

Lakeland Union High School

Senior College & Career Planning Handbook



MISSION STATEMENT:

The Lakeland Union High School District is dedicated to creating a safe, stimulating environment where all students may acquire the knowledge, skills, and ability to pursue academic, vocational and personal excellence.

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1. Senior Graduation Requirements

*“Normal progress toward meeting graduation requirements requires that a student earn a minimum of six credits each school year. Therefore, students must be enrolled in at least two credits per term to be considered full time students. Twenty-four credits are required for graduation from Lakeland Union High School.”*⁴

Required credits are as follows:

4 credits	English
3 ½ credits	Social Studies <i>(must include one semester of either Civics or AP Government)</i>
3 credits	Science <i>(must include full year of Biology)</i>
3 credits	Math
½ credit	Health
1½ credit	Physical Education
½ credit	Financial Literacy
8 credits	Electives

1.1 Senior Checklist ₃

September/October:

- ☐ If planning to attend college, ensure that you are still challenging yourself academically--colleges consider this on applications
- ☐ Finalize your college list: Use all the information that has been gathered from you college visits and your own research to determine which schools you wish to apply to compare costs of schools under consideration
- ☐ Get involved & Build your Resume: It's never too late for students to get involved
- ☐ Meet with college reps as needed
- ☐ Continue to visit colleges-face to face or virtually
- ☐ Retake the ACT if necessary to better your score. Visit act.org for future test dates & use ACT academy account for test prep
- ☐ Create a calendar for yourself to keep track of application deadlines for admission, financial aid, and scholarships
- ☐ Ask for letters of recommendation: Request these with at least a 2 week notice
- ☐ Complete College applications: Finish application for the schools you are interested in. *(UW Systems begin accepting applications as early as August 1st)*
- ☐ Check that colleges received all materials:
 - ☐ Application
 - ☐ Transcripts
 - ☐ Letters of recommendation *(if needed)*
 - ☐ ACT Test score(s) *(if needed)*
- ☐ Begin your scholarship search:
 - ☐ Visit [Student Services Scholarship Site](#)
 - ☐ Be sure to view freshman scholarships being offered from your future college

November/December/January:

- ☐ Continue building involvement
- ☐ Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend by the deadline: Course scheduling, orientation sessions, housing arrangements, and other necessary forms.
- ☐ Use winter break to continue working on scholarships for your High School and College
- ☐ Complete the FAFSA if considering attending college
- ☐ Pay attention to your attendance—graduation requires 85% attendance or better in order to walk during the ceremony
- ☐ Order your diploma, cap, gown and tassel - Will have a Senior class meeting to discuss.
- ☐ Complete FAFSA as soon as you can after applications open in December-January.
 - ☐ Seniors are able to attend our financial aid workshop for one-on-one help as you complete the application. View the LUHS website to see most current dates and information.

February/March/April:

- ☐ **Complete the local scholarship application found on the [LUHS website](#)**
- ☐ Keep an eye on your personal email and/or mail for notification from colleges
- ☐ College admissions will be looking at your final grades--FINISH STRONG!!!
- ☐ Continue submitting scholarships
- ☐ Complete enrollment paperwork for the college you will attend by their deadline:
 - ☐ Course scheduling
 - ☐ Orientation sessions
 - ☐ Housing arrangements
 - ☐ Any other necessary forms
- ☐ Register for college placement tests if needed
- ☐ [Request Final Transcripts from Xello](#)

May/June:

- ☐ Get ready for graduation!
 - ☐ Complete the Final Transcript Request Form if pursuing college
 - ☐ Complete Ms. Weldon's **Senior Survey** (*this information will be printed in the Lakeland Times*)
 - ☐ Pay all fines to Ms. Weldon in the front office
 - ☐ If adding a design to your graduation cap it must get approved by the Principal
 - ☐ Transfer any important emails or Google documents to your personal email. Seniors will one year from the date of graduation to have access to their LUHS email.
 - ☐ Provide proof of college enrollment in order to get your LUHS scholarship(s) released
 - ☐ Confirm your graduation rate is at or above 85% in order to walk at graduation (excused absences do not affect this percentage)

2. Post-Secondary Pathways

2.1 Workforce₉

For many students, finding a job immediately after high school is their number one priority. For students searching for full-time employment we recommend searching various state databases that offer current job market information. The [Job Center of Wisconsin](#) or the Department of Workforce Development offer great resources for those who are searching for a particular career field.

2.2 Military₆

There are 6 different branches of the Armed Forces: U.S. Air Force (USAF), U.S. Army (USA), U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), U.S. Marine Corps (USMC), U.S. Navy (USN), U.S. Space Force (USSF).

1. **The Air Force** is part of the Department of Defense (DOD). It's responsible for aerial military operations, defending U.S. air bases, and building landing strips. Its service members are airmen. The reserve components are Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve.
2. **The Army** is part of the DOD and is the largest of the military branches. It handles significant ground combat missions, especially operations that are ongoing. Army Special Forces are called Green Berets for their headgear. The Army's members are its soldiers. The reserve components are the Army Reserve and Army National Guard.
3. **The Coast Guard** is part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). It provides national security and search and rescue for America's waterways, seas, and coast. It's responsible for stopping drug smugglers and others breaking maritime law. It enforces marine environmental protection laws. Service members are Coast Guardsmen and nicknamed Coasties. The reserve component is the Coast Guard Reserve.
4. **The Marine Corps** is part of the DOD. It provides land combat, sea-based, and air-ground operations support for the other branches during a mission. This branch also guards U.S. embassies around the world and the classified documents in those buildings. Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) members are known as Raiders. All service members are called Marines. The reserve component is the Marine Corps Reserve.
5. **The Navy** is part of the DOD. It protects waterways (sea and ocean) outside of the Coast Guard's jurisdiction. Navy warships provide the runways for aircraft to land and take off when at sea. Navy SEALs (sea, air, and land) are the special operations force for this branch. All service members are known as sailors. The reserve component is Navy Reserve.
6. **The Space Force** is a new branch, created in December 2019 from the former Air Force Space Command. The Space Force falls within the Department of the Air Force. It organizes, trains, and equips space forces to protect U.S. and allied interests in space and provide space capabilities to the joint force.

