YWC A B E R K E L E Y / O A K L A N D P R E S E N T S:

SHADOW DAY

The Official Resource Packet

FROM FRESHMAN YEAR TO POST-GRADUATION, EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO PREPARE, APPLY, AND PAY FOR COLLEGE

Made by current college students, with the diversity of your current experiences and future goals in mind.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Meet our team (pg. 3)
What is Shadow Day? (pg. 4)
COVID-19 Disclaimers & Frequently asked questions (pg. 5)
Shadow Day Team Videos FAQs (pg. 6)
Youtube Playlist w/ Helpful Video Resources (pg. 7)
Paying for College (pg. 8)
The Different Kinds of Colleges (pg. 9-10)
  - Public vs. Private & In State vs. Out of State (9)
  - Difference Between Community, State, UC, and Private (10)
Preparing for College (pg. 11-18)
  - Year by Year Breakdown (11)
  - What are Extracurricular Activities and Why Are They Important? (12)
  - What If I Feel Like I’m Behind? (13)
  - A-G Requirements (14)
  - Differences Between the SAT and ACT (15)
  - FAQs about the SAT and ACT (16-18)
Applying to College (pg. 19-22)
  - Choosing Where to Apply (19-20)
  - Difference Between Application Types (21-22)
Adjusting to College (pg. 23)
City Colleges and Trade Schools (pg. 24)
What If I Don’t Graduate High School? (pg. 25)
Resource Links - Including Resources for Undocumented Students (pg. 26)
Thank You & Summary (pg. 27)
Connect With Us! (pg. 28)
MEET OUR TEAM

MELANY FLORES
I am a first-generation student at Berkeley studying Mechanical Engineering with an Education minor! I joined the team because as a first-gen low-income youth from the Bay Area, events such as Shadow Day, and mentors like the ones volunteering for it, were incredibly pertinent in my decision to pursue a higher education at Cal. Fun Fact: I love The Office!

AILINH NGUYEN
I’m a junior transfer at Cal majoring in Psychology. I joined the team because I wanted to be able to take part of a movement that advocated for racial justice and be a part of an organization that holds its arms open for anyone willing to join. Fun facts: I’ve watched The Emperor’s New Groove at least once a year since I was 14.

NATALIE VERDUCCI
I am a first-generation, formerly incarcerated transfer student here at UC Berkeley. I am extremely passionate about helping non-traditional students. Fun Facts: I plan on getting a graduate degree in Social Welfare, and my overall goal is to become a community college counselor.

GRACE MILLER
I’m the program coordinator for the Shadow Day Organizing Team! I got involved with Shadow Day bc I think it’s a vital program that improves access and equity at Cal. Fun facts: I’m a sociology student from Fresno! I love reading, bad movies & radical social and economic justice :)

PEARLE NWAEZEIGWE
I am a recent graduate of Berkeley Law School. I joined the Shadow Day team because I was a Shadow Day mentor last year, and it was a great experience! Fun fact: I cannot go a day without listening to a Beyoncé song. Her songs get me through anything!

ZOÉ MILLER
Some of my specific roles on the team are designing and publishing most of our promotional stuff! I joined the team because I think this program is super important to Cal and the the surrounding community in equal measure. Fun Facts: I’m a Society and Environment Major, I’m from Fresno, and I’ve been baking since way before COVID!

NYANGA NYANDEMOH
I joined the team mostly because being Black at Cal has historically not always been welcoming. I believe breaking the educational gap is very important and giving youth a gateway to higher education and other forms of continuing is what this program is bringing to the students. Fun Fact: I love music and Bay Area art!

KATHIA OSUNA
I’m a first-generation student and a first-year here at Cal! I joined the team because I am very passionate about demystifying institutions of higher education for historically marginalized communities. Fun facts: during my free time, I enjoy doing yoga and watching musicals with my friends.
WHAT IS SHADOW DAY?

What is Shadow Day?

Shadow day is an annual, day-long event that takes place every spring with one goal in mind: to provide high school students with the opportunity to explore higher education in a fun, engaging, and supportive environment.

Each year, Shadow Day brings together over 600 participants including 300 Bay Area high school students from the greater East Bay, to be matched in pairs with 300 current UC Berkeley students. Together, Cal students and high school students are matched in one-on-one pairs, and spend the day shadowing classes, touring campus, and experiencing all that UC Berkeley has to offer, as well as participating in fun and educational workshops & activities on and around campus - all while getting to know one another, and building community.

Shadow Day aims to provide resources to recruit and support Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and other students who have been historically underrepresented in the UC system by making connections, and providing high school students with opportunities to learn how to apply and pay for college.

Why is Shadow Day important?

At the YWCA Berkeley/Oakland, we are passionate about increasing access and equity within higher education, and providing opportunities for high school students to explore their futures.

Shadow Day is intended to serve a diverse array of students from the East Bay, and those who have been historically underrepresented in the UC system, including Queer, Trans, Black, Indigenous, and Students of Color (QTBI&POC), Educational Opportunity Program Students, and Transfer Students.

