
  - Coach
  - College access counselor
  - Employer
  - Family member
 - Peer
  - Other

Advisor

- **Optional**
- Students can invite up to 3 advisors
- Advisors do not submit any forms
- Can view student's completion progress and a PDF copy of their application (with permission)

Navigating the first-year application

The Common App tab is where you complete the main sections of the application.

FAQs and links to Common App support provide assistance throughout the application.
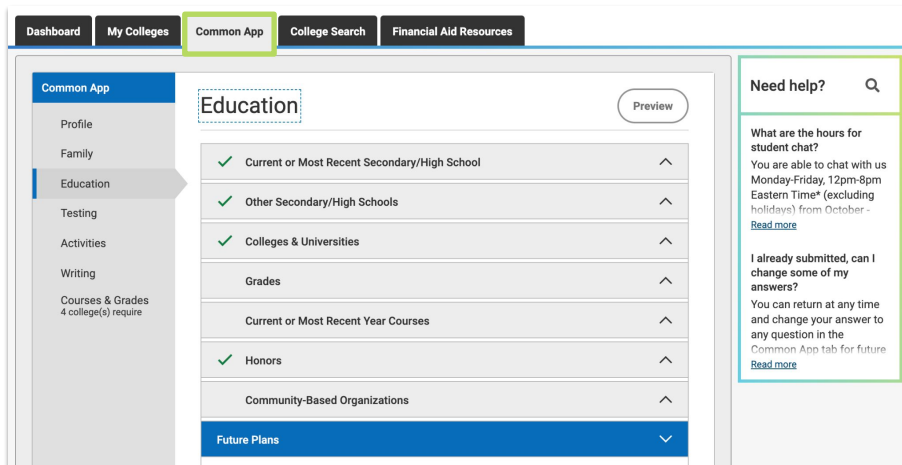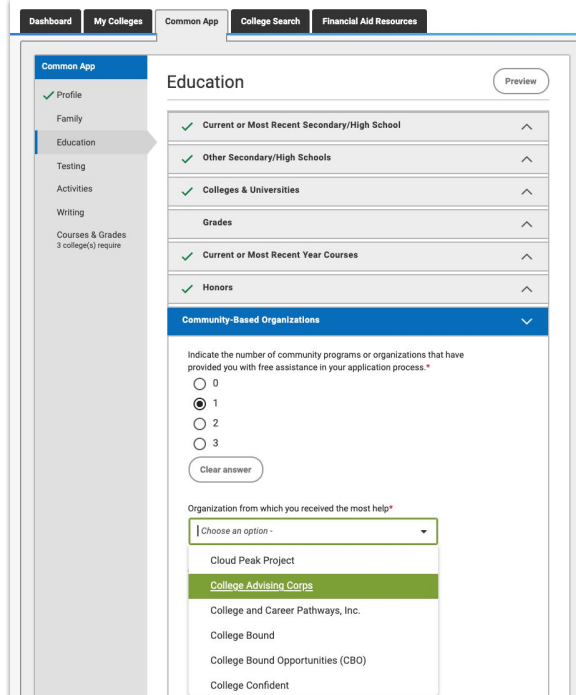
Advising support

Students who have participated in a free college access program can let colleges know.

- You can report up to 3 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)
- Examples:
  - ACES
  - AVID
  - Boy/Girl Scouts
  - College Bound
  - Collegiate Directions, Inc.
  - CollegeTracks - Montgomery County
  - POSSE
  - TRIO (Upward Bound, UBMS, Talent Search)
  - Other

Access to UStrive mentors

[UStrive](#) — formerly Strive for College — was started in 2015 as a way to virtually connect students to trained volunteer mentors in a safe and secure environment.

Since 2016, students who qualify for a Common App fee waiver have been invited to connect with a UStrive mentor in the first-year application.

Beginning August 2022, all first-year and transfer students have the option to connect with a UStrive mentor, regardless of fee waiver eligibility.

