

College Vocabulary: A Guide to the Jargon

Application Fee: This is a non-refundable fee charged to prospective students for applying to a particular college or university. An average fee is around \$50.

CSS / Financial Aid PROFILE: An acronym for the College Scholarship Service PROFILE, which is an application distributed by the [College Board](#) in America. It allows college students to apply for financial aid. It is primarily designed to give member institutions of the College Board a closer look into the finances of students and their families. It is much more detailed than the [FAFSA](#).

Common Application: This is a general application for admission to 517 member colleges and universities in 47 states in America and the District of Columbia, as well as Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and United Kingdom. Most of the schools included on the Common Application are private schools. Most state schools are NOT included on the Common Application, though there are some exceptions.

College Admissions Counselor: The person in charge of advising and screening prospective and incoming students at a particular college.

FAFSA: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the form used by the U.S. Department of Education to determine your expected family contribution (EFC) by conducting a need analysis based on financial information such as income, assets, and other household information. The form is submitted to and processed by a federal processor contracted by the U.S. Department of Education, and the results are electronically transmitted to the financial aid offices of the schools that you list on your application.

College Visits: College admissions counselors usually visit high schools in the fall semester. This is an opportunity for sophomores, juniors, and seniors to meet with admission counselors and learn about the schools they represent. Information discussed includes scholarships, entrance requirements, tuition, financial aid, majors, and activities offered (intramural, Greek life, clubs, and organizations).

Financial Aid: This is any money that the government or other organizations give or lend you so you can pay for college. To qualify for financial aid, you must complete the required applications.

Grants: Financial rewards that are given to you at no cost and do not have to be paid back in the future.

Scholarships: A sum of money or other aid granted to a student on the basis of merit or need for pursuing studies at a college or university.

Test-Optional Schools: Institutions like Wake Forest and Furman that de-emphasize the use of standardized tests and make admissions decisions without reference to scores on the SAT or ACT.

Liberal Arts College: A college with an emphasis on undergraduate study in the liberal arts and sciences. The curriculum aims to impart a broad general knowledge and develop general intellectual capacities, in contrast to one focused on professional, vocational, or technical knowledge.

University: An institution of higher learning granting degrees in many different fields of study. Universities typically offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. This is in contrast to a liberal arts college where there is more emphasis on undergraduate studies.

Decision Types: There are several time frames for applying and accepting admission to college.

Early Action: A type of early admission process for admission to colleges and universities in the United States that is not binding. Unlike the regular admissions process, early action usually requires students to submit an application by November 1 of their senior year.

Early Decision: A binding decision to accept admission to a college. A student who is accepted as an early decision applicant must agree to attend the college.

Regular Decision: The normal process by which students apply to college in accord with published deadlines. Most colleges provide admissions decisions no later than April 1 of the senior year.

To know the advantages and disadvantages of these decisions go to <https://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/applications/early>.

School Profile: A document that translates your transcript into terms college admission offices can use to compare your record to those submitted from other high schools. It also helps application readers evaluate your performance relative to other students in your school.

Transcript: A record of the courses you have completed in high school, the credit earned for each course, and each course's final grade. It also includes personal information used for identification purposes and usually a grade point average (GPA).

Recommendations: Teacher letters intended primarily to convey the teacher's classroom experience with you. It is used to give colleges an idea of how you are likely to perform academically. These recommendations serve a different function from the counselor recommendation, which is meant to provide a broader view of you as a person. All recommendations will be looked over by Mr. Herring and Mr. Wortman.