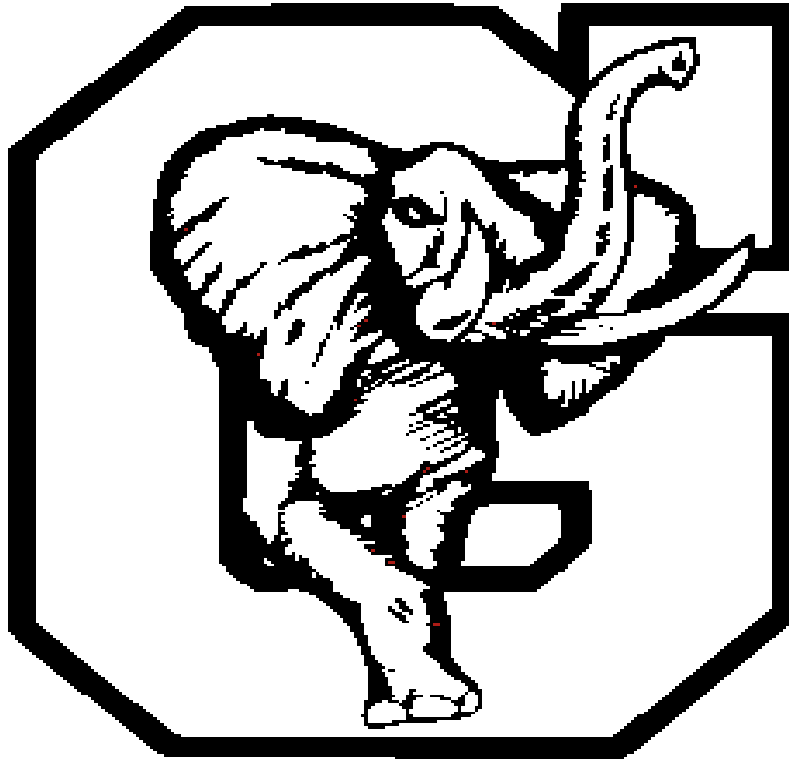


**Gainesville High School**

**Home of the  
Red Elephants**



# **The Big Red Review Senior Year**

**(A Planning Guide for Post High School Opportunities)**

GHS Guidance Website: <http://bigredguidance.weebly.com>

September, 2015

Greetings Class of 2016 Senior!

This handbook was designed to provide you with the basic tools necessary to make well-informed decisions about your options after high school. Whether it be attending a 4 year college, 2 year or technical institution, military, or full-time workforce, we want you to be knowledgeable about your choices.

This is an exciting time in your life and we hope that the information provided will decrease any anxiety you may have about your remaining time in high school as well as the college admissions process. Read through this planning guide carefully, and should questions arise before or after your “individual senior conference”, make an appointment to see your counselor.

Many different resources were used in compiling the information contained in this guide. Our office would like to thank College Board, GACollege411, and various high schools whose materials we found to be most helpful.

Sincerely,

Your GHS School Counselors

Mrs. Wilson (A-F)  
Mr. Mutchler (G-N)  
Mr. Jackson (O-Z)



**Go Big Red!**

# Gainesville High School 2015-2016 Profile

## School

Gainesville High School is a comprehensive four-year high school in a charter school district with over 1,900 students in grades 9-12 enrolled.

## Curriculum

The academic program is organized on a block schedule. Four credits per semester, with two semesters in the academic year. Students receive a General Diploma emphasizing college and career preparation.

## AP® Courses

There are 14 Advanced Placement courses offered at Gainesville High School; World History, US History, US Government and Politics, European History, Economics, Chemistry, Physics, Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Statistics, English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition, Spanish Literature and Culture, Studio Art.

## Honors Courses

There are 23 honors courses offered at Gainesville High School; Accel CCGPS Coordinate Algebra/Analytic Geometry, Accel CCGPS Analytic Geometry/Advanced Algebra, Accel Pre-Calculus, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Human Anatomy and Physiology, World History, US History, American Government, Economics, 9<sup>th</sup> Lit. and Comp., World Lit. and Comp., American Lit/Comp., British Literature, Spanish III, IV and V, French III, IV and V, Chinese III, IV.

## Grading and Ranking

Includes all students and all courses. Class rank is determined by overall GPA. GPA and rank are calculated after each semester, using all courses on the transcript. The reported GPA is weighted.

Numeric Scale (additional .05)	Regular and Honors Courses	AP & Dual Enrollment Weighted	
A – Excellent	90-100	4.0	4.5
B – Above Average	80-89	3.0	3.5
C – Average	70-79	2.0	2.5
F – Fail	69 and below	0	0