What are the Different Pathways to Serve in each of these branches?

1. Full-Time Active Duty (Federal)
2. Part-Time Reserves (Federal)
3. Part-Time National Guard (State & Federal)

**Within each service-pathway combination, you can join as either an officer or enlisted person. Becoming an officer involves getting a 4-year college degree, possibly while training for military service. Enlisting can be done with a high school diploma.*

What are the Career Benefits for Military Members?

The military offers a variety of educational and career benefits for Service personnel and their family members such as health care, paid vacation, life insurance, retirement savings, help paying for post-secondary education, VA (Veterans Administration) benefits, and much more.

What is the ASVAB and what score do I need to enter the military?

The ASVAB stands for Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. This standardized test has been “developed and maintained by the Department of Defense. The ASVAB helps the DoD not just determine whether you are a good fit to join the service, but also which service branch you might be best for and even what [military jobs](#) you can hold after you finish basic training or boot camp. The better your [ASVAB score](#), the broader your options.”

Service Branch	Required AFQT Score*
<u>Army</u>	31
<u>Navy</u>	35
<u>Marines</u>	32
<u>Air Force</u>	31
<u>Coast Guard</u>	40

Does the military deny recruits who have a diagnosis or disability?

Medical issues are dealt with on a case-by-case basis during the recruitment process. Some medical conditions or diagnoses can be waived but in general, the following conditions will be denied:

- Any medications being taken including those for depression, anxiety, ADHD, diabetes
- Hearing aids
- Vision impairments that are considered legally blind in one or both eyes

What is ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps)?

ROTC programs provide officer training for students during college. Students commit to serving for a set period of time after graduation. Many colleges including UW-Madison offer ROTC programs and allow the student to have a traditional college experience while preparing for their future as an officer.

An ROTC scholarship is one way to get your college education paid for while training to become an officer. The other way is through a Service Academy.

***For more information and details on the military, visit: [todaysmilitary.com](https://www.todaysmilitary.com).*

2.3 Trade School

Do you like working with your hands, problem solving, and learning while on the job? Have you considered a career in the skilled construction trades? The world around us is built by skilled tradesmen and tradeswomen. Carpenters, electricians, and plumbers are just a few of the skilled trades that are thriving in Wisconsin and across the nation.

Skilled Trade Specialties

Most of us are familiar with common skilled trades such as carpenters and electricians, but the list is much longer. In Wisconsin, you could pursue a career with boilermakers, bricklayers, carpenters, cement masons, drywall finishers, electrical workers, elevator constructors, glaziers, heat/frost insulators, ironworkers, laborers, millwrights, operating engineers, painters, piledrivers, plasterers, plumber/steamfitters, roofers, sheet metal workers, sprinkler fitters, or teamsters.

If you would like to learn more about each skilled trade specialty, the Northeast Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades Council has produced a booklet called Getting into the Trades:

<https://newbt.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Getting-Into-The-Trades-Booklet.pdf>

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are one of the key benefits of careers in the skilled construction trades. The apprenticeship method of training — with a skilled worker passing on craft knowledge to another junior worker — is almost as old as recorded history. Since the Middle Ages, skills have been passed on through a master-apprentice relationship.

Apprenticeship training today is a formal arrangement involving employers, training professionals, labor unions, state government, vocational-technical colleges, and the individual who wants to learn a skilled trade. Modern apprenticeship programs are a combination of on-the-job training supervised by highly skilled workers at a job site, and related classroom instruction. This classroom instruction is provided throughout the term of the apprenticeship and teaches apprentices the theoretical aspects of their trade through courses such as blueprint reading, mathematics, and sciences. Wisconsin is unique among the 50 states in requiring that employers pay their apprentices for both time worked on the construction site and time spent in required classroom instruction, recognizing the equally important weight of both aspects of apprenticeship training.

Wisconsin's Apprenticeship Law establishes the following:

1. There must be a written agreement, an indenture, between the apprentice, the sponsor, and the state. This agreement specifies plainly the length of the training, related school requirements, an outline of the skills of the trade to be learned, and wages the apprentice will receive.
2. Work assignments from the employer must allow the apprentice to gain a comprehensive knowledge of the trade.
3. At the end of the apprenticeship, the graduate must show competency in all the skills of the trade.

Standards for apprenticeship programs are administered by the Department of Industry, Labor and Human Relations, Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards. The Bureau jointly reviews classroom training standards with the State Board of Vocational, Technical and Adult Education, which conducts most of the classroom instruction. For all major skilled trades, the Bureau works closely with state and local

apprenticeship committees, labor unions, and employer associations to ensure that the Wisconsin apprenticeship system is effective.

Most skilled trade apprenticeships take about 5 years to complete, but this varies by skilled trade specialty. When an apprentice successfully completes the apprenticeship training, they are called a journeyman. A journeyman can literally work anywhere in the United States based on the training and skills learned during their apprenticeship.

Organized Labor vs. Merit Shop Opportunities

Opportunities in skilled trades work with both organized labor (union shops) and merit shops (non-union shops). In Wisconsin, merit shops are represented by the Associated Builders and Contractors of Wisconsin, Inc (<https://buildyourcareerwi.org>). In northeastern Wisconsin, organized labor is represented by the Northeast Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades Council (<https://newbt.org>). Both provide apprenticeship opportunities in numerous skilled trade specialties.

Expected Wage & Benefit Rates

An apprentice is paid a percentage of the journeyman base wage. For example, a new apprentice is paid about 50% of the journeyman base wage. An apprentice with one year of training remaining will be paid about 90% of the journeyman base wage. You are paid more as your training and skill set progresses.

For example, hourly journeyman base pay published by the Northeast Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades Council range from \$33-59 per hour (2024-25 scale data). In addition to hourly pay, each skilled trade has a health and welfare package and a retirement pension or annuity package. Total pay with benefits ranges from \$52.77-\$100.30 per hour depending upon which skilled trade you choose to pursue.