We hope to provide resources and information to support high school youth in their process of learning about how to apply and pay for college, by connecting them to on-campus resources at Cal, and to build community that reflects our values of diversity, equity & inclusion - for a community where all students have the opportunity and support to succeed.
COVID-19 DISCLAIMERS AND FAQS

Please note that due to the ever changing situation regarding COVID-19, not all information in this packet may be up to date, and not all information specifically applies to the class of 2021.

Mostly, this packet includes general information about how the college application and financial aid processes "typically" work. So please verify information as you go, especially if you are a part of the class of 2021 and are planning to apply to college this fall.

Do I still need to take the SAT/ACT this fall?
If you are in the Class of 2021 and are applying to college this fall (2020), you are not required to take the SAT or ACT to get into a UC school or CSU! If you are in the Class of 2021 and are applying to a private or out-of-state college, look into the requirements of the specific college(s) you are interested in. So far, most Ivy Leagues are still requiring them, but as with everything related to COVID-19, the situation is still really fluid.

If I want or have to take the SAT/ACT, how will I do that if we are still in quarantine?
The SAT and ACT are planning to offer their tests online in the Fall if the coronavirus crisis persists. Make sure to look into any updates as fall approaches.

My school has switched to Pass/No Pass grades. How will this affect college admissions and A-G requirements?
The UC (University of California) and CSU (California State University) colleges have agreed to count all classes that receive a Pass grade this semester (Spring 2020) to count as fulfilling your A-G requirements.

Are there any other changes to college applications and admissions that I should know about?
At the moment, most decisions about changing the application process for college and financial aid are dependent on how things look with COVID-19. Some things that might change to keep an eye on include: Deadlines for college and financial aid applications, SAT/ACT requirements, and CSU eligibility requirements.

Links and sources:

YWCA Berkeley/Oakland Shadow Day 2020©
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT UC BERKELEY

Here you can find videos of the Shadow Day Team answering some FAQs about our UC Berkeley experience!

https://tinyurl.com/y7fru4qg
A youtube playlist crafted just for you that covers College Admissions, Personal Essay tips, Financial Aid and Literacy tips for transfer students, what to know about SAT prep, and more, can be found here!

https://tinyurl.com/yd224m7b
For information about Financial Aid and Scholarships, check out our presentation on Financial Aid and Financial Literacy for college here:

https://tinyurl.com/ya7hpkrj
**Private School**
- Private schools are not funded by the government.
- Generally, private schools charge higher tuition, but these are usually offset by greater financial aid offers.
- If you go to a private school in California, you can get financial aid through Cal Grant, but it may be less than the aid you could typically apply for and receive when attending a UC.
- Private schools tend to have smaller class sizes, and smaller student body populations as a whole.
- “Elite” universities like Harvard, Stanford, Princeton, and Yale are all private universities. But not all private universities are elite, and many private colleges are not as competitive.
- If you are interested in private colleges, look into the school’s accreditation to make sure it’s legit. This happens either through the US Department of Education or through the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). (MOST schools are accredited, so don’t stress out, but if you’ve never heard of the school before, it can’t hurt to check it out.)

**In-State Schools (CA specific)**
- In-state schools are located in the state that you currently live in, and have lived in for some time. (In CA, at least 366 days.)
- California residents get lower tuition and may also receive more financial aid for CA schools.
- Some specific state grants and aid will only apply to you if you choose a CA school.
- CA has resources for undocumented students that many other states do not. For example, if you’ve already earned credits from a CA college, or you’ve gone to high school in CA for at least 3 years, you’ll pay in state tuition.
- Undocumented students are also eligible for the Cal Grant, and other state specific financial aid.

**Out of State Schools**
- Out of state schools are for the most part more expensive upfront, and don’t provide as much government–based aid, since you won’t qualify for whatever their state aid is, and CA aid also won’t apply if you choose to go out of state.
- Check them out! In many cases, out of state tuition can be pretty easily offset by specific college scholarships. The only way to fully know what your aid will look like for any college (in or out of state, public or private) is to submit the FAFSA and apply to the colleges, and wait until your personalized financial aid package is released during March/April of your senior year.

**Public School**
- Public schools are schools that are partially funded by the government.
- At public school, tuition tends to be less expensive for in–state students.
- If you go to a public school in California, you can get a greater amount of financial aid compared to the cost of education through Cal Grant than if you were to go to a private school (but this does not take into account other forms of financial aid).
- Public schools tend to have larger class sizes, and more options for majors.
- All public schools must be accredited, so if it’s a CSU, UC, or community college, you can be sure that your school is accredited, and don’t have to worry about the potential of a scam.
- Public schools cannot by law prioritize one religion, gender, or comparative social group. Private schools however, can consist of an all female–identifying student body, or be based in a Christian faith, just as some common examples. Besides the Ivy Leagues, most private colleges either have a loose religious base, or another specific focus.

It is important to keep in mind during this time that there really is no college that’s inherently "better" or "worse." What will be right for you entirely depends on your goals. When you make your choice, take into account your career goals (if any), financial goals, where you want to live/how far away from home you want to be, and anything else that feels relevant to you. What you shouldn’t base your choice on, is what others think about your choice.