UStrive mentors help students:
- Apply to college
- Navigate the financial aid process
- Transition into college
- Get their degree
- Find a job after graduation

Activities section

Reporting activities and experiences helps colleges better understand your life outside of the classroom.

- Report up to 10 activities
- Estimate the amount of time spent in each activity

Activities

Reporting activities can help colleges better understand your life outside of the classroom. Examples of activities might include:

- Arts or music
- Clubs
- Community engagement
- Family responsibilities
- Hobbies
- Sports
- Work or volunteering
- Other experiences that have been meaningful to you

Do you have any activities that you wish to report?*
- ● Yes
- ○ No

Clear Answer

Please list your activities in the order of their importance to you.

Activity 1

Activity type*
Athletics: JV/Varsity

Sport/team*
Volleyball

Position/Leadership description
(Max characters: 50)*

Organization Name
(Max characters: 100)

Please describe this activity, including what you accomplished and any recognition you received, etc.
(Max characters: 150)*

Participation grade levels*
- ☐ 9
- ☑ 10
- ☑ 11
- ☑ 12
- ☐ Post-graduate

Timing of participation*
- ☑ During school year
- ☐ During school break
- ☐ All year

Hours spent per week*
15

Weeks spent per year*
18

I intend to participate in a similar activity in college.*
- ● Yes
- ○ No

Clear answer

Writing section

The personal essay helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice.

- Choose from 7 different essay prompts

- 650 word limit

- Use content from Google Drive in your application 🟦

www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts

Essay prompt topics
- **Personal Growth**
- **Facing Adversity**
- **Background, Identity, Interest, or Talent**
- **Intellectual Curiosity**
- **Challenging an Idea**
- **Gratitude**
- **Topic of Your Choice**

Community disruptions

Located in the Writing section

Community disruptions such as COVID-19 and natural disasters can have deep and long-lasting impacts. If you need it, this space is yours to describe those impacts. Colleges care about the effects on your health and well-being, safety, family circumstances, future plans, and education, including access to reliable technology and quiet study spaces. For more information, check out our COVID-19 FAQ.

- **Optional**
- **250 word limit**
- **Separate from the existing Additional Information question, which remains (650 word limit)**
- **Counselors are also asked to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the school community in their forms**

commonapp.org/blog
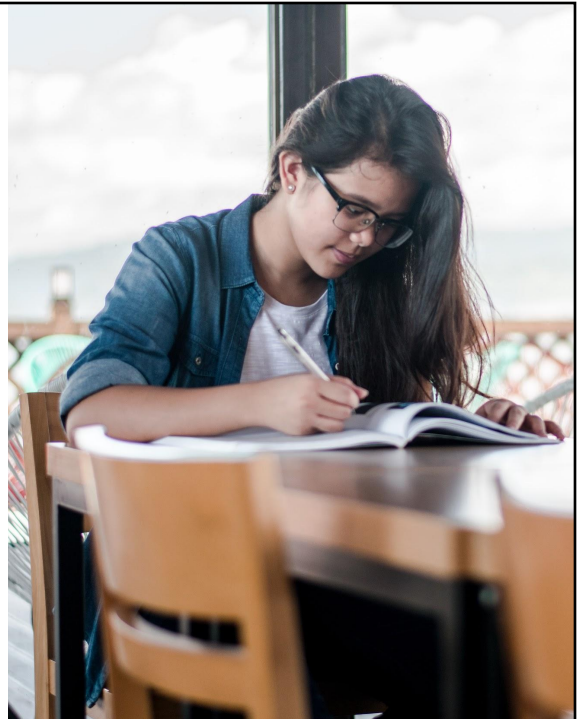
Courses & Grades

The Courses & Grades section is required by some colleges to inform them about courses you have taken for high school credit.