For example, an electrician working out of Stevens Point earns \$40.19 per hour (base rate take home pay) and \$63.59 per hour if you include the health, welfare, and retirement package benefits. Check the Northeast Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades Council website for the most current pay rates (<https://newbt.org/wages-benefits/>). Note that the pay figures above are meant as an example. Merit shop pay and benefits may differ from the organized labor program.

Where can I experience the skilled trades to learn more?

If you would like to see skilled trades in action, watch for career fairs each fall. The annual Construction Trades Career Fair sponsored by the Northeast Wisconsin Building & Construction Trades Council. The event takes place in early October in northeastern Wisconsin. A second event called the *Build My Future Northcentral WI* sponsored by the Wausau Area Builders Association and Northcentral Technical College takes place in early October in Wausau. Each of these career fairs provide high school students the opportunity to spend a day learning about and interacting with different careers in the construction industry. Finally, if you know someone in the skilled trades, ask if their employer would offer a job shadow opportunity. Seeing the job with your own eyes is the best way to see if it is the right career for you.

Is an apprenticeship in the skilled construction trades right for me?

There are some challenges working in the skilled construction trades — physical work, distant drives to the jobsite, night classes after work, and inclement weather conditions; however, there are many positives too such as working outside on a beautiful fall day, working with a team of skilled trade professionals, building a project from the ground up, and helping to build the future of our communities!

2.4 Technical College

The [Wisconsin Technical College System](#) has 16 different campuses across the state. These colleges offer a few different options for students to continue their education.

1. Certificate Program

- a. Examples include: Dental Assistant, Phlebotomist, Early Childhood Caretaker
- b. Anywhere from 3-9 months to complete

2. Associates Degree

- a. Examples include: Respiratory Therapist, Dental Hygienist, Accounting, Law Enforcement
- b. 2 year degree

3. University Transfer Program

- a. Earning an Associates degree, typically of Arts & Science or Liberal Arts, will allow students to then transfer to any 4-year UW institution. The transfer program allows students pursuing a bachelor's degree to complete their general education courses (English, Social Studies, etc) at a technical college at a lower tuition rate. Students will then begin their Junior year at their 4 year institution.

3. College Planning

3.1 Which level of education is right for me?

Each career goal requires a different level of educational training. Your goals, values, and priorities will help you determine which pathway is the best for you at this moment.

Apprenticeship/Certificate Program₁₀

An academic program in a specific or specialized area of interest with fewer credit requirements than an academic major. Apprenticeship programs are modernized training programs for skilled employment. Starting in high school, students can get training in various fields such as construction, health care, IT, financial services and much more. These programs are referred to as “earn-while-you-learn training”.

Associate Degree

A two-year postsecondary degree. Students who pursue this kind of degree full-time can complete a program in as little as two years— though many choose to go at their own pace. An associate degree translates into the first two years of a bachelor's degree (freshman and sophomore year).

Bachelor's Degree

Traditionally a 4-year degree awarded to an individual after completion of undergraduate coursework, usually taking eight semesters and 120 credits to complete. Also called an undergraduate degree.

Master's Degree

A master's degree is pursued after a student has completed their Bachelor's Degree. A Master's can often be completed in 1-3 years of graduate schooling. In some fields of study, such as fine arts, a master's degree is the terminal degree, which means there is no further academic degree or credential offered. A master's program usually entails coursework and exams. Programs may require a written thesis, a final paper, or a comprehensive exam.

Doctorate Degree

A doctoral degree is an extended graduate degree, typically completed after a bachelor's or Master's Degree. Depending on your educational background a doctorate program can take anywhere from 4-6 years to complete. Some of the most common doctoral degrees people pursue are engineering, education, psychology, and the biological sciences.

3.2 How to Write Your College Essay¹¹

For the majority of college applications there is a personal statement or essay required. While the idea of writing an essay can be nauseating, this is a great opportunity for students to write about “Who you are, and what do you value?” And in recent years, the main Common Application essay has become more and more important in colleges’ decision making process, especially as many colleges are [relying less and less on standardized test scores.](#)”

3.3 Comparing Cost of Tuition

[Reciprocity Agreements for Wisconsin Residents:](#) The Midwest Student Exchange Program, or MSEP, is a multi-state tuition reciprocity program. Through the MSEP, public institutions agree to charge students no more than 150% of the in-state resident tuition rate for specific programs; private institutions offer a 10% reduction on their tuition rates. All enrollment decisions are made at the discretion of the receiving campus and the campus may exercise its right to limit participation or set specific admission requirements for MSEP. States within this agreement are: Minnesota, Ohio, Wisconsin, Kansas, North Dakota, Indiana, Nebraska, and Missouri. **Illinois removed their participation as of 2022.* ⁵

Public versus Private School Tuition:

For Wisconsin residents specifically, the average annual tuition for a public college or university is \$8,697 compared to the average annual tuition for a private institution being \$34,424. ⁷ While this cost difference is drastic, students should not be discouraged from applying to private colleges. For many of these privately funded institutions they have a higher amount of scholarships to offer. So depending on your Financial Aid package, scholarships offered, and the cost of living, the final costs may be comparable to public universities.

3.4 Sending Official Documents to your College(s) of Choice

AP Test Scores ¹

Your AP score report must be sent to your colleges directly from <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/sending-scores>. A complete score history from all past AP exams will be sent to your designated college, university, or scholarship program unless you choose to withhold or cancel any of your scores.

When you look at your online score report, check that it's complete. Some scores may take longer to process because of later testing dates or other circumstances (e.g., late arrival of testing materials or extra time needed to match records). We'll email you when your score is added to your score report.

If you notice that exams that you took **last year or earlier** (up to four years ago) are missing, it might be because you have multiple accounts. To resolve a multiple account issue, contact AP Services for Students via our online form, or call 888-225-5427 (toll free) or 212-632-1780. Please note that during score release in July, AP Services for Students will have longer than usual response times.