CA laws that provide opportunities for undocumented students:
- https://www.csac.ca.gov/california-dream-act
## Different Kinds of Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Community College</th>
<th>CA State College</th>
<th>University of California</th>
<th>Private College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Also known as</strong></td>
<td>&quot;City College&quot;, like Berkeley City College for example</td>
<td>California State University (CSU), like Fresno State/CSU Fresno</td>
<td>University of California, a.k.a &quot;UC&quot;, like UCLA</td>
<td>The &quot;Ivy Leagues&quot; are private colleges, but NOT all private colleges are Ivy Leagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The basics</strong></td>
<td>- Public - Average attendance for 2 years - Intended to help you get an Associates Degree, a professional license, job training, or to help you gain units/finish your general education requirements before transferring to a CSU or UC (to finish the last few years of your degree)</td>
<td>- Public - Average time of attendance usually about for 4 years - Intended to help you get a bachelors degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average acceptance rate/difficulty</strong></td>
<td>100% They accept every person with a high school diploma or GED in California, except for some specific programs that vary campus to campus. Even those have a really high acceptance rate.</td>
<td>83.7% Mild to moderately difficult, but varies based on the school you’re applying to.</td>
<td>66.2% Moderately difficult, but varies campus to campus, and even within specific majors/programs on each campus.</td>
<td>84%, but with the most variance of all categories. Some private colleges are some of the easiest to get into outside of community college, but some are the most competitive in the world, like Harvard for example.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What do I need to do to apply/get in?</strong></td>
<td>- Have a high school diploma or GED, but there are exceptions to this depending on programs. - You don't need anything else! However it couldn't hurt to throw in a club/sport/job, or any combo, just for fun and future experience.</td>
<td>- A GPA of at least 2.0 - Complete the 15 A-G requirements - Take the ACT or SAT with or without the essay - No essay portion of the application - If you have a GPA of between 2.0-3.0, you need a certain SAT score (there’s a calculator for what score you need based on your specific GPA on the CSU website!) - Consider extracurriculars!</td>
<td>- A GPA of at least 3.0, with no grade lower than a C in any of the A-G requirements - Complete the 15 A-G requirements - Take the ACT or SAT with the essay - <strong>Join extracurriculars activities</strong> - <strong>Take AP and/or honors classes that are offered at your school!</strong> - Write several application essays - If you rank in the top 9% of California high school students, you are guaranteed admission into 1 UC (though it may not be the UC of your choice)</td>
<td>Varies based on school. For more competitive schools, it is recommended to take AP and/or honors classes, and to participate in some sort of extracurricular activities (like work, clubs, and/or community service). You can research the specific college to find their requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How much does tuition cost?</strong></td>
<td>Full time, tuition is <strong>free</strong> for the first two years! Part time is about $1,600/year, before scholarships/aid.</td>
<td>About $6,000 a year before financial aid</td>
<td>About $14,184 a year before financial aid, and free if your family makes $80,000 or less/year</td>
<td>Varies a lot, but in CA the average is about $14,500 a year before aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*doesn't factor in cost of living*
PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

YEAR BY YEAR TIMELINE

FRESHMAN YEAR

Take necessary classes (see “a-g requirements” below for more information). Continue this all four years if possible!

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Recommended to take Advanced Placement classes that are offered at your high school (optional, all following years as well)
- **September:** (Strongly recommended but optional) register to take the PSAT (Practice SAT, will help you figure out where you’re at)
  *Register through your school, around September
  *If your school does not offer it, talk to your counselor about taking the test at a nearby school

JUNIOR YEAR

**Second semester:**
- Register to take the SAT or ACT spring of this year if you think you might want to take the test multiple times. (More details on our testing page) Once you choose your date, remember to register for the test about a month beforehand. Pay attention to deadlines!
- Start considering what you hope to get out of college, whatever that means to you.

SENIOR YEAR

**Early September:** (Strongly recommended) register for the SAT OR ACT to take the SAT, which you should take by October
**Early November:** Final deadline to register for the SAT OR ACT, which you must take by December. You can also register for this test if you are unhappy with your previous score!
**October 1- November 30th:** Work on your college application
**November 30th:** Deadline to submit most college applications
**March 2nd:** Deadline to submit Federal Financial Aid Application (FAFSA) Application opens in October, start the application early to give yourself and your family time to complete it
**March-April:** Start receiving decisions from colleges
**May 1** (usually): Deadline to accept college offer
WHAT ARE EXTRACURRICULARS, AND WHY SHOULD YOU DO THEM?

What are extracurricular activities?
Pretty much anything you do outside of school. It includes a wide range of activities.

What can that include?
- Being part of clubs by going to club meetings and potentially taking on a leadership role. (You don’t have to be the president for it to count, but it is recommended to participate actively to be able to describe your experience in your applications).
- Doing community-based/volunteer work, such as for a political cause, a community group, a faith-based organization, or something similar that you enjoy and that speaks to you.
- Working! A lot of people think it counts less if you have a job, when you could have done a sport or a club, etc. But being employed is such important experience, and can demonstrate your commitment to the needs of you and your family, as well as your ability to hold responsibilities, especially on top of school.
- Creating art, or doing creative work.
- Taking care of your family and/or community, in whatever way that looks like for you!

