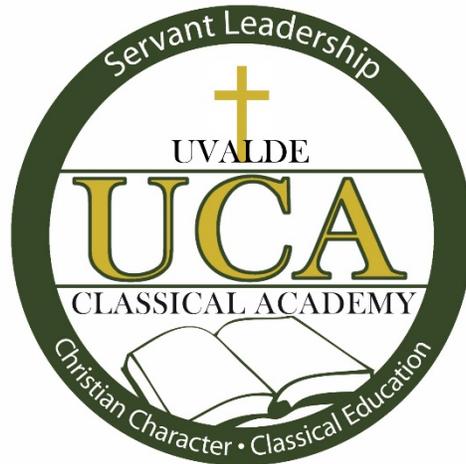


**UVALDE CLASSICAL ACADEMY**  
**SCHOOLS OF LOGIC & RHETORIC**



**GRADUATION**  
**HANDBOOK**

PLANNING FOR GRADUATION AND BEYOND

**2019~2020**

UCA  
400 North Getty Street  
Uvalde, TX 78801

(830) 591-2242

[www.uvaldeclassical.org](http://www.uvaldeclassical.org)  
[knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org](mailto:knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org)

Dear Parents,

This handbook is designed to help you and your child begin the college selection and application process. Parents are the most influential and important people in a child's life. UCA does not dictate where students should apply or enroll, but we do hope this booklet will give you the basic information needed to advise your child as he/she looks for a place to be able to continue his/her academic, social, and spiritual development. Here are some things you can do to help your son or daughter:

- **ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE COLLEGE PROCESS** – have them research college information online, fill out their own applications, be the ones to request transcripts from the school, and be responsible to meet all deadlines.
- **MONITOR COURSE SELECTION AND GRADES** – Keep your child challenged and motivated to achieve the best grades possible. Transcripts show grades from 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- **ENCOURAGE YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER TO BECOME INVOLVED IN A VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES** – Colleges are looking for students who are active in a variety of activities, both in and out of school, and who take leadership roles or are deeply focused and committed.
- **DEVELOP AN ONGOING LIST OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, HONORS, AWARDS, LEADERSHIP POSITIONS, EMPLOYMENT, VOLUNTEER WORK, COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ETC.** – This list will be useful when filling out applications or requesting recommendations.
- **PLAN MEANINGFUL SUMMER ACTIVITIES** – Summer activities can give your child invaluable experiences. Consider athletic teams, courses, jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, lessons, and travel. Check out a nearby college while on vacation.
- **RESEARCH AND DISCUSS JOBS, CAREERS, AND COLLEGE OPTIONS** – Encourage your child to talk with people about their occupations, gather information, and visit college campuses. Discuss your child's aptitudes and interests, and look at these in terms of career options. Help your child evaluate and analyze his or her interests, strengths, abilities, values, and priorities.

Blessings,  
The UCA Faculty and Staff

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SENIOR DEADLINES.....	4
Uvalde Classical Academy.....	4
College Admissions.....	4
Scholarships.....	4
RHETORIC SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS.....	5
SCHOOL PROFILE.....	6
SENIOR COURSE OPTIONS.....	9
Option 1: Independent Study.....	9
Option 2: Internship.....	9
GRADUATION DETAILS.....	11
COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE.....	13
Freshmen.....	13
Sophomores.....	13
Juniors.....	13
Seniors.....	13
COLLEGE CONSIDERATIONS.....	15
Choosing a College.....	15
Types of College and Degrees.....	15
College Fairs and Visits.....	16
Honors Program.....	17
Gap Year.....	17
The Importance of Assessment.....	17
COLLEGE ADMISSION.....	19
College Admission Process.....	19
Factors Influencing College Admission.....	19
Standardized Testing.....	21
Admission Vocabulary.....	23
FINANCIAL AID.....	25
The FAFSA Form.....	25
Begin Your Scholarship Search.....	26
SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES.....	27
SENIOR INFORMATION WORKSHEET.....	29

## SENIOR DEADLINES

### Uvalde Classical Academy

- Review your UCA transcript Summer
- Review graduation requirements Summer
- Register for dual credit courses, if applicable Summer
- Select senior electives August
- Independent study/internship proposals & senior courses due August
- Senior Fee due
- Get senior pictures taken October
- Register for second semester UCA classes and dual credit courses, if applicable Nov/Dec
- Second semester independent study/internship proposals due November
- Yearbook photo and bio submitted end of March
- Yearbook ad & money due, if wanted end of March
- Order yearbook, if wanted before May

### College Admissions

- Register for the SAT, ACT, and/or CLT (graduation requirement) Fall
- Apply to colleges Fall
- College deadlines (many are in Jan/Feb, some are in Nov/Dec) varies
- Deadline for notifying colleges if you plan to attend or not Spring
- Register for college classes and arrange housing Spring
- List where you want your final transcript sent May

### Scholarships

- Search for possible scholarships Fall
- Get teacher recommendations, if needed Fall
- File the FAFSA (same deadline as college application) mid Oct
- Give copy of received scholarships to the UCA Office May

## RHETORIC SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

1. To graduate a student must earn the requisite number of credits for a given diploma. One credit is earned for passing a course that meets three to five days per week in one semester. One-half credit is earned for passing a course that meets two days per week in one semester.
2. Seniors must be enrolled in a minimum of five credits of approved coursework.
  - a. Required classes: Rhetoric IV, British Literature, Government/Economics, Upper level Math course, Additional Science course
  - b. Additional credits may come from electives, internships, or college courses (refer to page 7).
3. Students must take the SAT, ACT, or CLT exams during either their junior or senior year. Often UCA will need to report class averages to outside institutions. Encourage your child to do well, even if scores are not needed for college.
4. Transfer students may receive credit for previous work if there is sufficient documentation/transcript.
5. The Head of School and Curriculum Coordinator may waive up to four course credits for students who have academic difficulty subject to the following conditions: the student is a long-time UCA student, the parents have demonstrated a clear commitment to their child's education by working with UCA teachers and administration, and/or the parent and Head of School agree that the work required is too difficult for the child in question.