Keep in mind that you can send your scores for free to one recipient every year that you take AP Exams. To use your free score send, sign in to My AP, go to My AP Profile, select the Score Send tab and choose the college, university, or scholarship organization that you want to receive your score report. Make sure to take advantage of your 2025 free score sent before the June 20 deadline. Even if the deadline has passed you can send your scores online at any time for a fee.

ACT Scores

ACT scores must be submitted to your college(s) directly from the act.org website. If a Senior has only ever taken the ACT with their Junior class at LUHS they will complete the following steps:

1. Click on MyACT Sign In at the top of the ACT homepage
2. Click on Create MyACT Account
3. Click on “I’m new, let’s get started”
4. Complete your demographic information

***Make sure the email you use to create an account matches the email you used when filling out the ACT paperwork your Junior year. If these emails do not match you will need to call ACT support to get this information merged together.*

What is a Superscore and how to Calculate it:

Superscoring is the process of averaging your four best subject scores from all of your ACT test attempts. Students who have taken the ACT more than once can calculate superscores and provide their best scores to college—so long as the college accepts superscoring. Here is how to find your superscore:

1. Gather all of your ACT score reports
2. Fill out a table with your test dates and corresponding scores from all tests so that you can easily compare subject scores
3. Identify your best score in each subject area by circling the highest number in each column
4. Calculate the average by adding those four scores together, dividing by four, and rounding to the nearest whole number. Add the four scores together
(22+23+23+22)=90 Divide the sum of your scores by 4: $90/4 = 22.5$. Therefore, 23 = your superscore

**Your superscore is never lower than your composite score*

LUHS Transcript

1. Login to your LUHS Chromebook
2. Find the Xello link under “BOOKMARKS” (*Sign in should occur automatically*)
3. Once logged into Xello click on the “PLANS” tab at the top of your screen
4. Click on COLLEGE APPLICATIONS
5. Create NEW APPLICATION
6. Search for the Institution (i.e. University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh)
7. Click NEXT
8. Select options for the following: (*this information is simply meant as a reminder for you*)
 1. APPLICATION METHOD (i.e. Common App, UW-System)
 2. ADMISSIONS TYPE
 3. DEADLINE
9. Click CREATE
10. Scroll down to APPLICATION CHECKLIST
11. Click REQUEST

**Repeat this process for each college you wish to send a transcript to*

Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are not always required for college applications but a strong, positive letter from a coach, teacher, counselor, or community member won't negatively impact a student's application. Students can submit these letters via mail or via your application portal (Common App, UW Systems).

3.5 List of College Planning Tools

1. [Up Next](#)

A free texting tool that offers personalized support on all things college access: college search and application, federal student aid, even student loan repayment information, all through text messages.

2. [College for Rural Wisconsin](#)

Connect with a Rural Peer Ambassadors – current college students from rural communities in Wisconsin and Minnesota – to ask questions about college through a FREE texting service. Chat one-on-one to get answers on all things college! Whether it's about paying for college, applying, or what it's like to be a rural college student, Ambassadors can help.
Text COLLEGE to 877.812.1746

3.6 Direct Admissions

Direct admissions is a proactive admissions process that offers college admission to qualified students before they apply. Offers are based on data which includes GPA, course selection, and/or class rank. This is one of the many efforts to simplify and streamline the admissions process. Below are the 3 different ways your student can receive direct admit.

- I. [Direct Admit Wisconsin](#) is an initiative by the Universities of Wisconsin to proactively offer admission to qualifying high school students in between their junior and senior years of high school. Direct admission removes the traditional application process and instead uses data provided by the high school to admit students to universities. Students who receive Direct Admit Wisconsin offers of admission must successfully complete required academic courses, maintain (or raise) their GPA, graduate from a recognized high school and submit an official final high school transcript.

Students can access their UW Direct Admit offers by following the steps below:

1. Go to apply.wisconsin.edu
2. Click on the Direct Admit link at the top
3. Click Accept Offer
4. Create an Account
5. When creating an account, the student needs to use both their highschool email and a personal email. Once these emails have been verified and the accounts linked, they should then be able to access their UW direct admit offers.

II. [Wisconsin Guarantee](#)

The Wisconsin Guarantee offers guaranteed admission to all Universities of Wisconsin (UW) universities for all who qualify. First-year applicants from Wisconsin high schools who are in the top 10% of their class at the end of 11th grade, or Wisconsin residents who are homeschooled and receive an ACT score in the national 90th percentile ranking or higher, or

are a National Merit Scholarship finalist will be guaranteed to all UW universities except UW-Madison.

Additionally, first-year applicants from Wisconsin high schools who are in the top 5% of their class at the end of 11th grade, or Wisconsin residents who are homeschooled and receive an ACT score in the national 98th percentile ranking or higher or are a National Merit Scholarship finalist will be guaranteed admission to UW-Madison provided that they apply on or before the Early Action deadline.

III. [Common App Direct Admit](#)

Students who choose to use the Common App platform also have a chance to receive direct admissions offers. By self-reporting your data, participating colleges set their requirements, including a minimum GPA and perks, like waiving the essay. Common App then finds first-generation, low- and middle-income students who meet these requirements using their Common App responses.

Students are notified of direct admissions offers in their Common App accounts and by email. They can learn more about the college, including academic program exclusions or other requirements. If a student chooses to apply with this non-binding admissions offer, they don't have to pay an application fee and aren't required to enroll if they apply.

Colleges will review student applications to verify their accuracy. The colleges will also ensure the students' applications meet their stated criteria, including any college-specific program and academic major exceptions.

3.7 Accessing Your Accommodations at College

Students with disabilities can request accommodations via their institutions' accessibility center. [The Universities of Wisconsin \(UW\) system provides accommodations](#) for students and employees with disabilities to ensure equal access to all programs, services, and activities. These accommodations, often called reasonable accommodations, are modifications or adjustments made to ensure individuals with disabilities are not denied access to the benefits of programs or activities.