## 2014-2015 Graduating Class:

There were 410 students in the class of 2015

There are approximately **375** students in the class of 2016

## Post High School Placement (data gathered from senior exit surveys)

54% matriculated to 4 year colleges

20% matriculated to Technical colleges or 2 year institutions

26% selected work, military service, other

**Principal:** Tom Smith

**Counselors 10-12<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Michael Jackson, JD Mutchler, Tracey Wilson

## Gainesville High School - SENIOR Calendar and Checklist for College Admissions

July/August	September	October	November
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review your career plans. Devise a list of the college(s) you plan to apply to. Research schools online.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Register for the college exams (SAT &amp; ACT) if you have not already taken the exams, or wish to improve your score.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin working on your student resume and profile and college essay.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visit the schools you are interested in. Call for campus tours.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make a list of persons you will ask to write you a letter of recommendation.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review your senior class schedule and be sure you are enrolled in correct courses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Go to <a href="http://www.gacollege411.org">www.gacollege411.org</a> to update your account or create one.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review Dual Enrollment information on Guidance website <a href="http://bigredguidance.weebly.com">http://bigredguidance.weebly.com</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Narrow your college list; pick up a copy of "<b>Senior Year College Timetable</b>" from Guidance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Review college websites &amp; decide on early decision or regular admission (Adhere to deadlines).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete your "<b>Senior Profile</b>"/Brag Sheet and give to teacher or counselor you would like to write a recommendation letter for you. (Please give them at least 10 days notice).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ask your English teacher or Academic Advisor to review your college essay.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin requesting letters of recommendation (adhere to deadlines)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Register for SAT, ACT, ASSET</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin Dual Enrollment process for 2<sup>nd</sup> semester (adhere to deadlines)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Senior Conferences Begin!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Obtain a copy of your unofficial transcript from the Guidance Office.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check your HOPE GPA on GACollege411.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin applying for scholarships</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to apply for admissions.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take the Oct. ACT exam</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to request letters of recommendation (adhere to deadlines)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Request financial aid information and/or applications from colleges.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend College PROB Fair</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dual Enrollment (adhere to deadlines)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend "Apply To College" Day at GHS.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin gathering family income information for tax preparation and completion of financial aid forms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research &amp; apply for outside funding or scholarships.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apply for FAFSA PIN number online at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dual Enrollment deadline is fast approaching (adhere to deadlines)</li> </ul>

December	January	February	March
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research &amp; apply for outside funding or scholarships.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> December ACT Test</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deadline for Dual Enrollment application for 2nd Semester.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Deadline for Online Courses and Flex Scheduling options.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Apply for FAFSA PIN number online at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check the Guidance website for scholarship updates. Apply! Apply! Apply!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> File student &amp; parent Federal tax returns as soon as possible.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Apply online at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a> beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>. <b>KEEP COPIES OF ALL FORMS YOU SUBMIT.</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make sure all mid-year grade reports are mailed if your college requests these.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write thank you notes for recommendations and interviews.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Research &amp; apply for outside funding or scholarships. Apply! Apply! Apply!</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If necessary register for February ACT.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Take February ACT if needed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check on all Scholarship deadlines</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch the mail for college acceptance letters.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch for the Student Aid Report from FAFSA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Check dates for Advanced Placement tests, if needed.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch the mail for college acceptance letters.</li> </ul>
April	May	June	July
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch for your college financial aid award letter. Remember to sign and return it.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Respond promptly for action on admissions, scholarship and financial aid offers.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Watch for important deadlines at your college of choice (housing, financial aid, etc.).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Contact the financial aid office at your college to make certain that your application is complete.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete "Senior Exit Survey" and turn in to Guidance.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make your final college decision; notify the other schools that you will not be attending.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend Baccalaureate and Graduation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Request official transcripts be sent electronically through GACollege411 website. Out of State transcripts will need to be printed out and mailed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Congratulations on your high school graduation. Have a great summer!</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Packets from the college should be arriving regarding registration for classes, campus events and organizations, and services available for students</li> </ul> <p><b>Best of Luck!! We Will Miss You ☹</b></p> <p><b>Go Big Red!</b></p>

# 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Bridge Advisement

## State Board Rule 160-4-8-.09

State Board Activity Requirement for Fall Semester: **After High School Transition Plan**

Estimated time to complete: 30 minutes

- Sign in to [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org) using your Username and Password.
- Click on the **Your Portfolio** tab at the top of the screen.
- Click on **College Planning Portfolio**.
- Click on **Postsecondary Plans**.
- Click on **“Have You Got a Plan?”** under **After High School Transition Plans**.
- Complete the requested information and click **Save**.
- Scroll through the remaining information on the page and update as needed.

This activity must be done before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester.

Recommended Additional Activities Beyond State Board Requirements:

- Click on **Financial Aid Planning** tab and explore.
- Click on **Find Scholarships** on the **Financial Aid Planning** page and explore.
- Return to Financial Aid Planning page, click on Financial Aid Application and begin applying for aid.

Check **Your HOPE GPA** by using the **Quick Link** on the right side of the **Financial Aid Planning** tab, click on **Applications and Transcripts**, and then click on **Apply to College** and **Track your Application**.

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### Transcript Request for In-State Colleges and NCAA

- ❖ Log onto GACollege411.org
- ❖ Click Sign-in, top right corner
- ❖ Enter Account Name and Password (if you do not remember, you will need to create a new account to include your **Social Security** number)
- ❖ Select College Planning tab
- ❖ Applications
- ❖ Request and Track Your Transcript
- ❖ Choose the college(s) and continue

If you need your transcript sent to an out-of-state college, you will need to complete a College Application Transcript Request Form in Guidance.

## Honor Graduates

Throughout the high school years, individual grades are averaged together to establish an overall grade point average (GPA). Gainesville High School uses the GPA for several things, including determining if students are graduating with honors. Adopting the tiers used by most colleges to acknowledge honor graduates, the three levels with which a student can graduate include: Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude and Summa Cum Laude. Each level requires a different cumulative GPA range.

**Cum Laude** – The first level of graduating with honors actually translates from Latin to mean “with praise”. If your GPA is **3.5-3.69** you will graduate with this honor of distinction.

**Magna Cum Laude** – The second highest level meaning “with great honor”. To qualify for this honor a student must have a cumulative GPA of **3.70-3.99**.