# SCHOOL PROFILE

## SCHOOL CODE

CEEB – 447167

## SCHOOL MISSION

Uvalde Classical Academy is committed to educating children by instilling a high standard of integrity and godly character according to Scripture.

## SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Uvalde Classical Academy is a partnership of students, parents, faculty, staff, and trustees committed to the development and implementation of the most refined and best education possible. Students are adept and prepared for college, career, and servant leadership through rigorous incorporation of the fine arts, sciences, and humanities taught from a biblical perspective.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Given the high value placed on scholastics and the ability of the students, academic courses are taught at an advanced level. The following courses are required for all four year Rhetoric students.

~ UCA ~	Freshman Year	Sophomore Year	Junior Year	Senior Year
English	Ancient & Classical Literature (1 credit)	European Literature (1 credit)	American Literature (1 credit)	British Literature (1 credit)
History	World Geography (1 credit)	World History (1 credit)	American History (1 credit)	Civics: U.S. Government (1/2 credit) Economics (1/2 credit)
Math	Geometry (1 credit)	Algebra II (1 credit)	Precalculus (1 credit)	Calculus (*optional course - 1 credit)
Science	Biology (1 credit)	Chemistry (1 credit)	Physics or Additional Science Course (1 credit)	Physics or Additional Science Course (1 credit)
Foreign Language	Spanish II (1 credit)	Spanish III (1 credit)		
Theology	Competing Worldviews (1 credit)	Apologetics (1 credit)	Social Challenges (1 credit)	

Logic/Rhetoric/ Speech	Rhetoric I (1 credit)	Rhetoric II (1 credit)	Rhetoric III (1 credit)	Rhetoric IV (1 credit)
*Fine Arts	Art I (1/2 credit)	Art II (1/2 credit)		
*Physical Education	P.E. (1/2 credit)	P.E. (1/2 credit)		
*Other Electives				

Spanish I = 1 credit for 8<sup>th</sup> grade year

Algebra I = 1 credit for 8<sup>th</sup> grade year

These 8<sup>th</sup> grade courses are included in the student's transcript as a pass/fail and do not factor into the student's GPA.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Humanities (History, Literature)	8 credits
Math (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Precalculus)	4 credits
Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, 1 additional science)	4 credits
Foreign Language (Spanish)	3 credits
Fine Arts	1 credit
Physical Education	1 credit
Liberal Arts/Speech	7 credits

Range	Letter Value	Point Value
95-100	A	4.0
90-94.99	A-	3.7
87-89.99	B+	3.4
83-86.99	B	3.1
80-82.99	B-	2.8
76-79.99	C+	2.4
70-75.99	C	2.0
65-69.99	D	1.3
Below 65	F	0.0

## RHETORIC SCHOOL CLASSES

### **Humanities:**

(Literature & History)

All rhetoric students must complete four years (eight credits) of humanities studies, the cornerstone of Uvalde Classical Academy education. History emphasis is on historical events and cultural progression, while the focus of literature is a progression of periods of historical significance. Both areas of study incorporate significant rhetorical components. The study of humanities integrates biblical and doctrinal material as the monumental ideas of western culture are discussed and evaluated.

### **Math:**

All rhetoric school students must complete math studies through Precalculus (four credits).

Depending on the student's goals, he or she may continue with Calculus. Students will be able to receive a credit for Algebra I in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Science:**

Rhetoric students must complete four credits of science.

**Foreign Language:**

Students in the school of rhetoric must complete three years of instruction in one foreign language (three credits). The first year of Spanish may be taken in 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Liberal Arts:**

(Theology, Rhetoric, & Speech)

Rhetoric school students must complete seven credits. The Liberal Arts includes training in logic and debate. The courses will provide instruction and practice in classical forms of both written and oral persuasive expression. The students will learn the basic assumptions of various worldviews and hone the skills of discovering those assumptions and tracking them to their logical conclusions.

Example: Thesis

Juniors and seniors, in the School of Rhetoric, will create and deliver various speeches to classmates. The crowning achievement of the junior and senior thesis is to present it to an audience of judicious listeners. The juniors present their theses to their own classmates, with family and friends in the audience.

The senior students are required to present an oration to a panel of adults, comprised of experts and faculty. The senior students theses must be a persuasive 4000-6000 word paper on a topic of his or her choice for defense before the preselected panel. This rigorous exercise clearly demonstrates the culmination of a distinctive educating resulting in students' ability to synthesize conflicting viewpoints, to logically sequence both thought and word, and to clearly articulate their well-reasoned arguments.

**Physical Education & Fine Arts:**

Students in the school of rhetoric will take a minimum of two years in both Physical Education and Fine Arts, which will be counted as one credit each.

**Standardized Testing:**

Annual testing includes the PSAT for grades 9 & 10, and the SAT and ACT for grades 11 & 12.

