



Your College Navigator, LLC

Admissions by design, not chance!

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January 2024

Seniors

- Fill out the FAFSA if applying for financial aid and search/apply for scholarships
- File any final college applications
- Have mid-year grades sent to colleges

Juniors

- Schedule your SAT/ACT winter/spring tests OR look at [Fairtest](#) to learn about test optional or test blind colleges
- Finalize your college criteria and develop a well-targeted list
- Begin connecting with staff at your targeted colleges

Sophomores/Juniors

- Strategically build on your activities and accomplishments
- Plan your summer activities

Upcoming Info Sessions

For 9th, 10th, and 11th-grade students and parents

Focus on how to select and get into the best colleges for you!

Attend one of our informative events:

College Admissions in Today's Challenging Environment

7PM Mon, Feb 12 Oceanside Library

7PM Mon, Mar 18 Half Hollow Hills Library

Register through:

www.ycnavigator.com

What to Look for When Considering a College

This time of year, is the perfect opportunity for 11th graders and their parents to be thinking about college. But what factors should you utilize when considering a college?

Rankings by publications such as U.S. News & World Report, Petersons, Kiplinger, Forbes, and others in the business of ranking colleges all provide value. These lists are based on many factors such as acceptance rates, resources offered, graduation rates, student/professor ratios, and other notable features. That said, no national ranking can tell you which college or university is best for you. Your interests, personality, talents, and career goals should be a major factor in any decision.

There are many factors to examine when considering a college. A few of these are outlined below:

Strength in your area of interest – some students know which major they are interested in pursuing. Others may only know which subjects they like the most. You should determine how strong the college is in those subjects of interest to you. There is a real difference between colleges in the number and backgrounds of professors, the number and quality of course offerings, research opportunities, and internship possibilities, etc. Know how strong the college is in your areas of interest.

Teaching style – each college has its own teaching style. For each college you are con-

sidering, know the style that they stress. Some colleges place an emphasis on writing, some on participative learning, and others on collaborative learning. Some colleges are lecture oriented, and others are more small-class oriented. In which teaching style will you thrive?

Academic intensity – it is one thing to get into a college. It is another to do well while attending the college. How many hours/week of academics are expected of students at the colleges you are considering? You will be amazed at the different expectations among colleges.

Student-body Personality – what does the college look for in a student? Does the college stress independent thinking, or do they stress collaborative learning? Do they look for students who are committed to community learning, well-rounded students or talented in specific areas? Learn what each college looks for and how well this matches your personality.

Social Activity Drivers – what drives the social activity at the college? At some colleges fraternities/sororities are the drivers; at others intramural sports play a big role. At others, activity is centered around the big football or basketball game and at others, clubs or dorm life play a big role. In which environment do you feel most comfortable? These are just a few of the factors to consider. There are many others. Just make sure you know the college and how well the college fits you. After all, you are about to spend four years of your life there.

Focus on Majors: Pre-Law

If becoming a lawyer sounds like a good way to ensure job security, earn a decent living, challenge your brain, and make a difference in the world, you might think majoring in “Pre-Law” would be your best bet. Think again. There is no such thing as a “Pre-Law” major.

Although there is no Pre-Law major, the term itself is not meaningless. It refers to advising programs that support students in preparing for and applying to law school. These programs often have advisors who devote themselves to helping students understand different types of law, explore various legal careers, and manage the law school application process. Pre-Law advising programs often sponsor lecture series, job shadow opportunities, and internships.

So, what *is* the best major to pursue for law school? The most common majors of law school applicants are: Political Science, History, English, Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Economics. But this doesn't mean that they're the best choices. Majors with the highest acceptance rates into law schools include: Physics, Philosophy, Biology, Chemistry, Government Service, Anthropology and Economics. In truth, the best major for applying to law school is the major that most interests you.

The American Bar Association (ABA) has identified “Core Skills and Values” that competitive law school applicants should possess. They include: Analytical / Problem Solving Skills, Critical Reading Writing Skills, Oral Communication/Listening Abilities, General Research Skills, Task Organization/Management Skills, Public Service and Promotion of Justice . These skills can be developed and honed in almost any major you might choose.

Successful law school applicants should have a broad understanding of history and the factors that have influenced the development of our society, as well as a fundamental understanding of political thought and the contemporary Amer-

ican political system. They should also possess mathematical and financial skills, such as an understanding of basic pre-calculus mathematics and an ability to analyze financial data. Knowledge of human behavior, social interaction, cultural differences, international institutions and issues, world events, and the increasing interdependence of the nations and communities within our world are also important.

If most of what you know about legal careers comes from watching Perry Mason or Law & Order reruns, you're in for a huge surprise. Criminal trial attorneys account for only a small percent of practicing lawyers. Traditional legal career paths include private practice lawyer, government attorney, corporate lawyer, entertainment lawyer, and public interest lawyer. Most attorneys spend a tremendous amount of time researching matters and composing documents.

Many law school graduates never actually practice law. They view legal education as a useful foundation for a wide range of careers. Several bestselling authors, politicians, corporate business people, and entertainers have attended law school and have found that their legal backgrounds played a significant role in their success. Non-traditional careers for law school graduates include journalism, real estate, nonprofit management, entrepreneurship, and the arts.

Employment of lawyers is expected to grow by 10 percent through 2020. Because the number of law school graduates now is outpacing the number of openings at law firms, new lawyers are increasingly working in non-traditional careers, where legal education is desired but not required.

The median salary range for lawyers with less than one year of experience is \$45,000 to \$68,000 per year, according to a 2010 PayScale survey. The median annual wage of all lawyers that year was \$112,760. Of course, many lawyers earn far in excess of these figures, depending on the field of law they practice.