**Summa Cum Laude** – The highest of all honors issued at graduation. Meaning “with highest praise” in Latin, this honor is bestowed only on those who have the highest cumulative GPA of **4.0** and above.

## Course Weightings

Currently, all AP courses and courses taken through dual enrollment are given an additional 0.5 weight when computing student’s GPA on a 4.0 scale. (This is a GHS grading scale, HOPE Scholarship does not award weights above 4.0)

## Grading Scale and Grade Point Average (GPA)



<u>Reg. and Honors</u>	<u>Reg. and Honors</u>	<u>AP and Dual Weighted</u>
A = 90-100	4.0	4.5
B = 80-89	3.0	3.5
C = 70-79	2.0	2.5
Below 70	0	0

Each year, a member of the senior class shall be determined to be the **valedictorian** and **salutatorian** of that senior class. Selection of the **valedictorian** shall be the student who has obtained the highest grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale. The **salutatorian** shall be the student who has obtained the second highest grade point average on a 4.0 grading scale. The following guidelines apply to rewarding of this prestigious school based award:

1. The valedictorian and salutatorian must be students enrolled in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade and who graduate with their cohort class. Credits must have been earned from an accredited school. All Gainesville High School graduation requirement policies must be followed and all grades accepted and verified by the high school principal and counselor.
2. A student's graduation class is established by a student's ninth grade entry date.
3. The student must have attended GHS for at least three consecutive semesters immediately preceding the determination of the class valedictorian and salutatorian (1<sup>st</sup> semester junior year).
4. The valedictorian must have earned the highest grade point average in his/her graduating class based on the school's consistent use of a weighted scale. The salutatorian must have earned the second highest grade point average in his/her graduating class. The grade point average shall be determined by grades received in all approved high school classes where credit is awarded and accepted including: high school classes at middle school, online courses, dual enrollment, summer school, and other alternative options approved by the school and administration. All grades will be calculated using the Gainesville High School grade point system. The grade point average is calculated to the fourth place beyond the decimal point.
5. When the determination of valedictorian status between the top two honor graduates is affected by the fact that one of the students transferred to GHS from a different program of study (such as a non-block high school) and thus has fewer total courses and a lower denominator in calculating grade point average, co-valedictorians may be named. The naming of co-valedictorians may occur after comparing each student's four year program of study and it is determined that the difference in grade point average is based on the above mentioned mathematical anomaly.
6. **Final grades will be calculated after the "GHS Senior Grades deadline", during the second semester of 12<sup>th</sup> grade. All grades must be turned in by this deadline in order to be used in the calculation of Valedictorian and Salutatorian. The students will be notified by their counselor.**



Note

#### **Addendum: Tie Breakers**

If two or more students have the same grade point average, calculated to the fourth decimal place, the following criteria, in rank order, shall be used to determine valedictorian and/or salutatorian:

- a. The student with the highest number of credits earned from middle school through 12<sup>th</sup> grade shall be selected. This includes all electives and all non elective classes (i.e., band, chorus, driver's ed, etc.)
- b. If all students involved in the tie have or will have taken the SAT by the November SAT date, the student with the highest composite SAT score in one setting shall be selected (STAR student guidelines).
- c. If a tie still exists, the student who has earned the highest numerical average based on all courses taken and accepted for credit from middle school through first semester 12<sup>th</sup> grade shall be selected. The numerical average is calculated to the fourth place beyond the decimal point. All grades will be calculated using Gainesville High School's consistent use of a weighted scale.
- d. Beyond these measures, if a tie still exists between two or more students, the valedictorian or salutatorian honors will be shared.



## How To Get an Unofficial Calculation of your HOPE GPA

Georgia's HOPE Scholarship is available to Georgia residents who have demonstrated academic achievement. The scholarship provides money to assist students with their educational costs of attending a HOPE eligible college in Georgia. To get a full overview and eligibility requirements, go to [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org).

The steps below will help you understand the HOPE GPA calculations and unofficially calculate your HOPE GPA. This is based on information provided to us by the Georgia Finance Commission.

Your HOPE GPA will be determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, not by the school system. If you have any detailed questions or concerns, please feel free to visit the Georgia Student Finance Commission website at [www.gsfc.org](http://www.gsfc.org) or call them at 1-800-505-GSFC.

### 1. Identify Courses That Count Towards Your HOPE GPA

The grades for all attempted (passed and failed) academic courses will be converted to a 4.0 scale and included in your HOPE GPA except courses taken in middle school for high school credit. Academic courses include courses in the areas of English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Foreign Languages. No arts courses whatsoever are used for HOPE calculations.

To identify academic courses on your transcript, use the following guide:

- All English courses with course numbers beginning with 23.
- All Math courses with course numbers beginning with 27.
- All Science courses with course numbers beginning with 26 or 40
- All Social Studies courses with course numbers beginning with 45.
- All Foreign Language courses with course numbers beginning with 60-64.

Remember, courses taken in middle school for high school credit do not count toward HOPE.

### 2. Convert Grades to the 4.0 scale using the HOPE Scale

<u>Reg. and Honors</u>	<u>Reg. and Honors</u>	<u>DE, AP, IB Weighted</u>
A = 90-100	4.0	4.0 (the highest GPA given by HOPE)
B = 80-89	3.0	3.5
C = 70-79	2.0	2.5
Below 70	0	0

If you fail an academic course, that failed grade will also count. For example, if you failed Coordinate Algebra and took Coordinate Algebra again in summer school, both grades will count.