How to request accommodations:

1. Register with the campus disability services office:

Each UW campus has a dedicated office that serves students with disabilities, like the McBurney Disability Resource Center at UW-Madison or the Accessibility Resource Center (ARC) at UWM.

2. Provide documentation:

Students need to provide documentation that supports their disability and the need for accommodations, demonstrating a substantial impact on a major life activity.

3. Meet with a disability services representative:

Meet with the office to discuss accommodation needs and develop an individualized plan.

4. Inform faculty and instructors:

Students should inform their instructors and faculty advisors about their eligibility for accommodations.

5. Request accommodations:

Submit a written request for accommodations to the relevant office.

6. Follow-up as needed:

Regularly remind instructors of your eligibility and any accommodations you need.

****Appeal process:** The UW System has an appeal process for individuals who disagree with a decision regarding accommodations. Appeals must be filed within a specified timeframe (e.g., 15 working days).

Overall, students are encouraged to **be proactive and disclose their need for accommodations as early as possible** during the admissions and enrollment processes. **Students and faculty share the responsibility** for implementing reasonable accommodations.

4. Navigating the Financial Aid Process (FAFSA) ₂

Understanding how to start the Free Application for Federal Student Aid can be an overwhelming process. To help students and families understand the process we have broken it down into steps.

4.1 Requirements for FAFSA

1. Demonstrate some level of financial need
2. U.S. citizenship
3. Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a college or university
4. Be enrolled at least half-time to be eligible for Direct Loan Program funds
5. Maintain satisfactory academic progress in college to maintain your financial aid

4.2 Steps to Complete the FAFSA

1. GET ORGANIZED

To complete the FAFSA for next year's fall semester you will need information from your federal tax return from two years prior. Tax forms may include a Form 1040, any unemployment, child support, W-2 for both student and 1 parent (*if parents are divorced they specify that the parent that has provided the most financial assistance for the past year must file*).

2. CREATE YOUR FSA-ID

If you are a dependent student, one of your parents will also need to create a FSA-ID of their own. To create your FSA-ID go to www.fafsa.ed.gov

1. On the home page, click on: Apply For Aid, Complete the FAFSA Form and Start Here
2. Indicate whether you are the student or parent
3. Unless you are a returning user, click on "Create FSA ID". After you set up your FSA-ID and have established your personal username and password, keep it in a secure place. Your username does not expire, but your FSA ID password will expire every 18 months.

3. COMPLETE THE FAFSA

Once you have created your FSA ID, log in to the FAFSA using your FSA ID username and password. Click Start a New FAFSA and make sure you are completing the correct academic year. You will be prompted to enter a Save Key that will allow you to save and finish your FAFSA at a later time or make corrections. NOTE: Complete every question and enter zero instead of leaving a box blank. The 'Help and Hints' box displays may help you to complete a question.

4. SUBMIT YOUR FAFSA

At the end of your FAFSA application you will agree to terms, sign, and submit the FAFSA. For dependent students, the parent with the FSA-ID will choose if they are parent 1 or parent 2 and enter their username and password; agree to terms; sign; and submit the FAFSA. You should then see a page confirming that your application has been received as well as a confirmation email.

5. REVIEW YOUR SUBMISSION SUMMARY

You'll receive your submissions summary via email once you complete the FAFSA. Review this document carefully and verify the information is correct. If you see incorrect information, make corrections on your FAFSA by returning to www.fafsa.ed.gov. Keep this summary for your records. A corrected Summary will be issued when changes are made. The college Financial Aid office will receive your information electronically from the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions regarding your financial aid package, students should call the college's financial aid office directly as they are the ones who determine your awards and disbursement.

6. SUBMITTING ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS FOR THE VERIFICATION PROCESS IF NECESSARY

You might see a note on your FAFSA Submission Summary saying you've been selected for verification; or your school might contact you to inform you that you've been selected. Verification is the process your school uses to confirm that the data reported on your FAFSA form is accurate. If you're selected for verification, your school will request additional documentation that supports the information you reported.

Don't assume you're being accused of doing anything wrong. Some people are selected for verification at random; and some schools verify all students' FAFSA forms. All you need to do is provide the documentation your school asks for—and be sure to do so by the school's deadline, or you won't be able to get financial aid.

7. UNDERSTANDING & CHOOSING A FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE

Once a student receives their financial aid award package they should take time to compare the financial packages from each college to see what is the best fit.

Students will often receive a combination of aid: grants, unsubsidized loans, subsidized loans, Parent-PLUS loans, scholarships, work-study, etc). Here is the order in which you should accept these student aid:

1. Grants and Scholarships (money you don't have to pay back)

2. Work-Study (allowance for you to earn from a job on-campus)
3. Subsidized Loans (loans that won't accrue interest while you are in college)
4. Unsubsidized Loans (loans that will begin to gain interest as soon as you beg

If a student and their family's financial situation has drastically changed in the past two years there is the option to appeal your financial aid package. View this resource on [How to Appeal your Financial Aid Package](#) and why you may want to consider doing so. See *Appendix* for full document.

4.3 FAFSA Vocabulary

Cost of Attendance (COA) refers to the average cost to attend college for one academic year (fall through spring). COA includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, transportation, and personal expenses.

Dependent for Financial Aid Purposes—Typically, undergraduate students who are under the age of 24 as of December 31 of the award year. These students will report their parents' information on the FAFSA.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)—A term formerly used in the FAFSA calculations which reflected the amount of money that a student's family was expected to contribute to college costs for one year. This term was replaced with Student Aid Index (SAI) as of fall 2024.

Federal Pell Grant Program—A need-based grant issued from the federal government to low-income undergraduate and certain post-baccalaureate students, and does not need to be repaid.

Grant—Money that is given to a college student usually by the government that does not need to be paid back.

Net costs—Cost of Attendance minus any gift aid. They include loans, money you pay directly to the college, and estimated funds your student might need.

