

College Admission Glossary: Learn the Lingo

ACT

A standardized college admission test. It features four main sections: English, math, reading and science — and an optional essay section.

Articulation Agreement

An agreement between two-year and four-year colleges that makes it easier to transfer credits between them. It spells out which courses count for degree credit and the grades you need to earn to get credit.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA)

An agreement many colleges follow that gives applicants until May 1 to accept or decline offers of admission. This agreement gives students time to get responses from most of the colleges they have applied to before deciding on one.

College Application Essay

An essay that a college requires students to write and submit as part of their application. Some colleges offer applicants specific questions to answer, while others simply ask applicants to write about themselves. Colleges may refer to this as a “personal statement.”

College Credit

What you get when you successfully complete a college-level course. You need a certain number of credits to graduate with a degree. Colleges may also grant credit for scores on exams, such as those offered by IB. You can review IB Recognition Policies on Naviance.

Common Application

A standard application form accepted by all colleges that are members of the Common Application association. You can fill out this application once and submit it to any one — or several — of the 475-plus colleges that accept it.

Deferred Admission

Permission from a college that has accepted you to postpone enrolling in the college. The postponement is usually for up to one year.

Early Action (EA)

An option to submit your applications before the regular deadlines. When you apply early action, you get admission decisions from colleges earlier than usual. Early action plans are not binding, which means that you do not have to enroll in a college if you are accepted early action. Some colleges have an early action option called EA II, which has a later application deadline than their regular EA plan.

Early Decision (ED)

An option to submit an application to your first-choice college before the regular deadline. When you apply early decision, you get an admission decision earlier than usual. Early decision plans are binding. You agree to enroll in the college immediately if admitted and offered a financial aid package that meets your needs. Some colleges have an early decision option called ED II, which has a later application deadline than their regular ED plan.

Financial Aid

Money given or loaned to you to help pay for college. Financial aid can come from federal and state governments, colleges, and private organizations.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

A number that shows overall academic performance. It's computed by assigning a point value to each grade you earn. See also Weighted Grade Point Average.

Legacy Applicant

A college applicant with a relative (usually a parent or grandparent) who graduated from that college. Some colleges give preference to legacy applicants (also called “legacies”).

Need-Blind Admission

A policy of making admission decisions without considering the financial circumstances of applicants. Colleges that use this policy may not offer enough financial aid to meet a student's full need.

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Priority Date or Deadline

The date by which your application — whether it's for college admission, student housing or financial aid — must be received to be given the strongest consideration.

Rolling Admission

An admission policy of considering each application as soon as all required information (such as high school records and test scores) has been received, rather than setting an application deadline and reviewing applications in a batch. Colleges that use a rolling admission policy usually notify applicants of admission decisions quickly.

SAT

The College Board's standardized college admission test. It features three main sections: math, reading and writing, which includes a written essay.

SAT Subject Tests

Hour-long, content-based college admission tests that allow you to showcase achievement in specific subject areas: English, history, math, science and languages. Some colleges use Subject Tests to place students into the appropriate courses as well as in admission decisions. Based on your performance on the test(s), you could potentially fulfill basic requirements or earn credit for introductory-level courses.

Transcript

The official record of your course work at a school or college. Your high school transcript is usually required for college admission and for some financial aid packages.

Transfer Student

A student who enrolls in a college after having attended another college.

Undergraduate

A college student who is working toward an associate or a bachelor's degree.

Waiting List

The list of applicants who may be admitted to a college if space becomes available. Colleges wait to hear if all the students they accepted decide to attend. If students don't enroll and there are empty spots, a college may fill them with students who are on the waiting list.

Weighted Grade Point Average (GPA)

A grade point average that's calculated using a system that assigns a higher point value to grades in more-difficult classes. For example, Standard Level (SL) courses have a .50 weight. Higher Level (HL) courses will have a 1.0 weight.

Self-Report/SRAR

A process through which students self-report their academic record by providing their course history, grades, and credits earned. This process is usually completed through an online portal, like the SRAR, short for the *Self-Reported Academic Record*. The SRAR is currently used by Temple, Penn State, and Temple to allow students to enter, track, and submit their academic record electronically.

Naviance

Naviance is a web-based service designed for students, parents, and counselors. It is a comprehensive website that you can use to help explore and make decisions about colleges and careers. Naviance includes up-to-date information specific to the students at the Downingtown STEM Academy. Students can log in to their account by following the steps below. If you have difficulty logging in to your account, please see your school counselor.