### 3. Adjust For Dual Enrollment and AP Courses

If the course in a Dual Enrollment course or an Advanced Placement (AP) course (or an IB course for students who transfer from and IB program), add .5 to your converted grade (on a 4.0 scale), unless your grade is already 4.0 or if you failed the course. So, for AP courses, your grade on a 4.0 scale will be one of the following: 4.0, 3.5, 2.5, or 0. Extra weight is not given to Honors courses.

### 4. Calculate Your Average

Your transcript includes both half year classes and full year classes. Count the full year class grades twice and each half year grade once. Add up all of the scores (on the 4.0 scale), and divide by the total number (remembering that you counted full year courses twice). Do not round up. Your GPA will not be rounded up for the purposes of determining HOPE eligibility. This calculation should give you a good estimate of your current standing.

**A final HOPE average (at the end of senior year) of 3.0 or greater (without rounding) will be required to qualify for the HOPE scholarship.**

## **Move On When Ready/Dual Enrollment**

The MOWR/Dual Enrollment program provides opportunities for Georgia High School students to take college-level courses and earn concurrent credit toward a high school diploma and a college degree while still in high school. Visit the GHS Counseling website for Dual Enrollment forms: <http://bigredguidance.weebly.com>

### **Quick Checklist for the dual enrollment process**

- First and foremost, investigate and discuss Dual Enrollment information with parents **and GHS school counselor.**
- Take the tests required by your chosen institution and determine if you meet the admissions criteria for the dual enrollment program: GPA, ACT/SAT/Compass, number of credits, etc.
- Apply for admission as a dual enrollment student to the college.
- When accepted, meet with the dual enrollment coordinator at the college of your choice to choose classes and register. You must apply through GACollege411.
- Make an appointment for you and your parents with your GHS counselor to finalize paperwork and to add your college classes to GHS schedule. Bring your college acceptance letter and college schedule to this **mandatory meeting.**
- Depending on your MOWR program, apply for the HOPE Grant online at [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org). Go to Financial Aid Planning Tab and follow the appropriate prompts, HOPE Grant, etc.
- Very Important:** College withdrawal guidelines differ from high school drop/add dates. You are bound by the drop/add rules of GHS which allows 10 days (from the first day you start class) to drop a dual enrollment course.

**Deadline for completing UNG college app. and documents: 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester – November 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Deadline to meet with GHS counselor: December 1<sup>st</sup>**

**Deadline for completing Lanier Tech. app. and documents: 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester – November 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Deadline to meet with GHS counselor: December 1<sup>st</sup>**

## **MOWR/DE Parent/Student Considerations**

### **Some important points to remember as you consider Dual Enrollment Options:**

- You will be a college student – with the responsibilities of a college student. Most college classes only allow 2 or 3 absences. Many instructors will drop you from their roll if you do not attend. A failing grade will be posted to your GHS transcript if you fail or drop a Dual Enrollment college course.
- How will the Dual Enrollment college credit be accepted? Not all colleges will accept our local dual enrollment credits –especially selective colleges outside the state of Georgia.
- Many highly competitive colleges prefer AP classes to dual enrollment classes. Check with your future college prospects to find out how it might affect your admission.
- You will need to take classes to complete your high school requirements. If your dual enrollment course requires a state End Of Course Test (such as Economics, US History, etc.) you are responsible for scheduling the test at your high school during the high school testing window. No credit will be awarded without the EOCTs. We cannot give the EOCTs outside the state testing window.
- Although tuition is paid for all approved coursework, you may still encounter these and other expenses: transportation, any special tools needed for class.
- You may have to pay extra if you take classes that are not on the approved list.
- Your high school HOPE GPA is determined when you graduate from high school. If you do poorly in dual enrollment, it will affect your HOPE GPA. There is a possibility you may lose HOPE before you graduate and not receive it during your freshman year of college.
- Remember that you must approach this dual-enrollment process as a mature and responsible college-bound student. The beginning of this process is investigating the information on our website. Go to <http://bigredguidance.weebly.com> and select the **MOWR/Dual Enrollment tab**. You may also access the School Counseling page through the main Gainesville High school website. You should print the information, read it carefully, and formulate and write down questions you may have. If you meet the requirements, share this information and discuss with your parents. You and your parent will be required to meet with your counselor if you decide to participate in Dual Enrollment.

## Recommended COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS

**Step 1** – Research colleges for academic, financial and personal fit. Plan a college visit or complete a virtual tour. As a senior, you will be able to have 3 excused absences for college visits. Please visit the Guidance office for appropriate paperwork.

**Step 2** – Apply to colleges online using the college’s website, GACollege411 or the Common Application. *Take note of deadlines imposed by the college, and plan ahead.*

**Important information for college applications:**

**Gainesville High School  
830 Century Place  
Gainesville, GA 30501**

**Main Number:** (770)536-4441 **Fax Number:** (770) 287-2033 **CEEB School Code:** 111385  
**School Website:** [www.gcssk12.net](http://www.gcssk12.net) **Counseling Website:** [www.bigredguidance.weebly.com](http://www.bigredguidance.weebly.com)

**Step 3** – Personally have SAT/ACT scores sent directly from the issuing agency (SAT: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)); (ACT: [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)).

**Step 4** – If required by the college, request teacher recommendations *at least 2 weeks* ahead of deadlines. Provide your teacher with a resume or come to the counseling office to pick up a Senior Profile Worksheet. Please check with your college to see if they require electronic forms or if they prefer everything to mailed with your transcript packet.

**Step 5** – For counselor letters of recommendation, you will need to provide the counselor with a resume or Senior Profile Worksheet at least 2 weeks before the deadline. Some colleges want your recommendation to be mailed with your transcript; please check with your schools.