Why should I participate in them?
- You probably already are, if you’re doing any of the things mentioned above!
- Make friends, and connect with your community.
- Can give you a sense of what you enjoy, and from that, a sense of what subjects you are interested in or what you would like to explore in the future.
- Can help you build skills (like leadership, communication, artistic skills, technical skills for jobs, and many more!)
- Can give you experiences that you can put on a resume when applying for jobs.
- Can give you experiences that you can talk about in the personal essays you will write for college applications to UC’s, private schools, as well as many scholarships.

What if my responsibilities at school and home, and/or other barriers make it difficult for me to participate in extracurricular activities?
Remember, that schools do not only look for traditional or standard kinds of extracurricular activities. In fact, schools are often interested in things that you do that are unique and different. So if you have trouble doing extracurricular activities that take place after school or on the weekends, think about things you may be doing outside of school that you invest your time in. Whatever you’re doing is important and counts!
WHAT IF I FEEL BEHIND?
- Remember that it is never too late to do anything. If you aren’t able to do something one year, you can always work to find a way to do it in the future, or you can find something you can do to make up for it.

- If you complete high school without the grades or test scores that colleges say they are looking for, community college is a great way to get your grades up, start earning college credits so that you can get into the school of your choice later on, and to explore areas of study you are interested in and passionate about!

What if my school doesn’t offer many AP or honors classes?
- Colleges take into account your geographical area and specific high school when looking at your application. You can also discuss this barrier in your application.
- If you are interested, you might want to look into taking classes at community college, which can help you take challenging coursework and gain college credits.

What if I struggle with school at the beginning of high school, but my grades significantly improve towards the end? Or what if I have a few bad semesters due to personal reasons?
- Many colleges give you a chance to explain changes in your grades in the application. In this section, you can share what happened or changed for you that explains any grade fluctuations. If there are specific requirements you are worried about, talk to a high school counselor for advice, resources, and support.

The moral of the story is, if you want to do it, there are resources for you, and you can do it. Even if your timeline doesn’t look like the ‘traditional college story’ (whatever that is), you can still access higher education! It might be challenging, but you can absolutely make it happen in a way that accommodates your goals, needs, and timeline.

It’s also possible that you don’t enjoy high school, and you don’t think you’ll enjoy college. That’s okay too! If you find it becoming an unreasonable stressor in your life, or you don’t see yourself enjoying or benefitting from it, there are endless possibilities for your future and other actions you can take. College is also incredibly different from high school, and there are plenty of people who had a rough high school experience who go on to thrive in college, as well as the other way around. If it’s best for you, start at a city college and transfer! Or you can wait a while and try again later, farther into adulthood. All these things are okay. Do what makes you happy, and that will take you to the right place.
A-G Requirements are classes you’re required to take in high school in order to get into a four year college/university. (Not a community college.)

What to know about A-G Requirements

- The only real difference between CSU and UC requirements is that most UC’s pretty heavily encourage you to try to go a bit beyond the minimum, especially in math, science, and foreign language. If you can add a year of all or some of those on top of the minimum, you’ll have a more competitive application, but if you don’t, it should not stop you from applying!

- Most of the courses you are required to take in high school count for your a-g requirements. Talk to a counselor for more information about what specific classes fulfill the a-g requirements, or if you have questions about your progression!

- If you receive a D or an F in a class required for A-G, you can retake that class to get a C or better!

- If you are worried that you cannot fulfill some required courses, there are some exceptions to these requirements. Talk to your counselor for more information and support.
**SAT VS ACT**

**SCORES**
- Scored on a scale of 400-1600

**CONTENT**
- Does not have a section "specifically dedicated to science," instead, science is sprinkled throughout the test (ex. in reading & math sections - some questions may be presented in a scientific way).
- 5 reading passages.
- Both tests test the same math skills, but SAT tests less Geometry.
- One section of Math on the SAT is with a calculator. The other is without a calculator.

**ESSAY**
- You write an essay evaluating an author’s argument & showing how an author makes their argument

**TIME**
- 3 hours + 50 minutes with essay

**ACT**
- Scored on a scale of 1-36

**CONTENT**
- Has a science section, with a science reading section.
- 4 reading passages.
- Both tests test the same math skills, but ACT tests more geometry.
- You can use a calculator on all Math questions on the ACT.

**ESSAY**
- You write an essay where you present a unique point of view on a topic while incorporating 3 brief viewpoints given in the prompt.

**TIME**
- 2 hours and 55 minutes + 30 minutes with essay

**MAIN DIFFERENCES**
- ★ Science is sprinkled throughout the SAT w/o entire section dedicated to science
- ★ Less geometry on the SAT
- ★ SAT essay is more about explaining an author’s argument
- ★ SAT is more English and writing based, ACT is more STEM based

YWCA Berkeley/Oakland Shadow Day 2020
SAT VS ACT

FAQS

Should I be worried about the tests?
- Feeling worried or anxious about the tests is a completely normal & expected part of the process. You are not alone!
- The SAT and ACT are 2 tools in your toolbox, and are just meant to measure your data analysis skills. They in NO WAY are a reflection of your intelligence or current/future success.
- Your SAT or ACT score does not have to be above average to get into most state colleges. If you are looking into more competitive programs and schools, your SAT or ACT score may matter more, but remember, your test scores will be weighed alongside your other strengths, like GPA, extracurricular activities, life experiences, and more.
- Taking practice tests like the PSAT can help prepare you for the format of the test and improve your test taking skills by teaching you helpful tips and practices.
- In other words, the SAT & ACT are one step in getting you to where you want to be, and if you want a more competitive score, look into ways to study and prepare for the exam.
- And remember, if you don't like your score, you can always retake the test!