## SENIOR COURSE OPTIONS

### Option 1: Independent Study/Dual Credit

This is a one-half (1/2) credit option in which a student arranges for instruction in an area of **academic** interest. Examples of programs include college courses (traditional and online). Approved subjects include math, science, theology, humanities, and the fine arts. Areas of study which do not qualify would include music lessons, recreational classes and/or self-guided courses with little accountability. Fees incurred for dual credit courses are the responsibility of the student's family. Financial aid is not available for dual credit courses.

### Option 2: Internship

The internship is a one-half (1/2) credit option intended to provide seniors with the opportunity to study a career. Students must work a minimum of two hours per week on their internship. A variety of internships are available, including: interning with a grammar or logic/rhetoric teacher, riding along with police officers, observing at a local vet clinic, etc.). Students are allowed to be paid for the time they spend as an intern, at the employer's discretion.

### PROCEDURES FOR BOTH OPTIONS:

1. At least two weeks before the beginning of each semester, students must submit a written proposal to the Head of School, via email. Late proposals will not be considered. Proposals must describe the following:
  - a. the main purpose of and goals for the program,
  - b. the work that the student will be doing weekly to achieve these goals,
  - c. the number of hours per week that the student will be participating in the program,
  - d. which UCA staff member will be supervising the program (If you are taking a college course, you do not need a supervisor. All other independent studies need to have a staff member who has agreed to supervise before the proposal is submitted),
  - e. and a description of the final project that will be presented at the end of the semester.
2. Students have two (2) days to resubmit proposals which have been modified and/or denied.

### GUIDELINES FOR BOTH OPTIONS:

1. Credit will not be granted for work completed before a proposal is approved.
2. Final Project: Students must submit a paper (6-8 pages for an independent study, 2-3 pages for an internship) which adequately summarizes the work that was completed during the semester. For independent study students enrolled in a class with a cumulative final exam, the exam can take the place of the paper.
3. Students will receive a letter grade of A, B, or C at the end of the semester.
4. Students are required to complete a weekly report and submit these reports to their supervising teacher. The student's final grade will be based largely on the content of these reports and the paper.

5. Failure to make satisfactory progress in the first semester will disqualify the student from participating in the independent study and/or internship program during the second semester.
6. Students may only request approval for one semester at a time.

## GRADUATION DETAILS

### Announcements/Cap & Gown

Early in the fall, a representative will be at UCA to talk about graduation announcements and cap and gown. Be prepared to pay for announcements in the fall and cap and gown in the spring.

### Transcripts

An official transcript is signed, sealed, and mailed to the university from UCA. You may also request an unofficial copy for yourself. Transcripts are provided at no charge; however, they are not necessarily available the same day as the request – so plan ahead. Use the green **Transcript Request Form** and turn it in to the UCA Office. Review transcript accuracy in the fall.

### Senior Pictures

Fall is the preferred time to get senior pictures taken – don't wait until the last minute in the spring! Please let us know if you don't plan to get professional photos. With all the digital technology available, other arrangements can be made. UCA will need two pictures from each student (see following).

### Senior Photo Collage

In the spring, we ask for a photo from each of the seniors. These are put together in a framed photo collage and displayed – along with pictures of all the other graduates. Specifications for the photos are as follows:

- color photo
- wallet size (at least 2 5/8 x 3 5/8)
- portrait orientation (not landscape)

### Yearbook Photo

Mrs. Fry (the yearbook teacher) will need a senior picture on CD or emailed to her. Specifications are as follows: portrait orientation, color or black & white, digital (needs to be 1 MB or greater to prevent pixelated photos). E-mail to [knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org](mailto:knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org)

### Yearbook Bio

Submit the following information to [knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org](mailto:knowledge@uvaldeclassical.org)

- nickname (s)
- highlights
- activities
- future plans
- favorite verse or commonplace

Use no smaller than 8 pt font, use Microsoft Word format (or compatible), margins: top & left = 1 inch, bottom = 5 inches, right = 3.5 inches.

### Yearbook Ads

Parents may also buy a page or portion of a page dedicated to their senior – this is different than the bio the students are to submit.

### Scholarship/College Record

Toward the end of the year you may be receiving scholarship award letters. As you receive them, please give copies to the UCA Office. These scholarship totals will be published in the school yearbook. We will also be keeping track of which colleges have accepted you and which college, if any, you plan to attend.

### Graduation

Bring your cap, gown, tassels, and cords with you for the ceremony . When graduation is over, turn in the gown & collar at the reception. You may keep the cap, tassel, and honor cord. Be prepared to pay a fee for your cap, gown, and group picture.

# COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

## Freshmen

- The journey to college begins here. You should challenge yourself to get the best grades you can. Beginning your freshmen year, you will establish a record that will be sent, along with your sophomore and junior record, to all of the colleges to which you apply.
- Take the PSAT (preliminary SAT) in mid-October. This is practice for your junior year.
- Take the CLT 10 in mid-October. This is practice for your junior year.
- Get involved in meaningful school and community activities. These activities can help distinguish you from other college applicants, especially if your role shows leadership skills or a deep level of commitment. Keep a record of these activities.
- In addition to having fun, do something constructive with your spring and summer vacations. Think and talk with your parents about what your interests and abilities are. Many colleges offer summer enrichment courses or workshops.

## Sophomores

- Continue with all above listed points.
- Take the PSAT (preliminary SAT) in mid-October. This is practice for your junior year.
- Take the CLT 10 in mid-October. This is practice for your junior year.