Famous lawyers and their undergraduate degrees:

Hilary Clinton
(former) Secretary of State
Political Science

Ann Coulter
Radio Personality
History

John Grisham
Author
Accounting

Elizabeth Marston
Co-Creator of Wonder Woman
Psychology

Judy Scheindlin
Judge Judy
Government

Will Shortz
Puzzlemaster
Enigmatology

Resources

American Bar Association:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education.html

National Association for Law Placement: <https://www.nalp.org/prelaw>

Financial Matters: College Scholarships - What You Need to Know



Paying for college can feel overwhelming, but receiving scholarships can make the cost of college more manageable. Contrary to popular belief, you don't need to be an athlete or a student with a 4.0 GPA to qualify for a scholarship. What you do need is the time to research the many scholarships that are available. That is why the process of searching and applying for scholarships, ideally, should be started during your first year of high school.

Many colleges offer a variety of scholarships including merit-based scholarships or scholarships specifically for new students. Institutional scholarships come directly from the university that you applied to. These can benefit prospective students who don't qualify for student loans. Institutional scholarships can be found on the university's website under the financial aid department. Many colleges require the FAFSA to be filed in order to receive institutional scholarships.

Scholarship opportunities should be explored before you consider taking out federal or private student loans. While an institutional scholarship is considered a grant that you don't need to pay back, if you receive a private scholarship you are required to report it to the college you plan on attending and it may affect other aid you receive from the college.

Students can also use free scholarship matching services to search for the awards.

Some of the services include [Fastweb](#) and [College Board's Big Future](#). During your search, you'll want to consider what sets you apart. For example, if you are the first person in your family to attend college, search the following keywords: "first generation student". According to the U.S. Department of Education, students should ask both their high school counselor and the college's financial aid office about scholarship opportunities. Institutions to research are foundations, religious and community organizations, businesses, and civic groups. Professional organizations and associations related to your field of interest, ethnicity-based organizations, and your employer or your parents' employers are other options to explore.

Each scholarship will have its own unique requirements and deadlines. For instance, the [Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation](#) awards up to \$20,000 annually. In 2023, they had 91,000 applicants, and at the end of a multi-phase process, they chose 150 recipients. To be considered for a large scholarship, you will most likely need to write an essay, obtain a recommendation letter, and possibly interview. On the flip side, there are scholarships with smaller awards, and the application process is less time consuming. Did you know there is a Vegetarian Video Scholarship and an American Fire Sprinkler Association Scholarship? If you have the time and energy to research and apply for scholarships, it may be worth it financially.

The U.S. Department of Labor also has a [Scholarship Search Database](#). The website matches your background profile against a large database of scholarships, showing you only those for which you are eligible. Remember, you should nev-

er have to pay to apply for scholarships. If you receive a letter in the mail or an email saying you have been selected for a scholarship that you never applied to, that is a red flag. Never give your information to a company that claims they can complete the FAFSA for a processing fee. These are all signs of a scam. If you are unsure, research the company before providing any of your personal information.

When applying for awards, make sure to understand your colleges displacement policies. Displacement policies are activated when a student receives an outside or private scholarship, which then results in a reduction in other forms of college aid. It is practiced by colleges and universities across the country. Though some states have banned scholarship displacement, it is important to check local laws. Use caution when reviewing the scholarship terms and conditions to make sure you understand what the issuer requires and under what circumstances you would have to repay the award.

Other important considerations - Is the scholarship renewable? Is there a minimum GPA stipulation? Do you receive the money in one lump sum, or is it sent directly to the university? Read the terms thoroughly. Parents and their teens should have an honest discussion about the cost of college as early as freshman year of high school. College cost calculators will give an estimate of the cost of attending each specific college. It is helpful if teens know the amount that has been saved for their education, the feasibility of student loans, and the possibility of receiving scholarships in order to help determine if the colleges of their choice are affordable.



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Check our website for
upcoming webinars
and seminars.

Admission Office Blogs

Reading an admissions blog can give both parents and teens an honest view of the admissions process at a particular college. Instead of listening to other parents or friends, whose information may be inaccurate, blogs give you facts from Directors of Admission and current students. They are a way to get an idea of what makes each college unique and interesting. Blogs can put a human face on the institutional facade.

Student blogs usually cover information and insights into student life, academics and the culture at the college. High school students who are reading about the experiences of their peers might feel less stressed and better manage expectations of what college life will be like. Knowing that others have overcome challenges and still achieved their academic goals can be inspirational.

The blogs written by admissions deans offer years of experience and help eliminate myths that a parent or teen may believe. Since the world of college admissions is constantly changing, blogs can inform readers with information on current trends. There may also be details about the application timeline, required documents, and tips for making a strong application.

Admission Office Blogs

Here is a list of reader-worthy blogs. Even if there isn't a college that interests you in this sampling, it may be worth reading some of them to gain a better understanding of college admissions. Some of the blogs could even make you laugh. Remember, when reading the blogs that the writer's perspectives will vary according to their institution and experiences.

Georgia Tech Admission Blog

<https://sites.gatech.edu/admission-blog/>

Admissions Blog at Illinois

<https://blog.admissions.illinois.edu/>

Tulane University Office of Undergrad
Admissions blog

<https://admissionblog.tulane.edu/>

Jon Boeckenstedt

<https://jonboeckenstedt.net/>

University of Virginia Admissions Blog

<https://uvaapplication.blogspot.com/>

Tufts Inside Admissions

<https://admissions.tufts.edu/blogs/inside-admissions/>

MIT Admissions

<https://mitadmissions.org/blogs/>