Which should I take? Both?
- Generally, colleges will accept either test without preference.
- You can look into the similarities and differences between each test in the above table.
- Your school may provide more practice opportunities and resources geared towards one test. Take the test you feel most prepared for.
- Usually, it is recommended that people stronger in reading and writing take the SAT, and those stronger in math and science take the ACT. However, most students score similarly on both tests.
- You do not need to take both the SAT and the ACT, and you do not look better to most colleges by taking both. Again, most students score similarly on both tests.
- You can take both tests, and many colleges will accept your scores on both tests.

Is there a point deduction for guessing?
No, you no longer lose points if you guess incorrectly on an exam. This used to be the case for the SAT. But now, you are encouraged to give your best guess on every question for both exams.

Should I take it with or without the essay?
The SAT and ACT are offered both with and without an essay section in the test. You choose which version of the test to take. If you are applying to a California State University (that is - not a University of California - UC school or a private university), you do not need to take the SAT or ACT with the essay. However, if you plan to apply to a UC or a private university, many require the SAT or ACT with the essay.
How can I study?

- Khan Academy offers free SAT practice. This includes full practice tests and practice problems based on subjects.
- ACT has free practice tests in both math and English that you can access online.
- If you qualify for an ACT fee waiver, you can get free access to more online ACT prep. Talk to a counselor for more information.
- Your school might provide test prep sessions that could help you to improve your score.
- Sign up for PSAT during your sophomore or junior year of high school as a way to practice for the test and see if you need improvement in certain subject areas or skills.
- Generally, the SAT and ACT measure your preparedness for college, based on your experiences in high school. So your high school classes, themselves, *should* prepare you for the SAT and ACT.
- While some students may find guides and online programs that cost money helpful when preparing for the test, you do not *need* to spend money on resources to do well on these tests.
- Talk to your counselor about ways you can prepare for the test that are specific to your needs and your school!

What score should I be aiming for?

- There is no magical score to be shooting for when you take these tests. Remember, your admission into college is based on a combination of your SAT/ACT score, your GPA, your extracurricular activities, and your life experiences (as well as many other factors that are out of your control, based on what the university is looking for in a particular year).
- Your SAT or ACT score is not a guarantee that you will or will not be accepted into a particular school. With that said, your SAT or ACT score is important for determining how far in reach certain colleges are.
- At less competitive state colleges, like Cal State East Bay, the middle 50% of (accepted) students score 16-20 (ACT) and 890-1090 (SAT). Whereas, at more competitive state schools, like CSU Long Beach, the middle 50% of students score 20-26 (ACT) 1040-1250 (SAT).
- Look into average test scores at colleges you are interested in to determine what score you would like to aim for. If you find yourself struggling to achieve your goal, consider applying to less competitive schools, but keep in mind that your SAT/ACT score is not the only thing colleges consider! Just as important, remember that the ACT/SAT does not measure your intelligence, nor does it define you as a person.

Should I take it more than once?

- You are allowed to take the SAT and ACT as many times as you want, though it is usually recommended that you take the test no more than two times.
- If you feel prepared, it is a good idea to take the test during the summer before or in the early fall of your senior year. This gives you time to decide if you would like to retake your test in October or December.
- After receiving the score on your first test, you can decide whether you want to retake the test based on how your score compares to the desired test score at the college you hope to attend.
- If you qualify for a fee waiver, remember that you can take the test up to two times for free.
SAT VS ACT FAQs

When should I take the tests?
- It is recommended that you take the ACT or SAT for the first time by the October test date (Remember you must register for the test about a month beforehand).
- The absolute latest you can take either test is the December of your senior year of high school.
- However, you may want to take the test during the second semester of your junior year or during the summer before your senior year. Taking your test in the summer can give you more time to study without having to worrying about other classes, and taking the test earlier can give you more time to improve.
- The SAT is offered in March, May, June, August, October, November, and December & the ACT is offered in February, April, June, July, September, October, and December.

What is an SAT subject test? Should I take it?
- SAT subject tests are tests on specific subjects, outside of the regular SAT, that show your mastery of a particular subject.
- Most public colleges and universities do not require or recommend that you take SAT subject tests. Most colleges that strongly recommend or require this tests are elite, private universities (like Harvard, Boston University, etc).
- With that said, more competitive majors at some UC schools may recommend that you take an SAT subject test. Look into the specific majors or programs you are interested in at particular schools to see if an SAT Subject Test would be helpful for you. If you have your heart set on a specific prestigious program, check out their recommendations, but otherwise it shouldn’t be needed.