To access Naviance, go to <https://student.naviance.com/stem>. The username is your student ID number. The password is your birthdate (e.g. 10/24/1993 or in the case of a single-digit birthdate, use 9/9/1993 and do NOT use 0).

Some of the things you can do in Naviance include:

- Link personality type and interests with careers
- Indicate preferences/ criteria to determine college matches
- Compare your academic statistics to the average statistics of your prospective colleges
- Predict the outcome of your application for a specific college using the Scattergrams
- Track application materials, including academic transcripts and teacher recommendation letters

Online Resources

- **STEM Counseling Website**
<http://dasd.schoolwires.net/domain/459>
- **Collegeboard**
www.collegeboard.org
- **Naviance**
Succeed.naviance.com/stem
- **ACT**
<http://www.actstudent.org/>
- **FAFSA**
<https://fafsa.ed.gov/>
- **Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency**
<https://www.pheaa.org/>
- **CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE**
<https://student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile>
- **NCAA**
<http://www.ncaa.com/>
- **Common Application:**
<http://www.commonapp.org/>
- **College Greenlight**
<https://www.collegegreenlight.com/>
- **College Navigator**
<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>
- **Cappex**
<https://www.cappex.com/>
- **The Princeton Review**
<http://www.princetonreview.com/>
- **Unigo**
<https://www.unigo.com/>
- **College Confidential**
<http://www.collegeconfidential.com/>
- **Education Planner**
<http://www.educationplanner.org/>
- **Fair Test**
<http://www.fairtest.org/>

Downingtown STEM Academy

11th Grade College Planning Night



Presented by the STEM Counseling Department

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College Planning Timeline

Fall 2019/Winter 2020

- Review results of PSAT and utilize online planning tools (Naviance and Collegeboard)
- Start to create a list of colleges that attract you (15-20 schools)
- Start to notice similarities: type of campus, size of campus, location, cost, culture, programs offered
- Remember to add these to “Colleges I’m Thinking About” in Naviance!
- Register for the SAT/SAT Subject Test or ACT
- Have Junior Meeting with your Counselor

Spring 2020

- Take the SAT/Subject Test or ACT
- Request information from colleges/universities
- Learn about Admission Requirements from the preliminary list of schools you’re thinking about (e.g. are SAT Subject Tests required?)
- Student Athletes: Register with the NCAA Clearinghouse

Summer 2020

- Narrow down your list of schools and visit as many as possible
- Start to have conversations with your family about financial aid
- Fill out the Senior Questionnaire
- Fill out your Resume on Naviance

College Planning Timeline Con’t

Summer 2020 con’t...

- Start to identify and ask the people you want letters of recommendation from (min. 2 people). You can start to do this before the end of junior year too!
- Research what the college essay requirements are for the schools you are considering

Fall 2020

- Whittle down your list of 15-20 schools by doing further research, taking campus tours, talking to students, etc.
- Focus on applying to between 6-8 schools (approx. 3 reach schools, 3 match schools, and 2 likely schools)
- Complete the Common Application
- Complete any other non-Common App college applications.
- Add the schools you will be applying to on the *Colleges I’m Applying to* list on Naviance.

*Remember to keep your counselor informed of important deadlines for specialized programs (e.g. accelerated med programs, scholarships, etc.) This includes NCAA and applications for the U.S. Military Academies. **Please note that U.S. Military Academies operate on a strict, early schedule. You should let your counselor know if you plan to apply to a U.S. Military Academy before the end of junior year.***

Standardized Testing Dates

SAT Test Dates

Test Date	Info	Registration Deadline
Dec. 7, 2019	SAT Subject Tests available on this date	Nov. 8, 2019 <i>Late Deadline: Nov. 26th</i>
March 14, 2020	SAT Subject Tests not available on this date	Feb. 14, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: March 3rd</i>
May 2, 2020	SAT Subject Tests available on this date	April 3, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: April 21st</i>
June 6, 2020	SAT Subject Tests available on this date	May 8, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: May 27th</i>

ACT Test Dates

Test Date	Registration Deadline
Dec. 14, 2019	Nov. 8, 2019 <i>Late Deadline: Nov. 22nd</i>
Feb. 8, 2020	Jan. 10, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: Jan. 17th</i>
April 4, 2020	Feb. 28, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: Mar. 13th</i>
June 12, 2020	May 8, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: May 22nd</i>
July 18, 2020	June 19, 2020 <i>Late Deadline: June 26th</i>