Student Aid Index (SAI)—The student aid index is the eligibility index number that your college's or career school's financial aid office uses to determine how much federal student aid you would receive if you attended the school. This number results from the financial information you and your contributor(s) provide on your FAFSA® form. One major difference between the EFC and SAI is the new formula removes the number of family members in college from the calculation and allows a minimum SAI of negative \$1,500 to give financial aid administrators more insight when making determinations for students with especially challenging situations. The need analysis formula will remain: cost of attendance (COA) minus Student Aid Index (SAI) and other financial assistance equals eligibility for need-based financial aid.

Subsidized Federal Student Loan —A loan that is based on financial need, and interest is paid by the government while the students are enrolled in college. Only undergraduate students who are enrolled at least half time are eligible.

Unsubsidized Federal Student Loan —Loan that is not based on financial need. Interest accrues as soon as the loan is disbursed. Undergraduate and graduate students are eligible to receive these

loans. Given the higher cost of interest for this type of loan students should consider relying more heavily on Subsidized loans whenever possible.

Work Study–The Work Study Program helps students earn funding through a part-time job, typically on campus. Work study is part of a financial aid offer which is determined by a student’s level of financial need.

5. Earning College Credit While in High School

There are three different ways students can earn college credits while at Lakeland Union High School.

1. **Advanced Placement (AP) Courses** which are designed to be rigorous high school courses that provide students the opportunity to take the AP exam at the end of the school year in hopes of scoring high enough to earn college credit. A student who scores a 3, 4, or 5 has shown that they reached a level of mastery comparable to if they would have taken an introductory college course. The cost to take the AP exam is roughly \$99 unless a student qualifies for a fee waiver.
2. **Transcripted Credit (TC) courses** are high school classes taught by your high school teachers and held to the same standards as an equivalent college course. Essentially, a college has reviewed the curriculum and lessons for this class and agreed that this teacher has the qualifications and lessons that would meet their standards of learning which allows this high school class to earn you college credit if you choose. There is no cost to take a transcripted course at this point in time.
3. **Start College Now (SCN) & Early College Credit Program (ECCP)** are the final paths to earning college credit while in high school. SCN students must work directly with a technical college and ECCP students work directly with a 4-year institution. These courses are taught by college professors. Given that LUHS is within the district of Nicolet College we are partnered with Nicolet for our SCN program. Students interested in this program must apply to participate. The deadline to apply is October 1st for spring semester and March 1st for the following fall semester. So long as a student successfully completes their college course, LUHS will pay for their tuition and textbooks for up to 18 college credit hours.

If you are wondering which path is best for you here are some things to consider. For a complete list of AP and transcripted courses, please review our [Student Handbook](#).

	AP Courses	Transcripted Courses	SCN / ECCP Course
Cost	\$99 per exam	Free to student	Free to student unless failed or withdrawn–paid for by LUHS
Student Requirements	Instructor Consent and/or Recommendation	See LUHS Coursebook for more details but essentially open to all students.	Students must hold a 3.0 GPA or higher and have minimal academic or behavioral misconduct

Course Setting	LUHS Classroom with LUHS teacher	LUHS Classroom with LUHS teacher	Virtual or College setting with college instructor
Credit Earned	Earning college credit is not guaranteed. Students must score a 3, 4, or 5 on their AP exam. If a student scores high enough to earn college credit this credit will be recognized and transferable for most colleges across the country.	Transcripted course credit is typically credit that is primarily recognized and transferable through the technical college system rather than 4-year universities. Students must specifically sign up through the institution of origin to receive the college credit.	Depending on the course being taken many of the general studies courses are automatically transferable throughout the UW System while other courses, similar to transcripted credits, are only beneficial to technical colleges.

6. FAQs

What should I choose first– A major or a college?

Every student's college search experience will look different based on their values and goals. For many students it is beneficial to start by choosing a major as this course of study rather than a college. A college major is a subject or field of study that you choose to be your main interest. By choosing a major *before* choosing a college students will be able to make decisions that more closely align with their career goals and future rather than choosing a college only to later find out they don't offer any of the majors that student is interested in pursuing.

Check out the U.S. Department of Education's [College Scorecard](#) to help search colleges across the country based on your values. Click on "Compare" and "Search Schools".

How many colleges should I apply to?¹¹

To increase your chances of getting into a selective school—and to account for colleges you may not have considered before—we recommend a balanced list. A balanced list includes at least 3 reach colleges, 2 matches, and 1 safety school. They should all be colleges you'd be happy to attend.

A Reach School is an institution where your ACT score is lower than the average score range of last year's freshman class. Matches: Your ACT score is solidly in the same score range as last year's freshman class. Safeties: Your ACT score is higher than the average score range of last year's freshman class. ¹

[The College Essay Guy](#) recommends applying to 10 colleges:

- 1 Wild Card (1-10%)
- 3 Reach - Low Chance of Acceptance (11%-25% chance of acceptance)
- 3 Maybe - Medium Chance (26%-60% chance)
- 3 Likely - High Chance (61%+ chance)

What application platform should I use to apply to college?


Many students use the Common App or the UW-System application portal to submit their college applications. The convenience of these platforms allows students to complete one set of personal data and submit to multiple colleges at the same time.

Wondering how to know which colleges use the Common App? Check out this website:

<https://www.commonapp.org/explore/>

What's the difference between ACT and SAT? Is one better than the other?

The SAT (once referred to as the Scholastic Aptitude Test) and the ACT (American College Testing) have many similarities. Colleges do not have a preference for one test over another. While the majority of Wisconsin and Midwest colleges do not have a preference, LUHS only offers the ACT as this is the most common college admissions test for colleges and universities in the Midwest.