## Juniors

- This is the most important year academically. Challenge yourself appropriately.
- Take the PSAT (preliminary SAT) in mid-October. This year's assessment will qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship.
- Consider taking the SAT, ACT, and/or CLT (register in winter – test in spring).
- Explore college options. Research colleges and visit the campuses if you can. Check individual school websites for special junior open house dates and for required school specific entrance exams.
- Attend meetings at UCA conducted by college representatives (often at lunch).
- Plan senior courses and do credit check. After making sure UCA graduation requirements are met, consider course requirements of college(s) of interest.
- Begin investigating scholarship opportunities through academic, business, professional, and religious organizations and civic clubs, etc.

## Seniors

- Do not forget how important your grades are!
- Stay involved in school and community activities.
- Explore college options if undecided. Attend college fairs/open houses.
- Research scholarship opportunities.
- Review evaluation sheet.
- Keep track of test dates, fees, college, and financial aid application due dates and deadlines – file early on everything if at all possible!
- Ask teachers for recommendations.
- Begin composing your college application essay(s); ask someone to proof it.

- File FAFSA mid-October – file as early as possible! ([www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov))
- Request transcripts sent to colleges.
- Meet with college representatives that come to the school.
- Begin to arrange housing, if needed.
- Take ACT, SAT, or CLT on or before middle of December.
- Visit the college of your choice before your final decision.
- Have your deposit at the college you will attend by May 1.

# COLLEGE CONSIDERATIONS

## Choosing a College

**ACADEMICS** You are going to college to get an education. Be sure to consider the academic atmosphere and available majors when choosing a school.

**ADMISSIONS PROBABILITY** Can you get accepted? You might decide that Harvard is a good fit for you, but it might not be realistic to get accepted into such an elite school. Some schools are very selective, and other good schools are not as selective. Look at a database of colleges acceptance scores here: <http://www.collegesimply.com/>

**LOCATION** Consider the expense of travel, the need for independence or staying near your family, the effects of living in a different climate. Think about the campus setting. Is it in a large city, a “college town,” or a rural area? Visit campuses and become familiar with the town in which the college is located.

**COST** The cost for a year includes tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. Total costs range from \$2,000 for a community college to \$50,000 for a private school.

**SIZE** Colleges range in size from 150 to 150,000 students. Small schools offer you more personal involvement, a community atmosphere, and small classes (from 5 to 50 students). Large schools tend to be more impersonal, allow you to be more anonymous, and offer class sizes from 20 to 500.

**FACILITIES** See the facilities for the major that interests you. Talk to someone who is in the same program.

**LIVING AREAS** Ask to see a dorm room. Eat in the cafeteria. Visit the student union and library. Inquire about campus safety.

**ACTIVITIES** What do the students do on weekends? Check into what programs are available that interest you (tutoring, musical activities, sports, work-study).

## Types of Colleges and Degrees

Associates Degree	2 years
Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science	4 years
Master of Arts/Master of Science	2 more years
Doctorate (PhD)	2 to 4 more years

**TWO-YEAR COLLEGES** Offer quality education at a low cost. These allow you to attend for two years then transfer to a four-year institution to complete your bachelor’s degree.

**TECHNICAL SCHOOLS** Offer specific career-oriented programs that last from a few months to a couple of years. Most are specialized and offer intense training in one specific skill area.

**COLLEGE** An institution of higher education that offers a curriculum leading to a four-year bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree. The primary focus is on undergraduate education.

**UNIVERSITY** Typically has a liberal arts college as well as several specialized colleges and graduate program in such fields as business, engineering, medicine, law, agriculture, nursing, and the arts. Most offer advanced degrees in addition to the traditional four-year bachelor's degree.

**LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE** A four-year institution that emphasizes a broad undergraduate education. It offers exposure to the sciences, history, philosophy, music, and art.

**NURSING SCHOOL** Some of these are affiliated with hospitals and students receive their RN degree upon completion of training. Others are affiliated with colleges or universities where graduates receive an RN degree and a bachelor's degree.

**ENGINEERING OR TECHNICAL COLLEGE** These are independent professional institutions that provide training programs in the fields of engineering technology, and the physical sciences.

**ONLINE EDUCATION** Many universities also offer online courses or even completely online programs leading to a degree. This non-traditional approach can provide great flexibility. For a listing of programs and advice about online education, see <http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org>

### College Fairs and Visits

Do not make a decision about where to attend college based on pictures in a brochure or someone's opinion. Pictures show the best of the campus and a representative's job is to "sell" the college. Do not overlook local colleges. Start with them to get experience in handling a college visit.

Some colleges offer a "virtual" college tour via the web. See <http://www.youvisit.com> or <http://www.youniversitytv.com>

Here are good example questions to ask at a college fair or college visit:

#### *#1: How would you describe the student body's personality?*

Each college campus has a personality, revealed through its student body. Of course, not everyone on campus has exactly the same personality, but a student body tends to value certain qualities. For example, some campuses are politically liberal; some are conservative. A student body might especially value the arts or athletics or community service. This question helps you determine if you might fit in well among your potential classmates.

#### *#2: How is this school distinctive?*

Each school has a unique story. Maybe you will learn about a newly developed internship program; maybe you will hear about an unusual curriculum or a special program for freshmen.

#### *#3: How many students transfer to another school during or after their first year?*

This question offers a glimpse of current student satisfaction. You obviously want to attend a school where your peers are generally happy. Sometimes a high transfer rate indicates that students are not finding what they thought they would find at the school; sometimes a high transfer rate is due to a change in curriculum or financial aid. If the transfer rate is high, ask why and listen carefully to the response.