**Step 6** – Send your transcripts. For in-state schools, you can send your transcripts for free using [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org). If you are applying to out-of-state schools, complete a transcript request form (available in the counseling office). Each paper transcript will be available for pick-up 24 hours after your request is submitted.

**Step 7** – In January of Senior year, you will need to complete your FAFSA (Federal Application for Student Aid). Begin your FAFSA by signing up for a PIN. Visit [www.pin.ed.gov](http://www.pin.ed.gov) for more information. The application is completed electronically on [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). You will need W2’s for you and your parents from the previous year to complete the application. All documents needed are listed on the FAFSA website.

## **TYPES OF ADMISSIONS DECISIONS**

**The following are some of the most frequently mentioned admissions practices.**

### **Early Decision**

Early decision allows a student to apply between October and mid-January for an early determination of admissibility. If accepted, the student is obligated to attend. The student may submit other applications during this period, but only one can be Early Decision. If accepted through the Early Decision program, the student must withdraw all other applications. Please keep in mind that if you apply for Early Decision and are accepted, IT IS BINDING!

### **Early Action**

Early Action is a plan offered by a few schools that invites early applications but does not require the student to attend if accepted. The application deadline is usually in early November. It allows the student to receive notice of admission but is not binding. The student has until May 1<sup>st</sup> to inform the school of his/her decision.

### **Deferred Decision**

The college or university determines that more information is needed to make a final decision about a candidate's application. Often the decision is delayed until the second semester and/or new test scores are received.

### **Rolling Admissions**

The college will notify the applicant as soon as the application has been processed (usually four to six weeks) and the file is complete. It is to the student's advantage to apply early.

### **Open Admissions**

Students are accepted upon application (usually community colleges).

### **Deferred Admission**

Deferred Admission permits a student, once accepted, to postpone matriculation for one year in order to pursue other plans.

## EXPLORING POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS

***Remember that there are over 7,000 post-secondary options in the United States. You have a lot of choices when it comes to higher education. What's next after high school? Even if you're unsure what path to take after graduation, you have to start planning now for your future. The same skills and knowledge needed to get into college are the same needed to get a good job.***

### **Degree Programs:**

1. ***Certificate and Diploma Programs:*** Usually a program you can finish in less than two years, sometimes one. These programs are very career-specific and lead to employment opportunities.
2. ***Associate of Arts (A.A.) or Associate of Science (A.S.):*** A degree awarded after completing a two year college program.
3. ***Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) or Bachelor of Science (B.S.):*** A degree awarded after completing four- or five-year college program.

### **Four-year universities and colleges offer B.A. or B.S. degrees.**

1. Most four-year college students focus on coursework full time and work no more than part-time. Graduates from four-year colleges and universities are in greater demand by employers and generally earn more money than non-graduates. Tuition costs can be high and may include fees or living on-campus, but some financial aid is available for all students.
2. A common misconception is that you need to know what you want to do before going to college. On the contrary, college is a place to explore your interests and abilities in a multitude of new areas. Liberal Arts colleges, for example, encourage you to experiment in different fields before declaring a major. Most colleges require students to declare their major by the end of sophomore year. Students who do know what they want to major in can often apply to that area of study from the very beginning. Undecided students can sample a variety of courses before concentrating.

### **Community/ Technical colleges generally require 2 years of coursework to earn a degree.**

These schools are open to everyone, though a high school diploma or GED is usually required. They are relatively inexpensive and offer flexible class schedules. It is often possible to transfer to a four-year school to get a B.A. or B.S. after earning your Associate's degree.

### **U.S military provides training and money for education.**

Options include enlistment, military academies and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs. Many colleges and universities offer ROTC programs for one or more branches of the military. In addition to regular coursework, ROTC cadets take classes on military science and participate in physical and leadership training outside of the classroom. ROTC graduates can earn a B.A. or B.S., but most enter the military as an officer with a four-year active duty or eight-year inactive duty commitment after college.

### **Uncertain of which option to follow or which career path matches your interests and skills?**

We recommend that you use GACollege411 ([www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org)) to help you with this process.

## BUILDING A COLLEGE LIST

**When building a college list it is important to consider the following characteristics:**

- Campus Size/Student Population
- Location: City, Suburban, Rural
- Cost: Tuition, Financial Aid, Scholarships
- Programs and Majors Offered
- On-Campus Activities: Sports and Greek System

**After you determine a college is a good fit for you and your interests and personality, it is generally a good rule to follow these guidelines when you are deciding where to apply:**

**Students should have on their list:**

- One or two safety colleges:** colleges to which they will almost certainly be admitted.
- Some “matches”:** colleges where their GPA, test scores, and other features look very similar to those of recent entering classes.
- A reach (or two):** colleges where they meet the criteria for admission but may not have the stellar qualifications of most first year students.

**Generally speaking, colleges fall into 6 admissions categories ranging from Most Competitive to Noncompetitive based on GPA, class rank, test scores, and the school’s acceptance rank. When making admissions decisions, many colleges take into consideration the applicant pool, rigor of curriculum, recommendations, special talents, leadership, essays, intellectual curiosity, and your level of interest.**

### Most Competitive Schools

**GPA Class Rank:** Typically accept students with an A average/are in the *top 10% of their class or higher.*

**Test Scores:** Median SAT of 655 to 800 on critical reading and math / 29 and above score on the ACT.

**Acceptance Rate:** Many admit only a small percentage (1% to 33%) of students who apply.

**Examples:** Duke, Brown, Harvard, the Military Academies, Princeton, Stanford, Yale, Emory, Columbia

### Highly Competitive Schools

**GPA and Class Rank:** Look for students with *at least a B or B+ average in rigor high school classes.* Accept most of their students from the top 10% to 35% of their high school class.