Does it cost money?
- The SAT costs $47.50 without the essay ($64.50 with essay), and the ACT costs $50.50 without the essay ($67 with essay).
- However, if you are low-income, you likely qualify for a fee waiver, which allows you to take your test for free.
- For both the SAT and the ACT, you apply for your fee waiver through the school. More information about eligibility and the process is on the College Board and ACT websites. If you qualify for free/reduced lunch, you should receive free waivers.
- Your SAT fee waiver allows you to take the SAT twice for free, and you can send your scores to as many colleges as you want. Your ACT fee waiver allows you to take the ACT once for free, and send your scores to a total of 26 colleges. You may apply for up to two waivers - meaning you can take the ACT twice for free, as long as you remember to re-apply for a waiver the second time you take your test.
CHOOSING WHERE TO APPLY

1. Take a look at the major differences in the different kinds of colleges/programs/schools in the “different kinds of college,” and “differences between applications,” sections of this document to find more information about the differences between kinds of colleges. You can also Google specific colleges that you are interested in to learn more about their acceptance rates, requirements to get in, applications, and costs. Additionally, you can talk to your high school counselors and teachers to ask questions you have about different colleges.

2. Cost - Look into the costs of different colleges, as well as how much financial aid you expect to get when you attend.
   a. To get a better sense of how much different types of colleges can cost, most college websites have estimated financial aid calculators. Note: it is not a guarantee, but rather provides you with a rough estimate.
   b. Talk to your family/those who financially support you about how much financial support they can offer you in your college journey.
   c. Consider that in-state colleges are typically less expensive than out-of-state colleges. Also consider that attending a college close to home can allow you to live at home while you attend college, which can also help reduce your cost of living.
   d. If your dream college(s) seem to cost more than you can afford, consider attending community college and transferring to the college you are interested in. Community college allows you to complete your general education for little to no cost, so that you can finish your last 2 years of college at a school/program that you might not have been able to afford before.
   e. Think about whether you are interested in getting a Masters, PhD, or a law degree after you get your Bachelor’s (4 year) degree. If you are interested in pursuing education after getting your Bachelor’s degree, you might want to take on as little debt as possible for your Bachelor’s degree, in case you have to take on more debt for future education.

3. Geographical Area: Consider where you want to live. Look to see if the college is within a city or rural area. What is the culture of that area? Look into the cost living within that area. Do you want to be close to home? Far from home? Far enough from home that you can easily visit, but not so far that visiting would be difficult?

4. Consider that the CSU and UC fee waiver will allow you to apply to up to 4 UC colleges and 4 CSU colleges for free, if you qualify for the waiver.

5. It is typically advised that you apply to at least one “dream” school (a school that you might feel less confident that you can get into), one school that is likely to accept you, and one school that you are confident you will get into.
CHOOSING WHERE TO APPLY

6. Difficulty getting in: Make sure you look into the requirements for different colleges, as well as how hard it is to get into that college. Here are some things to look into and consider:
   a. Consider GPA and/or SAT & ACT requirements or average scores.
   b. Look into the acceptance rate percentage for each school.
   c. Applying to multiple schools, with some that are harder to get into than others.
   d. Remember that while CSUs are generally easier to get into than UC's, some CSUs are more competitive than others. And certain majors are harder to get into than others. Make sure to take a look at this when exploring where to apply.

7. The major or career you want to pursue. You may want to look into what colleges are higher ranked or best known for your major, career goals, or study area of interest.

8. Whether the school has support systems in place that are specific to your needs:
   a. Some colleges have more built-in support systems for historically underrepresented students. Take a look at the school’s resources to see if they have the support systems that meet your needs.
   b. Other colleges are known for specifically supporting students from certain backgrounds and identities. For example Historically Black Universities (HBCUs) are known to historically support and uplift Black students. Other colleges may have programs and scholarships that may provide support that may be relevant and/or important to you.
   c. Look into whether there are any colleges that have a reputation for having great support systems that align with your needs, by doing research on the internet and/or talking to trusted counselors, teachers, and friends.
   d. If possible talk to the students who attend these schools and ask for their honest opinions.

9. Remember to apply to a California City College in the spring of your senior year. This ensures that no matter what, you can always go to City College if your plans for other schools end up changing for whatever reason.