SAT [®] A CLOSER LOOK	ACT [®] A CLOSER LOOK
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 154 questions / 3 Hours (plus 50-min essay)• 1 min 10 seconds per question• Top Score = 1600 (sum of 2 sections)• "Real World" Problems, Evidence-Based, Content-Based, Multi-Step Solutions• Writing: similar to ACT English + Charts & Graphs• Reading: Greater emphasis on vocabulary, historical texts + charts and graphs• Math: Heart of Algebra (33%), Problem Solving & Data Analysis (29%), Passport to Advanced Math (28%), Other (10%).• Features a no-calculator math section• Features some "grid-in" answer choices• No "Science" Section• No Guessing Penalty• Score Choice• Optional Essay: Analyze an argument <small>SAT[®] is a trademark owned by the College Board, which is not affiliated with, and does not endorse, this product. ACT[®] is a trademark owned by ACT, which is not affiliated with, and does not endorse, this product.</small>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 215 questions / 2 Hours 55 min (plus 40-min essay)• 49 seconds per question.• Top Score = 36 (average of 4 sections)• Straightforward questions, longer test, intense time pressure• English: similar to SAT Writing w/o charts & graphs• Reading: Lesser emphasis on vocabulary (no charts & graphs)• Math: Pre-Algebra (23%), Algebra (17%), Intermediate Algebra (15%), Coordinate Geometry (15%), Plane Geometry (23%), Trigonometry (7%).• Calculator allowed on all math sections• "Science" Section = Charts & Graphs• No Guessing Penalty• Score Choice• Optional Essay: Consider an issue & three perspectives as you make your own argument. 

Do colleges view student applications differently if they apply as "undecided"?

Being undecided is the most common major for incoming undergraduates—as a matter of fact some colleges require all incoming freshmen to apply as undecided because they know many students will change their minds. Being undecided does not subject a student to a different review process; however, some colleges have specific scholarships that are specific to certain majors. Therefore, undeclared students would not be eligible for scholarships that are major specific. An admissions survey from spring of 2022 shows that all UW colleges view "undecided" status no differently in the admissions process.

What do colleges want me to write about in my personal statement?

College admissions teams take a holistic approach on student applications—this means that they view the applicant as a whole person, beyond one set of test scores, and beyond 4 years of grades. Colleges want to know who you are as a person and what you will offer to their campus. If you don't believe us, here is what they said...

"Be genuine and honest! Avoid silly grammar errors and have multiple trustworthy eyes go over your essay before submission. We want the essay to give us insight into who the student is beyond just their ACT. If there is a random dip in the student's grades due to a personal hardship, we want to know those things."

Lastly, don't let the essay delay the submission of the application. As long as you do your best, tell the truth, and write clear and concisely, everything will be fine!"-- UW–Stevens Point

"TELL YOUR STORY! Tell a story that is an example that represents WHY you are a leader, helpful, hardworking, caring, or _____(fill in the blank)."--UW–River Falls

"Tell us who you are and what you can bring to our university. If there is a red flag on your academic record, wave that flag. Tell us the "why" behind it to give us a better understanding."--UW-Oshkosh

"I would recommend that seniors try to write their essays with as much personal voice as possible! A good essay almost always has a good personal voice and passion vs. just a list of a students' accomplishments."--Milwaukee School of Engineering

"It's a great time for students to share any additional context about themselves and their academics that might aid in the process. Spend some time and make sure it is professional, but don't let it be something that stresses you out or takes weeks to complete. We are not expecting a Pulitzer-prize-winning piece!"--UW-Eau Claire

Will a scholarship affect my financial aid?

A scholarship will affect your other student aid because all your student aid added together can't be more than your cost of attendance at your college or career school. So, you'll need to let your school know if you've been awarded a scholarship so that the financial aid office can subtract that amount from your cost of attendance (and from certain other aid, such as loans, that you might have been offered). Then, any amount left can be covered by other financial aid for which you're eligible. Questions? Ask your financial aid office.

What is an award letter and when will I receive it?¹¹

Every college you are accepted to will provide you with an award letter which breaks down the list of monies being offered or awarded to you. You can expect to see loans, grants, work study, and/or scholarships. Think of it like an itemized receipt of your educational expenses.

Award letters must be accepted and sent back to the college financial aid office in order for you to claim the money that is being offered—otherwise it will be forfeited. The single most common reason a financial aid award letter isn't generated and sent to you is that there is a problem with the student's FAFSA. Here are the top three FAFSA hiccups and how to fix them.

#3 FAFSA (or CSS Profile) was never submitted.

Whoops! Go back to Section 3 for help filling these out ASAP! Usually the issue has to do with missing signatures.

#2 The college wasn't added to the FAFSA.

This is an easy fix. Log in to your FAFSA form using your FSA ID. Click "Make a Correction." Go to the School Selection page. Add the college you forgot. Go to the submit page and sign using your FSA ID. Have your FAFSA parent do the same. Hit submit. Wait 5 days. Check with the college again.

#1 most common reason an award letter is delayed is you haven't checked your email.

If a college is missing anything they need to finish processing your award letter, they would have emailed you about it. Probably multiple times.

If you haven't gotten any such email (and you're sure you've checked the correct email address and your spam/junk folders), then call or email the financial aid office to politely ask what the holdup is. Feel free to use the template below.

Hello,

My name is _____. My student ID is [insert assigned college student ID]. I was accepted to attend college at your institution in the fall. I'm emailing to inquire about the status of my financial aid award letter as it does not appear in the student portal and I haven't received a digital or physical copy yet.

Please let me know if you are missing any items from me. I've checked my email and student portal but haven't seen anything to indicate that my award would be delayed.

If all is well, please let me know—at your convenience—when I might expect to receive the award letter.

Thank you for your attention, and I look forward to making my enrollment decision once I've had a chance to review my financial aid package.

Why would I apply for financial aid if I know I'm not going to qualify?

Any student applying for financial aid will receive a loan offer regardless of your Student Aid Index (formerly known as estimated family contribution). Students whose SAI is "too high" will be offered Unsubsidized Federal Loans.

Another important reason students and families should consider applying for the FAFSA is related to college scholarships. Oftentimes colleges will view scholarship applicants differently if they have not attempted to apply for financial aid. In other words, show your college you have exhausted your options for financial aid before asking them for scholarships.

How do I send my transcript to colleges?