**Test Scores:** Median SAT of 620 to 654 on SAT critical reading and math/ 27 to 28 composite on the ACT.

**Acceptance Rate:** Generally accept between 33% and 50% of their applicants.

**Examples:** Georgia Tech, University of Georgia, University of Florida, Furman, Oglethorpe, New York University, Boston University, Vanderbilt, UNC Chapel Hill.

### Very Competitive Schools

**GPA and Class Rank:** Look for students with at least a B- average and students that rank *in the top 35% to 50% of their class or higher*.

**Test Scores:** Median SAT of 572 to 620 on SAT critical reading and math / 23 to 27 composite on the ACT.

**Acceptance Rate:** generally accept between 50% and 75% of their applicants

**Examples:** North Georgia, Georgia College, Georgia State University, Appalachian State University, University of Tennessee, University of Alabama, Clemson

### Competitive Schools

**GPA and Class Rank:** Some require that students have at least a high school GPA of B- or better, although some state a minimum of C+ or C. They typically admit students *in the top 50% to 65% of their high school class or higher*.

**Test Scores:** Median SAT between 500 to 572 on critical reading and math / 21 and 23 composite on the ACT.

**Acceptance Rate:** generally accept 75% to 85% of their applicants.

**Examples:** Valdosta, Georgia Southern, Kennesaw State, Auburn

### Less Competitive Schools

**GPA and Class Rank:** Admit students with averages below C who rank in the top 65% of their class.

**Test Scores:** The median freshman test scores are *below 500 SAT critical reading and math and below 21 on the ACT*.

**Acceptance Rate:** generally accept 85% or more of their applicants.

**Examples:** Georgia Gwinnett College, West Georgia, Augusta State, Savannah State, Columbus State, Clayton State

### Noncompetitive Schools

**GPA and Class Rank:** Only require evidence of graduation from high school or GED.

**Test Scores:** Some require that entrance exams be taken for placement purposes only.

**Acceptance Rate:** generally accept 98% or more of their applicants.

**Examples:** Georgia Perimeter, Gwinnett Tech, Lanier Tech, Athens Tech, Chattahoochee Tech



# PAYING FOR COLLEGE

## Breakdown of the Financial Aid Terminology:

### It all starts with the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)

With this one application, you can apply for financial aid at multiple colleges and from multiple funding sources. You will need to complete the FAFSA every year, starting after January 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Scholarships:** An award that does not have to be repaid. Scholarships are generally granted based on an applicant meeting certain eligibility criteria.
- Grants:** A grant is a financial award given to a student for the purposes of paying for all or part of college expense. A grant does not need to be repaid by the student.
- Loans:** Financial Aid awards that the student or parent borrows from a lender, the school or other third party. Loans must be repaid by the borrower, usually with interest.
- Work-study:** A work-study program allows a student to earn money by working part time during the school year as a component of their financial aid package. The jobs are usually on campus.

### Sources of Financial Aid:

- Federal Government:** The federal government is the largest source of financial aid. Awards are based on financial need. Students fill out the Federal Application for Student Aid each year. Visit [www.fafsa.gov](http://www.fafsa.gov) for additional information.
- Colleges and Universities:** Schools offer a wide variety of aid and scholarships to students. These awards are both merit-based and need-based. Students might need to complete an additional application for scholarships or it may be offered as part of the admissions process. Contact your school of interest for additional information.
- Private Sources:** Churches, companies, and other organizations offer a variety of scholarships for students. Each organization has a specific set of qualification requirements. For additional information contact local organizations or visit scholarship search websites.

### Georgia's Hope Program:

- The **HOPE Scholarship** program is for students that are seeking a college degree and plan on attending college in Georgia. A 3.0 GPA in academic courses (Language Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, and Foreign Language) is required. A part of your college tuition will be covered. This amount will vary depending on projected lottery revenues and expenditures.
- The **HOPE Grant** program is for students seeking a technical certification or diploma, regardless of the student's high school grade point average or graduation date. This will cover a certain percentage of tuition at a Georgia public technical college or public college or university.
- The **Zell Miller Scholarship** program is for students who have demonstrated academic achievement and that are seeking a college degree in Georgia. To become eligible, a student must graduate with a 3.70 GPA in academic courses and a minimum score of 1200 on the SAT (Critical Reading and Math, one sitting) or 26 on the ACT in one sitting.

**You can check your HOPE GPA using [www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org).**

## **Service Academies**

An appointment to a United States Military Academy such as West Point, Air Force or the Naval Academy is considered to be a \$285,000 scholarship. It takes a strong desire to serve your country. The application process is tedious and life as a cadet is rigorous. The opportunity is without limits for the right applicant. The process is outlined below:

### **Sophomore or Junior Year**

1. Contact the academy and ask them to put you in contact with the liaison officer in your area. Make sure your counselor knows about your interest in the academy.

### **Junior Year**

1. Make sure you take the PSAT (Fall semester, one time only)
2. Ask the liaison officer to help you apply for the special summer program
3. Apply for a nomination through your Congressman
4. Take the SAT and/or ACT (Spring semester)

### **Summer before Senior Year**

1. Take medical and physical aptitude tests as directed by the academy
2. Complete applications to the academy
3. Complete applications to the Congressman

### **Several tasks must be accomplished simultaneously:**

1. Contact the academy to complete the pre-candidate information
2. You must request a nomination to a military academy from your United States Congressman and Senators
3. Contact the U.S. Senators for your state at [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov)

Contact the Congressman representing your district. Use this website for this information: [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) Many Congressmen have their academy applications available online.