10. Remember that you do not need to go to college immediately out of high school. It is perfectly okay to take time off to save money and/or to figure out what you want for yourself and your life. Also, it is equally important and valid if you are more interested in getting a certificate or professional license at a trade school than in attending a four year school.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIFFERENCES IN APPLICATIONS</th>
<th>COMMUNITY COLLEGE</th>
<th>CA STATE COLLEGE</th>
<th>UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA</th>
<th>PRIVATE COLLEGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deadline to apply</strong></td>
<td>January of your senior year (or the January before you plan on attending). Deadlines may be more flexible for foster youth and EOP students.</td>
<td>-November 30 of your senior year. -If you’re planning on enrolling other than the fall after your senior year, check out calstate.edu/apply</td>
<td>November 30 of your senior year.</td>
<td>Usually late November/early December of your senior year. Look into your specific college for more info.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How to apply</strong></td>
<td>Apply online at cccapply.org</td>
<td>Apply online at calstate.edu/apply</td>
<td>Apply online at apply.universityofcalifornia.edu</td>
<td>Apply online to most private colleges using commonapp.org</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does it cost money to apply?</strong></td>
<td>CA community colleges are free to apply, but for out of state community colleges, fees may vary.</td>
<td>It costs $70 per school that you apply to. But you may qualify for a fee waiver that will allow you to apply to up to 4 CSU schools for free (if you are a United States citizen, permanent resident, or are eligible for AB540 benefits). Once you fill out your whole application, with your income and family size, you will see a “Check My Fee Waiver Status” link on the Submit Application tab, which will show you if you can get a fee waiver.</td>
<td>It costs $70 per school that you apply to. But you may qualify for a fee waiver that will allow you to apply to up to 4 UC schools for free (if you are a United States citizen, permanent resident, or are eligible for AB540 benefits). You will see if this applies to you automatically when you put in your family income and size in the “About you” section of the online application.</td>
<td>-Like everything, cost varies, but it’s usually about $25-90. Almost all colleges have some form of fee waiver. Check with your specific choices to find out more. -If you are applying using Common App, you can find a fee waiver in the Profile section of the Common App tab. You will need a counselor to verify the information you input.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What’s in the application?</strong></td>
<td>- General information about yourself, where you live, and your family - Contact information - Family income - Classes you have taken - Your accessibility needs - You do not need to submit any test scores (like the SAT or ACT) - There are no personal essays. - There will be an option to take part in the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP)!</td>
<td>- General information about yourself, your family, your living situation, and income - High school classes, grades, and GPA - The area of study you want to apply to (your intended major, no strings attached) - SAT/ACT scores (you don’t have to have them at the time of your application, but you’ll have to arrange to send them later if not) - No personal essays</td>
<td>- General information (like the CSU apps) - High school classes, grades, GPA - Your intended major (some take it into account, some don’t. Check on a case by case basis.) - SAT/ACT scores (similar to CSU, if you don’t have them yet, that’s ok) - Info about any achievements/awards, extracurricular activities, work history, etc. - a section to indicate interest in scholarships - 4 personal essays</td>
<td>- Most applications are similar to the UCs - They all vary (just like with everything) - You can likely expect at least one personal essay of some kind, possibly more.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>How long should I spend on the application?</strong></td>
<td>Recommended 30-60 mins but however long it takes for you!</td>
<td>Recommended around an hour, but however long it takes for you!</td>
<td>Recommended several hours, plus at least a month or few of writing and reviewing your essays, but however long it takes for you!</td>
<td>Recommended similar to UC app, but however long it takes for you! -Check with colleges towards the start of your senior year.</td>
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### Differences in Applications

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<tr>
<th>Community College</th>
<th>CA State College</th>
<th>University of California</th>
<th>Private College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What documents I need to fill out the application?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Social security # or Taxpayer Identification # (if you have one. No worries if not)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No documents needed for family income, but check your tax returns to make sure your info is correct</td>
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<tr>
<td>- You should use an unofficial transcript to make sure your educational info is correct</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Social security # or DACA issued social security # (Don't worry, if you don't have one, the campus will issue you a temporary one.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No documents needed for family income, but check your tax returns to make sure your info is correct</td>
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<td>- Residency info (where you live currently + how long you've lived there, document verification usually comes after you've already submitted)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- A credit card or check if you're paying for the application.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Social security # if you have one</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Citizenship status (you CAN still apply if you are not a citizen, choose “No Selection”)</td>
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<td>- Your classes, grades, and GPA from high school, check your transcript for accuracy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Annual family income if you're applying for EOP or a fee waiver (no document verification at this stage, but make sure it's accurate to avoid problems down the road)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Your 4 personal essays</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Varies college to college, but almost always pretty similar to the UC application</td>
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</table>

**Bay Area colleges you may be interested in**
- Berkeley City College
- City College of San Francisco
- Diablo Valley College (Pleasant Hill)
- Laney College (Oakland)
- Merritt Community College (Oakland)
- College of Alameda
- Chabot College (Hayward)
- CSU East Bay (Hayward)
- San Francisco State University
- San Jose State University
- Sonoma State University
- CSU Sacramento
- CSU Monterey Bay
- UC Berkeley
- UC Davis
- UC Santa Cruz
- All non-Bay Area UCs:
  - UC Merced
  - UC Riverside
  - UC San Diego
  - UC Los Angeles
  - UC Irvine
  - UC Santa Barbara
- Stanford University
- Saint Mary's College of California (Moraga)
- Mills College (Oakland)
- University of San Francisco
- California College of the Arts (Oakland)

### Personal Insight Questions (UC Apps)

You will want to start working on your personal essays in advance - about 1-3 months before the application is due
to give yourself plenty of time. If you can, have 1-3 other people that know you best (teachers, adults, friends, family members, or others) look over your essays for edits or to give you tips on information to include.

Be yourself, and consider your personal experiences, passions, and strengths. You don’t need to have an extraordinarily impressive achievement to write about. Many people write about experiences in their home life, things they have done in their school or community that they are passionate about, a creative outlet, and many, many other subjects.

If you are having trouble thinking about what to write about, talk to friends, teachers, and/or family members about their thoughts, as well as what they see as unique about you. And remember, your personal essays are ultimately yours to write, and are your story to tell.

https://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/how-to-apply/applying-as-a-freshman/personal-insight-questions.html

**Check this out for the list of personal insight questions, and some tips from the general UC system. There are 8 available, and you choose the 4 that fit you best.**

https://admissions.ucmerced.edu/learn/uc-personal-insight-questions

**Check this out for some more tips on writing your essays.**
ADJUSTING TO COLLEGE

Adjusting to college tips for students who are first in their family to go to college, or who come from marginalized backgrounds:

- There are many scholarships available for first-generation students. Some of these are directly from the government, some campuses have their own specific aid, and there are tons from outside organizations. Google is your friend here, and you can also talk to your counselor as a starting point.