*#4: How would you describe the students' relationship with professors?*

The counselor might tell you about opportunities for students to collaborate with professors on research. Maybe they will mention that professors give out their home numbers so students can reach them outside of class and office hours. You will have a general idea about how accessible the professors are – an important part of your college experience.

*#5: How do you award scholarships and financial aid?*

There are varying policies about financial aid. Some schools require separate applications for scholarships; some simply award scholarships based on information in a student's application. You need to know not only how to apply for these awards, but also which qualities the scholarship committees weight most heavily. You also need to know how a college awards financial aid, which is based on your family's need.

### Honors Program

If the college you attend offers some sort of Honors Program, you should definitely look into it. College Honors courses will be more challenging, but more engaging, smaller, and will have the best professors in the department. Such programs are open to all majors.

### Gap Year

If you decide to take a “gap” year before starting college, it is best to still apply to college during your senior year of high school. After you receive an acceptance to the college, you can request to have the acceptance deferred for one year. Most private colleges will allow you to do that. Some public colleges will ask you to reapply.

It is much easier to get letters of recommendation from teachers while you are still a student here. If you do not have any idea where you want to apply, you could get some teachers to write a letter for you and save it for a year or leave the sealed letter with the school in your student file.

Here are some suggestions of “gap year” activities that may enhance your college application when you later decide to go to college:

- mission work, volunteer work, community service
- foreign exchange program, travel
- work, internship, explore career interests

### The Importance of Assessment

You should be familiar with your abilities, desires, personality, values, and opportunities, when planning what to do after high school. You will continually be learning as you go through life, whether you are in a college setting or not. Consider the following:

#### SEEK GODLY COUNSEL

You are not alone. Parents, teachers, pastors, and others who know you can help you think through the options.

#### ACCEPT HOW YOU ARE MADE

You are “fearfully and wonderfully made” by our sovereign God. Do not try to be someone else. God will use you as he sees fit. You are made for the work He has for you.

### ENJOY YOUR LIFE

Many, many people have spent a good portion of their time and energy in pursuit of wealth or notoriety, and do not have joy or fulfillment in their work. Is your motivation for higher education based on pleasing God or pleasing yourself?

### PERSONAL RESEARCH

What do you like and enjoy in life right now? What are your strengths? What have people complimented (or commented) on about you that you can do well? What kind of person are you?

There are various skill assessments that you can take during high school that could help you choose colleges and majors. They can also help you determine the best career choices for you or if something other than attending college would be the best choice for you.

# COLLEGE ADMISSION

## College Admission Process

### REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION

Check with each college to make sure you meet all their requirements (e.g., entrance exams, GPA, letters of recommendation, personal interviews, personal essay, specific college prep courses). Plan to take required tests by December. This allows time for re-testing, if needed.

### WHEN TO APPLY

Plan to apply between October and January of your senior year, for admission the following fall. Familiarize yourself with the application deadlines for each institution so test scores and transcripts can be secured and sent before stated deadlines. Some deadlines are as early as October.

### COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

The cost to apply to colleges varies, but many are around \$50. Copy the application for practice and keep it as a work copy. Read the application directions before you begin to complete it. Make copies of everything before you submit it. You may also want to consider asking the Post Office the best way to document the mailing date. A sloppy, incomplete or late application sends a very clear message to the college.

## Factors Influencing College Admission

### GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

The GPA is the average of a student's high school grades, starting with the freshman year. It is on a 4.0 scale. UCA uses an "Unweighted GPA" which means advanced classes are not weighted any differently than regular classes. A high GPA improves your college and scholarship opportunities.

### TRANSCRIPT

The formal document outlines a student's academic achievement in high school and includes courses, grades, cumulative GPA, test scores, distinctions, and activities. Official transcripts must have a signature and seal verifying its authenticity. You may request either an official or unofficial transcript from the UCA Office. Please use the green transcript request form. Note: It is important that you carefully proofread your transcript prior to having it sent to a university. Make sure it is correct!

### SCHOOL PROFILE

This is the form sent to colleges to help the admission officer interpret the transcript. The profile gives a brief history of the school, provides community and accreditation information, as well as telling about UCA's courses, grading, and scoring on standardized tests.

### SAT/ACT SCORES

See detailed "Standardized Testing" section on page 18.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

You must ask a teacher well in advance of the deadline to provide a written recommendation for you. Give your teacher several weeks notice if possible. Students normally do not see what the

letter says. Please provide a stamped envelope addressed to the institution of your choice, as well as specific instructions on when and how to submit the recommendation. Remember to thank your teachers profusely for doing this for you – it can be a time-consuming task!

#### CLASS RANK

Indicates where a student stands academically in relation to the other members of his/her graduating class. Because of our relatively small class sizes, UCA does not typically rank students.

#### ACTIVITY INVOLVEMENT/AWARDS

Your involvement in out-of-class activities might reveal special talents and abilities you possess in areas such as science, art, music, technical skills, and organizational and problem solving. Be sure to keep a list of these things throughout high school.