If you are applying to a college that requires C&G, you will need an unofficial copy of your high school transcript to complete this section

Courses & Grades FAQs

Courses & Grades   Preview

| Courses & Grades | ∨ |

×   Courses & Grades

Courses & Grades – 11th grade
Use this grid to report your courses exactly as they appear on your transcript.   View walkthrough

Transcript #1 - Yorktown High School

School Name *	School Year *	Grading Scale *	Schedule *
Yorktown High School	2021-22	A-F	Semesters

Subject *	Course Name *	Course Level *
History/Social Science	US Government	Regular/Standard

Semester Grades *   Semester Credits *
S1 * S2 * Final *   S1 * S2 * Final *   N/A
B+ ▾ N... ▾ B+ ▾   0.5 0 0.5

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Navigating the first-year application
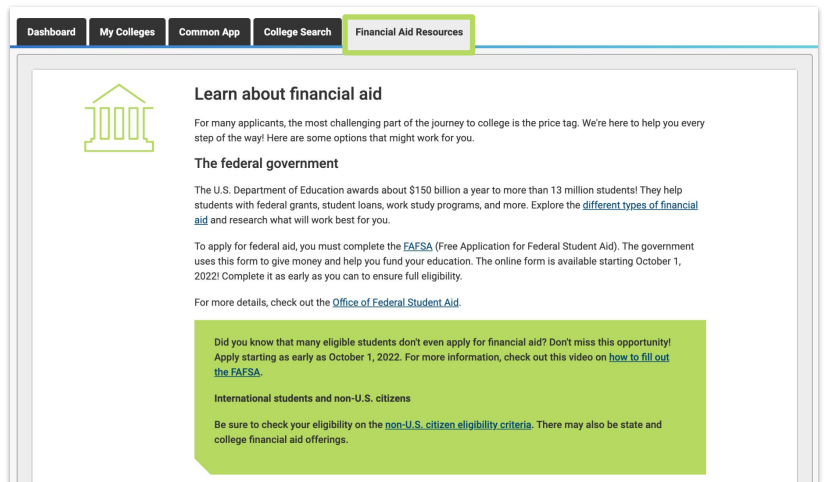

The Dashboard provides a snapshot of all colleges on your list.

Access the Requirements Grid to see a detailed list of deadlines, fees, and admission requirements for all colleges on your list.

Dashboard	My Colleges	Common App	College Search	Financial Aid Resources

Dashboard
       Application Requirements

Sort by: College Name ▾

DePaul University
🛑 **February 1, 2022** – *Deadline has passed*
✏️ Application – *In progress*
Show more details ∧

Indiana University Bloomington
Add your term or admission plan
✏️ Application – *In progress*
✏️ Writing Supplement – *In progress*
Show more details ∧

Jack Kent Cooke Foundation
Add your term or admission plan
✏️ Application – *In progress*
Show more details ∧

University of Maryland Eastern Shore
July 26, 2022 – *20 days until deadline*
✏️ Application – *In progress*
Show more details ∧

Navigating the first-year application

Access financial aid resources and scholarship opportunities while completing your Common App.

| Dashboard | My Colleges | Common App | College Search | Financial Aid Resources |

Learn about financial aid

For many applicants, the most challenging part of the journey to college is the price tag. We're here to help you every step of the way! Here are some options that might work for you.

The federal government

The U.S. Department of Education awards about $150 billion a year to more than 13 million students! They help students with federal grants, student loans, work study programs, and more. Explore the different types of financial aid and research what will work best for you.

To apply for federal aid, you must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The government uses this form to give money and help you fund your education. The online form is available starting October 1, 2022! Complete it as early as you can to ensure full eligibility.

For more details, check out the Office of Federal Student Aid.

Did you know that many eligible students don't even apply for financial aid? Don't miss this opportunity! Apply starting as early as October 1, 2022. For more information, check out this video on how to fill out the FAFSA.

International students and non-U.S. citizens

Be sure to check your eligibility on the non-U.S. citizen eligibility criteria. There may also be state and college financial aid offerings.