- Most colleges have on-campus resources, like a career center, tutoring services, an EOP office, and more. If you’re planning on living on campus, some colleges also offer living-learning communities, where students can live in residence halls with people who share their same academic goals, interests, and/or backgrounds. Some of these communities are focused on first-gen students, Black students, Latinx students, LGBTQ+ students, and more. In your college search, or when you’re making final decisions, see what your campus has to offer.

- Read this teen vogue article on more advice for historically marginalized students: https://www.teenvogue.com/story/college-advice-students-marginalized-identities

The Educational Opportunity Program:

- Educational Opportunity Program is a program at all California public schools that provides resources (support programs, mentorship, counseling, scholarships, and more) for students who are low-income, first generation, Black, Chicano/Latinx, Indigenous, or come from other historically underrepresented backgrounds.

- During the academic year, students in EOP receive academic support, mentorship, and get to connect with students with similar backgrounds. Some campuses give EOP students other benefits, such as priority on campus housing waitlists, free events like art classes, and more.

- Each campus does it a little differently, so be sure to look into the individual programs at the schools you’re looking into.

- Some out of state schools, as well as California private schools, have similar programs that are specific to that campus or state. If you’re considering somewhere other than a CA public school, look into what resources your future campus may offer.
TRADE SCHOOL AND NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS

Do I need to go to a four year college or university to get the education I need to get a job?
- No, many careers require that you get job training or what is called a professional license or certificate (also known as an occupational or technical program).
- With trade school and other professional training programs, you learn how to work specifically in the field that you are interested in.
- These options are great if you already know what kind of job you want, as well as if you are not interested in pursuing or attending college.
- Trade school and city college programs can usually be completed in 1-2 years, and are less expensive than 4 year degrees

Can I get financial aid to go to trade school?
- Yes, you can get scholarships for any kind of schooling!
- Cal Grant C is a grant that you will be considered for by applying to FAFSA for occupation and technical programs. It provides $2,462 for tuition and fees and $547 for books, tools, and equipment.
- There are also lots of outside scholarships (meaning you would search on your own and apply outside of the FAFSA) that cater to city college students.

JOBS YOU CAN GET THROUGH A CITY COLLEGE PROGRAM

- electrician
- dental hygenist
- plumber
- paralegal
- nurse
- graphic designer
- welder
- computer technician
- mechanic
- cosmetologist
- chef
- construction manager
- massage therapist
- pharmacy technician
- & MORE!
You Can Take the GED!
- The GED stands for General Education Diploma, and it is considered equivalent to a high school diploma. The GED includes a series of tests in four major subjects.

- It is recommended to take some practice classes before you sign up to prepare for the test. The GED testing service offers some practice exams and tutorials online, and many community colleges also offer in-person classes through their adult education departments. There are also often test prep materials at local libraries!

- When you’re ready, you can register online for an in-person exam at a local testing site (usually a local school.)

- If you do all four sections at once, it takes about 7.5 hours. However, you can take them one at a time, or as many as you want. The Language Arts portion is the longest, which takes about 2.5 hours on it’s own.

- Special testing accommodations can be made for people with physical and/or learning accommodations.

- A score of 150 will get you a GED, and if you get a 170 or above, you’ll also be given an honors designation on your GED diploma. If you don’t pass the first time, you can retake whatever sections you need to until you pass.

How long does it take?
- On average, most people are able to get their GED within 3 months of beginning the process. Some take a bit longer, but some do it even faster. GET STARTED AT GED.COM!
Check out this google doc with links to tons of resources, including Resources for Undocumented Students, SAT and ACT Practice and Prep Resources, Resources for Adjusting to College, and much more!

https://tinyurl.com/ybj8yc37
We hope this packet has been helpful, wherever you are in your process of planning for your future. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all in many different ways, and our team was so sad to not be able to share a day connecting with all the wonderful Cal mentors and high school students like you for our 27th annual Shadow Day event. This packet cannot replace those connections, but we hope that it captures the essence of Shadow Day, which in the end is to support YOU in your process of exploring your own higher education journey, and in pursuing the path that is right for you.

The YWCA Berkeley/Oakland has many of other programs that operate year-round, with plenty of ways to get involved, just check out our next page!

If this packet was helpful for you, please share it! We would love to spread these resources to as many students as we can.

Stay safe, and good luck on the rest of your high school journey and beyond!

Sincerely,
Your friends at the YWCA
CONNECT WITH US!!

To learn more about the YWCA Berkeley/Oakland and all of our programs:

Visit our website @ www.ywca-berkeley.org.

Follow us on social media for up to date information and ways to plug in!

@ywcaberkeleyoakland
@ywcaberkeley
@ywcaberk

Sign up for our newsletter @ https://bit.ly/2z1scO0 to see us in action and get involved!

If you have any questions, or want to get in contact with us, email info@ywca-berkeley.org or call (510) 848-6370.