### **Academy Contact Information**

Air Force  
[www.usafa.edu](http://www.usafa.edu)  
1-800-423-8723

Army – West Point  
[www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)  
1-800-872-2769

Navy  
[www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)  
1-800-872-6289

Coast Guard  
[www.uscg.edu](http://www.uscg.edu)  
1-877-NOW-USCG

Merchant Marines  
[www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)  
1-866-546-4778

## The ASVAB Career Exploration Program

Your decision to enter college, technical school, military or the civilian world of work is an important one. The ASVAB Career Exploration Program is designed to help you, no matter what future educational and career plans you may be considering.

### What is ASVAB?

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) is a multi-aptitude test battery that is designed to measure your aptitudes (abilities) at this time in your life. It consists of eight short individual tests covering verbal skills, math skill, science and technical skills. It is offered at **no cost** and **no obligation** to high school juniors and seniors.

### How can the ASVAB be used to explore careers?

You can use your ASVAB results with *Exploring Careers: The ASVAB Career Exploration Guide*. Every student who takes the ASVAB receives a copy of the Guide. It has a series of activities that will enable you to match your interests, abilities, and personal preferences to over 450 civilian and military occupations.

### Should you take the ASVAB if you plan to go to college?

**Absolutely.** *The ASVAB Career Exploration Program* provides you with Math, Verbal, and Science and Technical career exploration scores which can help you gauge your readiness for college. These scores can help you better understand your academic strengths and weaknesses. The ***Interest-Finder*** results tell you about your career-related interests which can help you choose potentially satisfying courses of study and a major that will hold your interest. The bottom line is that the ***ASVAB Career Exploration Program*** can help you confirm your current college plans and identify other college options that you may not have considered. Investing a few hours in your future now could save you lots of time later.

### What is the relationship between the ASVAB and the military?

If you are a junior or a senior, you can use scores from your ASVAB to enlist in the military after graduation. However, you are under **no obligation** to join the military as a result of taking the ASVAB. **Most students take the ASVAB for career exploration and have no interest in the Armed Services.** Others wish to explore military career possibilities. If you have high scores, recruiters may contact you to discuss current career opportunities and available scholarship monies. If you are interested, you may talk with them. If not, just say “**Thank you, sorry, not interested.**” Furthermore, there is no relationship between the ASVAB and Selective Service Registration.

## The ASSET or COMPASS Placement Tests

### What is the ASSET or COMPASS?

The ASSET/COMPASS program is a series of short placement tests developed by American College Testing (ACT) for students interested in attending any technical college in Georgia. The ASSET is a paper and pencil test while the COMPASS is taken on the computer. The results are valid for five 5 years.

## SAT and ACT Information

All colleges/universities require some type of entrance or placement examination. Most colleges and universities in the U.S. will except either the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT (American College Test). You may take either or both tests several times to improve your score. Please consult with the college or university of your choice for specific requirements. Most schools in the south accept either test! Always double check with the admissions office.

Some colleges/universities require the SAT II (subject tests). Check with the college board or your selected college/university to see if they require the SAT II for admission.

For the SAT Test Question of the Day go to: <https://sat.collegeboard.com/practice/sat-question-of-the-day>.

### SAT Testing Calendar for 2015-2016

<http://sat.collegeboard.com/registration/sat-dates>

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
<b>March 5, 2016</b>	<b>February 5, 2016</b>	<b>February 19-23, 2016</b>
<b>May 7, 2016</b>	<b>April 8, 2016</b>	<b>April 22-26, 2016</b>
<b>June 4, 2016</b>	<b>May 5, 2016</b>	<b>May 20-25, 2016</b>

### ACT Testing Calendar for 2015-2016

Register online at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
<b>April 9, 2016</b>	<b>March 4, 2016</b>	<b>March 5-18, 2016</b>
<b>June 11, 2016</b>	<b>May 6, 2016</b>	<b>May 7-20, 2016</b>

Students must request test scores be sent directly from the College Board for SAT or from ACT to individual colleges. Your high school transcript will not have test scores that can be utilized by college admission offices or the NCAA Clearinghouse or NAIA.

**UNG offers the Institutional SAT and ACT for quicker results**  
**Go to: <http://ung.edu/testing/index.php>**

**COMPASS is offered at Lanier Tech. with same day results.**  
**Call for an appointment at: 770-533-7006**

## TESTING INFORMATION: SAT vs. ACT

### **SAT** (until Jan. 2016)

#### **Basic Format:**

3 math sections  
2 reading sections  
3 writing sections (2 grammar, 1 essay)  
1 experimental section (un scored)

#### **Philosophy:**

Rewards logic and aptitude. Requires basic grasp of math and English.

#### **Material Covered:**

Arithmetic  
Algebra  
Geometry  
Advanced Algebra  
Vocabulary  
Reading Comprehension  
Grammar/Editing  
Essay writing

#### **Timing:**

Very long day...4.5 hours of testing.  
Slower pace... usually more than a minute per question.

#### **Scoring:**

Each subject is graded on a 200-800 scale. 500 is the national average of each. Typically, the score is reported as a sum of the math and reading (out of 1600) or of all three parts (out of 2400).

#### **Superscoring:**

Most schools will superscore the SAT, meaning they will take the best math, best reading, and best writing score, even if they are from different sittings.