#### PERSONAL ESSAY

Admissions essays are not required for all colleges, but if admission is competitive, then essays are often required. Admission personnel read thousands of essays a year. Your essay, or personal statement, gives you a chance to make your application stand out and come alive. Here are some things to remember when writing such an essay:

- Read the instructions carefully! Make sure you understand the question and answer it.
- Write your own essay and give yourself enough time to do a good job.
- Be thoughtful, insightful, creative, authentic, direct, open, and honest – this will help distinguish you from others. You don't have to come up with something unusual or flowery; rather, be honest, direct, and sincere in your essay.
- Use correct grammar and punctuation. Proofread and edit, also have someone else proof your essay. There are no reasons for errors!
- Try to demonstrate qualities such as: self-discipline, curiosity, tenacity, motivation, complexity, leadership, creativity, commitment, etc.
- Don't exceed the space allowed for your essay or statement.
- Don't use someone else's work.
- Don't force one essay to fit all schools.
- Don't mistake an accomplishment list with an essay.
- Don't try to be wildly creative or funny – the adult reading it might not think it is funny.
- Don't get too personal or brag.
- Don't use trite statements (e.g., "I want to leave this world a better place," "Through sports I've learned the value of commitment," etc).

#### INTERVIEW

Some campuses offer the opportunity for students to interview, but only highly selective colleges require it. Other schools regard the interview as an optional, informal activity.

Be prepared to answer questions about your academic history, interests, and school and community activities. This is a good time to address issues that you would like the college to know about and to ask some questions of your own.

### Interviewing Tips:

- Know the basic information about the institution you are visiting.
- Arrive early.
- Dress neat and clean. Lean towards conservative dress.
- Make eye contact and use a firm, confident handshake.
- Be yourself! Be enthusiastic, but not overbearing.
- Listen to what is being said and take time to reflect on it.
- Use the interviewer's name and thank them when you leave.

### Common Questions That May Be Asked:

- How did you become interested in this school?
- What courses have you taken that you enjoyed and why?
- What do you plan to contribute to our campus?
- How do you spend your free time?
- Have you worked up to your potential in high school?
- What is your biggest achievement to date?
- List some words that describe you.
- What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses?
- What books or magazines have you read recently?
- What current events are of the most interest to you?
- What is the most difficult situation you have faced?
- What do you plan to do after you graduate from college?

Be prepared with some questions of your own or ask for clarification about things you have seen, heard, or read about the school. This is a good way to demonstrate your level of curiosity and understanding.

### Standardized Testing

Most colleges and universities require applicants to take at least one standardized test (ACT, SAT, or CLT) for consideration for admission.

Either the ACT, SAT, or CLT are required to fulfill UCA's graduation purposes. However, research specific college entrance exams in addition to the ACT, SAT, or CLT. College applications are typically due in January and February, and so taking these tests by December of your senior year is a good plan – you can always retest in the spring if you want to or if needed.

Look at the schedules for the ACT, SAT, or CLT now. Pick some test dates and register for them. They are only offered on certain Saturdays and they can fill up, so do not procrastinate. Note that scheduling conflicts can make this complicated, so if you are playing sports or involved other extra-curricular activities, look carefully at the schedule and pick one that works for you.

Admission is getting more competitive. Your GPA is important to colleges, but there is so much variability in GPA scale (between different high schools) that colleges rely more on the SAT, ACT, or CLT. It is disappointing that your high school grades are given lesser weight than a single 4 hour multiple choice exam, but colleges like that the SAT, ACT, or CLT are standardized.

While the ACT and SAT are important for admissions, many schools also use these scores to determine financial aid or scholarships. Thus, even if your score is good enough to “get in” to your school of choice, it can still be beneficial to do your best.

The best type of preparation you can do for these tests is to become familiar with them: take practice tests, know the test inside and out, understand the instructions and time limits for each section, learn how to make educated guesses. Listed below are some free online resources:

<http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice/sat-practice-test>  
<http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/>  
<http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice/sat-question-of-the-day>  
<http://www.cltextam.com>

Many students perform quite differently when they take both the ACT, SAT, or CLT, so it is a benefit to take both tests. If you take a test more than once, most colleges will take your “best” score. However, this is not true of some elite colleges (e.g., Harvard), which look at all your scores.

You are responsible for seeing to it that the respective testing agency forwards your scores to the colleges to which you will be applying. Make sure to enter UCA’s CEEB code when registering: 447167. You are also responsible for registering by the appropriate deadline!

#### WHAT DO THE TESTS COVER? (A SUMMARY)

- The PSAT only covers English and math through Algebra II.
- The CLT 10 covers verbal reasoning, grammar/writing, and quantitative reasoning.
- The SAT is very similar to the PSAT except it is longer and has a written essay question.
- The ACT has a separate section for science, while the SAT spreads science questions in with the math and reading sections. The focus is not on science facts or theory, rather on interpretation of graphs and charts, drawing conclusions from data, and analytical thinking.
- The math on the ACT covers Trigonometry and logarithms, while the SAT does not.

#### HOW ARE THE TESTS USED?

- The SAT, ACT, and the CLT are college admission tests. Many colleges accept the ACT, many accept the SAT, some accept the CLT, and many accept either.
- The PSAT is a high-stakes test that determines national merit finalists and college scholarships. It is not used for admissions.
- The ACT and SAT are used for a variety of scholarships.
- Certain SAT and ACT scores may exempt you from freshman classes.
- Finally, the ACT, SAT, and CLT are used for UCA to help quantify the results of a UCA education.

**PSAT/NMSQT:** The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) measures verbal reasoning, critical reading, math problem solving, and writing skills. It is taken by juniors and offered optionally to sophomores and freshmen. (Read more at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) The National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) portion uses the scores for the math, verbal reasoning, and writing to find the top 1% of the nation’s juniors for eligibility in participating in Merit and Achievement programs ([www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org)).

Commended Students: Even though these students do not continue in the competition, some will become candidates for special scholarships offered by corporations and businesses.

Semifinalists: Semifinalists represent the highest scoring entrants in each state. They can advance to finalist standing by meeting the requirements in the materials provided to them.