Tools you can use

Plan for college

- College roadmaps for middle school, high school, community college, and military students
- Application and Recommender guides
- First-year and transfer video tutorials
- Learn about paying for college
- Parent resources

commonapp.org/plan

Plan your future

Get connected with everything you need to apply to college, research financial aid and scholarships, and get advice from counselors, advisors and mentors.

WHY COLLEGE MATTERS

College is an investment in yourself. It's worth it because you're worth it.

Learn more >

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

You have more options than you know. We can help you find them.

Learn more >

YOUR COLLEGE ROADMAP

The path may seem unclear. Luckily we know the way, including all the shortcuts.

Learn more >

Common App Ready

A toolkit of tips and best practices to help you with each step of the application process

- Getting started
- Preparing your application
- Telling your story
- Working with recommenders and advisors
- Paying for college

commonapp.org/ready

Resources

WHAT IS CO
↓ Download

HOW THE F
↓ Download

APPLICATIO
↓ Download

COMMON A
↓ Download

Telling your story
How to approach the essay

The Common App essay instructions ask you what you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores. You have 7 prompts but endless possibilities to tell your story. Here are some ideas to inspire your thinking.

Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, please share your story.

Think about
- Your community, environment, family, and culture
- What you're deeply curious about and how you spend your time
- What makes you proud
- People and experiences that have shaped your life

Ask yourself
- What's missing from the rest of my application?
- Is there context to help colleges understand who I am?

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?

Think about
- All obstacles: big, small, personal, and societal
- Hardships faced by family or friends that also impacted you
- Unresolved challenges you're still struggling with

Ask yourself
- How did I cope? How did I grow?
- Who helped me?

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24/7 support

Help when you need it!

- Frequently Asked Questions
- Known issues
- Contact support
- Live member colleges
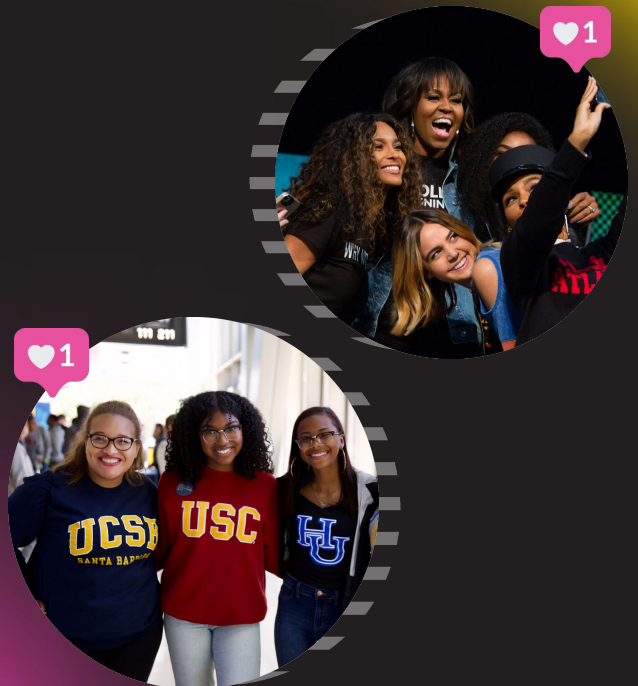- Writing requirements resource

appsupport.commonapp.org
recsupport.commonapp.org

Saying things out loud makes them happen. What will you be?

Better Make Room is Common App's student-facing branch, so follow us on social media for resources and tips on your college application journey! 🤳

#BetterMakeRoom

Connect with #commonapp, #reachhigher and #bettermakeroom

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@ReachHigher
@BetterMakeRoom

@BetterMakeRoom

CommonAppMedia
BetterMakeRoom

What next steps do you want to take on your college journey?

Your questions

Thank you

—

Contact 24/7/365 support when you need it
appsupport@commonapp.net *(first-year application questions)*
sfsupport@commonapp.net *(first-year recommender questions)*
thecommonapplication@liaisoncas.com *(transfer questions)*

We're committed to continuous improvement:
ideas.commonapp.org