#### **Guessing Penalty:**

Yes, meaning student should not take wild guess, only educated one.

**Registration:** [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

### **ACT**

#### **Basic Format:**

1 English section  
1 math section  
1 reading section  
1 science section

#### **Philosophy:**

Rewards hard work in school and strong grasp of material (No formulas given.)

#### **Material Covered:**

Arithmetic  
Algebra  
Geometry  
Advanced Algebra/Basic Trig.  
Reading Comprehension  
Graph/Chart Comprehension  
Grammar/Editing  
Essay writing

#### **Timing:**

Long day...3 hours of testing.  
Faster pace...usually less than a minute per question.

#### **Scoring:**

Each subject is graded on a 1-36 scale. 21 is the national average in each. The four subject scores are averaged, and a cumulative score is reported. This is also on a 1-36 scale.

#### **Superscoring:**

Most schools will not superscore the ACT, but they will take the highest cumulative.

#### **Guessing Penalty:**

No, meaning a student should never leave an answer blank. Guess!

**Registration:** [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

## SAT/ACT Score Comparisons

SAT Math and Reading	2400-Point SAT Estimate	ACT Composite
<b>1600</b>	<b>2400</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>1560-1590</b>	<b>2360</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>1510-1550</b>	<b>2300</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>1460-1500</b>	<b>2220</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>1410-1450</b>	<b>2140</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>1360-1400</b>	<b>2070</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>1320-1350</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>1280-1310</b>	<b>1950</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>1240-1270</b>	<b>1890</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>1210-1230</b>	<b>1830</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>1170-1200</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>1130-1160</b>	<b>1710</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>1090-1120</b>	<b>1650</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>1060-1080</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>1020-1050</b>	<b>1550</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>980-1010</b>	<b>1500</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>940-970</b>	<b>1440</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>900-930</b>	<b>1380</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>860-890</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>810-850</b>	<b>1250</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>760-800</b>	<b>1180</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>710-750</b>	<b>1100</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>660-700</b>	<b>1020</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>590-650</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>520-590</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>500-510</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>11</b>

The SAT and ACT are different tests that measure similar but distinct constructs. The ACT measures achievement related to high school curricula, while the SAT measures general verbal and quantitative reasoning.

This table provides a tool for finding comparable scores between the two assessments.

## **College and Career Planning**

[www.gacollege411.org](http://www.gacollege411.org) – College search, scholarships, career assessments, HOPE GPA and more  
[www.elegibilitycenter.org](http://www.elegibilitycenter.org) NCAA – Athletes must fill out form and sent transcript  
[www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org) NAIA – Athletes must fill out form and sent transcript  
[www.njcaa.org](http://www.njcaa.org) NJCAA - National Junior College Athletic Association  
[www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org) College Exploration, Comparisons, Scholarships  
[www.zinch.com](http://www.zinch.com) College Search, Admission Chances, Scholarships  
[www.cappex.org](http://www.cappex.org) College Search, Scholarships  
[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org) Common Application Forms, completing multiple applications at one time  
[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com) College Search, Application Process, Financial Aid, Majors  
[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com) College search, Scholarships  
[www.usnews.com/rankings](http://www.usnews.com/rankings) College and University Rankings  
[www.electroniccampus.org](http://www.electroniccampus.org) College Search, Financial Aid, Careers  
[www.collegeconfidential.com](http://www.collegeconfidential.com) College Search, Admissions, Paying for College  
[www.peterson.com](http://www.peterson.com) Guide to Colleges and Universities  
[www.collegeweeklive.com](http://www.collegeweeklive.com) College Search, Scholarships, Applications

## **Financial Aid and Scholarships**

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) Federal Application for Financial Aid  
[www.studentaid.ed.gov](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov) Financial Aid Explanations  
[www.finaid.com](http://www.finaid.com) Scholarships, Loans, Savings, Military Aid  
[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) Scholarship Search  
[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com) Scholarships, Loans, Grants  
[www.scholarships.com](http://www.scholarships.com) Scholarship Search  
[www.scholarshipsandgrants.us/](http://www.scholarshipsandgrants.us/) - Scholarship search  
[www.studentscholarships.org](http://www.studentscholarships.org) Scholarship Search, Career Information, College Search  
[www.thesalliemafund.org](http://www.thesalliemafund.org) Scholarships for minorities, all (includes black college dollars)  
[www.blackstudents.com](http://www.blackstudents.com) Scholarships for Black students  
[www.maldef.org](http://www.maldef.org) Scholarship information for Latinos

## **Test Information and Prep**

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) PSAT, SAT and AP information, dates  
[www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) ACT registration and information, dates  
[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) SAT, ACT, PSAT and AP prep  
[www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com) Test Prep Information  
[www.ineedapencil.com](http://www.ineedapencil.com) FREE SAT Prep  
[www.march2success.com](http://www.march2success.com) FREE SAT and ACT Prep

## **Academic Majors**

[www.careercruising.com](http://www.careercruising.com) Career Guidance  
[www.mymajors.com](http://www.mymajors.com) Majors, Careers, and Schools  
[www.collegemajors101.com](http://www.collegemajors101.com) Major and Career Information

## **Career and Employment Planning**

[www.ajb.dni.us](http://www.ajb.dni.us) America's job bank  
[www.careerpath.com](http://www.careerpath.com) Career Information, Career and Personality Tests  
[www.onetcenter.org](http://www.onetcenter.org) Occupational Information Network  
[www.myfuture.com](http://www.myfuture.com) College, Career and Military Search