Finalists: About 15,000 students will be notified in February if they have advanced to finalist standing.

**SAT Reasoning:** The Scholastic Assessment Test is a college admission test comprised of a verbal, math, and writing section. It consists of multiple choice questions and one essay question. Students may register online or by mail. Plan to take it by December of your senior year – you can always retest in the spring. ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com))

**ACT:** The American College Test is a three-hour curriculum-based college admission test covering English, mathematics, natural sciences, and social studies. Plan to take it by December of your senior year. ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org))

The ACT has an optional writing test for an extra 30 minutes and an extra cost. Some colleges (typically the more elite ones) require it. UCA does not require this optional writing portion.

**CLT:** The Classic Learning Test is a college admission test used primarily for private schools. The standardized assessment is a two-hour online college admission test covering verbal reasoning, grammar/writing, and quantitative reasoning.

**OTHER OPTIONS:** Depending on the college or university of the student's choice, there are specific entrance exams and requirements for admission. Research thoroughly the options and requirements necessary. Plan accordingly.

#### Admission Vocabulary

**CEEB Number** is a code each high school uses for tracking by the College Board, ACT, or university. The CEEB Code Number for UCA 447167.

**FAFSA** is the free application for federal student aid. It is one form used for the financial aid process at colleges. Applications are available from [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) by mid-October. This form cannot be filled out until after October and requires income tax information from the previous year.

**Common Application** allows you to apply to multiple schools using one application form. A listing of the schools that will accept the Common Application may be found at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) Most local colleges do NOT use Common Application. This application is used for out of state colleges and universities.

**ApplyTexas** allows you to apply to multiple, mostly public, schools using one application form. A listing of the schools that will accept the ApplyTexas Application may be found at [www.applytexas.org](http://www.applytexas.org) This application is used for Texas colleges and universities.

**Application Deadline** is the date by which all application materials are due. Check to see whether it is a *postmark* due date or needs to be *received by* a certain due date.

**Early Decision** involves an early application deadline and an early offer by a college. Once accepted by early decision, the student is finished with the entire application process. Colleges who accept you under early decision usually require you to withdraw your application from other colleges. You usually will not be able to compare the early offer to other offers, so choose this option carefully.

**Open Admission** is the policy of accepting almost every student who has a high school diploma without regard to rank, GPA or test scores.

**Standard or Regular Admission** is the application process which requires application materials to be submitted no later than the specified deadline printed in the college catalog or application form.

**Rolling Admission** schools process applications as they arrive and usually notify students within six weeks of receiving the application. This admission option is most common at public universities. Applications need to be submitted early to maximize chances of admission.

**Applicant Notification Date:** This is the date by which you will receive a decision or the date by which decisions will be mailed from the school.

**Applicant's Reply Date:** The date of May 1 has been accepted by most colleges and universities in the U.S. as the date by which all admitted students must inform the school they are planning to attend of their intention to enroll. A non-refundable deposit is usually due by this date.

**Wait List:** A student who is placed on the "wait" list will not know his/her status until after May 1. If your child is "waitlisted" and does want to attend the school in question, be sure to fill out the school's wait list form and send it back immediately.

## FINANCIAL AID

College is expensive. Harvard costs \$62,000 per year and even some Texas universities costs \$20,000 per year (tuition, books, room, and board). However, many students do not actually pay that full amount. The average Harvard student receives \$45,000 in scholarships.

A specific school might cost more or less than you think. Check out the actual costs – it is relatively simple to quantify. It never hurts to apply. If you think you need aid to continue your education, your chances of getting it are best if you apply in the right way at the right time.

*Merit-based financial aid* is given in recognition of special skills, talents, and/or academic ability. These include: merit scholars, top 10% of the class, outstanding athlete, accomplished musician, etc.

*Need-based financial aid* is given based on the difference between what it will cost a student to attend college and the amount a family can contribute toward the student's education *as determined by the financial aid office*. The family's income, assets, debts, family size, and extenuating circumstances are all taken into consideration.

**GRANTS** – monies given to you by the college, usually because of financial need, which do not have to be repaid. The Pell Grant is the largest of the federal grant programs. Determination is made on the basis of information provided by review of your FAFSA. The Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) is for students with exceptional need.

**SCHOLARSHIPS** – monies awarded also do not have to be repaid. Scholarships are given based on a variety of criteria. The area of study at college, academic excellence, ethnicity, and special activities in high school are some of the criteria which might qualify you. Additionally, parents' employers or professional associations may sponsor scholarships.

**WORK STUDY** – is employment which you must take while in school, earning a salary which you are expected to contribute toward your expenses. The program is administered by the colleges and the financial aid or work study office will help you find a job which qualifies.

**LOANS** – must be repaid and have different terms: Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal Stafford Loan, and Federal Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students (PLUS Loans) are some of the more well-known loans.

- Ask for information about financial aid opportunities and application procedures when writing to the admissions office. Generally, the financial aid office at your college is the best source of financial aid.
- File all required financial aid forms – the FAFSA and others required by the specific colleges.
- Mail completed FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1. Check with individual schools as to specific deadlines.

### The FAFSA Form

The *Free Application for Federal Student Aid* is required by both public and private universities and colleges before scholarships or financial aid is awarded. For more information about the FAFSA and instructions, go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Know the filing priority date for your college. The earlier you file a FAFSA, the more likely you are to hear from the Commission early. Since most colleges have a May 1 deadline for intention to register, it is to your advantage to know as soon as possible about financial aid so you can make an informed decision regarding which college you will attend.

Within four weeks of filing by mail and a few days after filing online, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) from the federal processor. It will list the student's *expected family contribution* or EFC. A standard formula is used to calculate the EFC, based on the information the student provides on the FAFSA. The SAR will also be sent to the colleges you indicated on the FAFSA. The colleges will use the EFC to determine if you will be offered grants, loans, and/or work-study programs.

### Begin Your Scholarship Search

#### **Departmental Scholarships**

One of the best ways to get scholarships is to apply at a specific college and declare a specific major. Some colleges award based upon those factors alone.

#### **General Scholarship Search Sites**

- **College Board:** [www.collegeboard.com/parents/pay](http://www.collegeboard.com/parents/pay) Scholarships, financial aid and student loan resource
- **GoodCall:** <https://www.goodcall.com/scholarships/> Free internet scholarship database
- **Fast Web:** [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) Free internet scholarship database
- **College for Texans:** [www.collegefortexans.com](http://www.collegefortexans.com)
- **College Answer:** [www.CollegeAnswer.com](http://www.CollegeAnswer.com)
- **Scholarship Search:** [www.scholarshipsearch.com](http://www.scholarshipsearch.com) Scholarship database
- **ScholarshipExperts:** [www.scholarshipexperts.com](http://www.scholarshipexperts.com) Scholarship database
- **FinAid:** [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) Free resource for scholarships, information about loans and general college financial planning.
- **Federal Trade Commission:** <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt009.shtm>  
Information about how to avoid the pitfalls of scholarship scams.
- **Minne Sevens Piper Foundation:** [www.window.state.tx.us/scholars](http://www.window.state.tx.us/scholars)
- **San Antonio Area Foundation:** [www.saafdn.org](http://www.saafdn.org) Scholarship clearinghouse for local donors.

For first generation college students:

<http://www.imfirst.org>

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**AXA Achievement Scholarship** – [www.axa-achievement.com](http://www.axa-achievement.com)

**RMHC Scholarship Program** – [www.rmhc.org](http://www.rmhc.org)

**Burger King Scholarship** – [www.scholarsapply.org/burgerkingscholars/](http://www.scholarsapply.org/burgerkingscholars/)

**Walmart Scholarship** – [www.act.org/walmart/community/](http://www.act.org/walmart/community/)

**Daughters of the American Revolution** – [www.dar.org](http://www.dar.org)

**Gates Millennium Scholarship** – [www.gmsp.org](http://www.gmsp.org) or  
[www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/Scholarships)

**Super College Scholarship** – [www.supercollege.com/about/about.cfm?area=7](http://www.supercollege.com/about/about.cfm?area=7)

**San Antonio Mensa Scholarship** – <http://merf.us.mensa.org>

**Abbott and Fenner Scholarship** – [www.abbottandfenner.com/scholarship.htm](http://www.abbottandfenner.com/scholarship.htm)

**The University of Texas at San Antonio Undergraduate Scholarships** –  
<http://admissions.utsa.edu/>

**Hispanic Scholarship Fund** – [www.hsf.net](http://www.hsf.net)

**Las Casas Foundation** – [www.lascasasfoundation.org](http://www.lascasasfoundation.org)

**UT Austin 40 Acres Scholars** – [www.40AcresScholars.org](http://www.40AcresScholars.org)

**Texas A & M University Academic Scholarships** – <http://scholarships.tamu.edu>

**Texas Christian University: Texas Youth Entrepreneur Awards** – [www.tcuyeya.org](http://www.tcuyeya.org)

**Texas A & M Foundation Excellence Award Scholarships** –  
[https://scholarships.tamu.edu/tamu\\_scholarships/current/other\\_university\\_scholarships/fea.aspx](https://scholarships.tamu.edu/tamu_scholarships/current/other_university_scholarships/fea.aspx)

**Casa Navarro Scholarship** – <https://www.friendsofcasavarro.org/scholarship-instruction-and-application-2016/>

**Terry Foundation Scholarship** – <https://terryfoundation.org/future-scholars/>

**UTSA Presidential Honors Scholarship Program** – [www.utsa.edu/honors](http://www.utsa.edu/honors)

**The International Culinary Schools at Art Institutes** – [www.artinstitutes.edu/btc](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/btc)

**The Art Institutes Storytellers Photography Competition –**  
[www.artinstitutes.edu/photocompetition](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/photocompetition)

**The Art Institutes: Passion for Fashion Competition –** [www.artinstitutes.edu/passion4fashion](http://www.artinstitutes.edu/passion4fashion)

**San Antonio Area Foundation –**  
<http://www.saafdn.org/Scholarships/WelcomeScholarshipSeekers.aspx>

# SENIOR INFORMATION WORKSHEET

If you think you might ask a teacher for a recommendation, please complete this form and give a copy to Mrs. Dockal. She will provide this document along with your transcript to the teacher. Keep the original for your use. It is helpful to have on hand when you are filling out applications.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATIONAL GOAL \_\_\_\_\_

## PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

## INSTITUTIONS BEING CONSIDERED

\_\_\_\_\_ 4-year college

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 2-year college

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ vocational school

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ apprenticeship program

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ intermediate employment

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ armed services

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PAID WORK EXPERIENCE: (include self-employment ventures, i.e., lawn care, babysitting, etc.)

Dates	Employer	# of hours/week	Duties
-------	----------	-----------------	--------

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES which I have participated in:

Name	Grade (9-12)	Special Commendations/Awards	Officer
------	--------------	------------------------------	---------

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