Colleges or Universities require an official transcript after graduation. A transcript becomes "official" when it is received from a secure authenticated designated party or the issuing institution. It must bear institutional validation (such as seal, logo, or watermark), date, and appropriate signature. Transcripts received that do not meet these requirements are not considered official. During the application process all UW colleges will accept an uploaded, unofficial transcript for the admissions decision. Students can access their unofficial transcripts via Infinite Campus.

What does it mean if I'm waitlisted?

Students who receive a waitlist decision are neither admitted nor denied. Students offered a spot on a waitlist are generally compelling applicants, but simply do not have enough room in the college's incoming class. Many colleges will wait until after May 1st National College Decision Day to know which admitted students will be committed to attending and thus the college will better understand how much space remains, if any, in the incoming class. Colleges will then admit students from the waitlist to fill any available seats.

What can/should I do after receiving a waitlist decision?

In order to be considered for admission, you must accept your spot on the waitlist by a certain date—typically in spring. The number of students that a college is able to admit from the waitlist varies from year to year, therefore, It is important for students to continue to work hard as they wrap up their senior year and not forget about the colleges they have been admitted to.

If you have any questions about the waitlist process for a certain college it is best to contact their admissions office. Know that they may not have the concrete answers you are looking for but they may be able to help provide an estimated date of decision.

Should I apply to a college even if my ACT scores are below their published ranges?

Yes. The admission scores and grades that colleges show on their websites are averages or ranges—not cutoffs. There are students at every college who scored lower (and higher) than the numbers shown.

Remember that colleges consider many factors to get a more complete picture of you. For example, they look at the types of classes you take, your activities, recommendation letters, your essay and your overall character. Colleges are looking for all kinds of students with different talents, abilities and backgrounds. Admission test scores and grades are just two parts of that complete picture.

What level of importance do 4 year colleges hold for my high school grades, letters of recommendation, quality of character, etc.?

Below is a data table from the [National Association for College Admissions Counseling](#) which essentially lists the order of importance as determined by colleges across the country rating the importance of factors in their admissions process (2023).

Admissions Factors		Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
High school grades in college prep courses		76.8	15.1	4.9	3.2
Total high school grades (<i>all courses</i>)		74.1	18.9	5.4	1.6
Strength of high school curriculum		63.8	22.7	10.3	3.2
Positive character attributes		28.3	37.5	18.5	15.8

Essay or writing sample		18.9	37.3	26.5	17.3
Student's interest in attending		15.7	27.6	25.4	31.4
Counselor recommendation		11.9	40.0	27.6	20.5
Teacher recommendation		10.8	40.5	28.1	20.5
Extracurricular activities		6.5	44.3	30.8	18.4
High school class rank		5.5	22.4	43.2	29.0
Admission test scores (ACT, SAT)		4.9	25.4	38.9	30.8
Portfolio		4.9	10.8	24.3	60.0
Interview		4.3	8.6	32.4	54.6
Work		2.2	30.8	40.0	27.0
State graduation exam scores		1.6	6.5	18.4	73.5
Subject test scores (AP, IB)		1.1	22.2	25.9	50.8

How do I know if I am eligible for a fee waiver?

Fee waivers are available for students in a variety of opportunities (i.e. ACT testing, AP testing, college applications, etc). Typically students who are eligible for a fee waiver qualify based on their income status. Free and reduced lunch status is often used to determine this eligibility. Students who have questions or concerns about their eligibility or their ability to pay should contact their school counselor.

Do I need 2 years of a World Language to be admitted to a 4 year University?

Not all colleges or universities require two years of a world language for admissions. As of the fall of 2025 the only UW campus that requires two years or more of world language to be admitted is UW-Madison. Every college has different requirements and therefore it is important to check their website for admissions requirements.

It is also important to note that admissions requirements are different from graduation requirements. While many colleges do not require a world language in order to be admitted they may require you to take a certain number of semesters of a world language in order to graduate from your program. If world language is a graduation requirement many colleges will offer the chance for students to “test out” to show they have reached the required skill level based on their high school course experience.

What if I plan to attend a 4-year college but I have not taken Advanced Algebra?

The majority of 4 year colleges require the completion of Advanced Algebra as this is considered a college preparatory math course. Some colleges such as MSOE and UW-LaCrosse are firm with this math requirement. Other admissions teams state there is some flexibility in this criteria and they look at the applicant holistically.

In addition, many colleges openly admit that taking four years of math is strongly encouraged and even preferred. This additional year of math will allow students to provide a more well-rounded course of study. Students who are planning on pursuing a career or major within STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) are going to be expected to have this 4th year of math given this is your chosen field.

I've been accepted into several colleges but how do I choose which is best for me?

Making the final decision on where to go to college can be the most difficult part in the whole process. Unfortunately there is no clear answer as to which college will be the best choice until you're already there. When making this decision it is important to consider a number of factors such as cost of attendance, housing situation, distance from home, scholarships or gift aid, and how well their majors align with your career goals. To help families in this process we have created a customizable spreadsheet that will help you track these various factors for each institution you are considering.

**Use this helpful tool to create a [Customizable College Search Spreadsheet](#)*

7. Glossary

ACT—A standardized college admission test. It features four main sections: English, math, reading and science

Admission Tests—Also known as college entrance exams, these are tests designed to measure students' skills and help colleges evaluate how ready students are for college-level work. The ACT and the College

Board's SAT are two standardized admission tests used in the United States. The word "standardized" means that the test measures the same thing in the same way for everyone who takes it.

Application Fee—An application fee is a fee that a college charges for applying to their institution. Each college can choose how much to charge, and whether or not they charge a fee at all. In fact, many colleges don't charge a fee.

Apprenticeship—An apprenticeship is an “earn while you learn” program providing on-the-job training and related instruction. The employer teaches the skills of the occupation. An area technical college or private training center teaches theoretical knowledge pertaining to the specific occupation.

Award Letter: a list of all the different kinds of money—scholarships, grants, loans, work study—you've received to go to a particular college next year. [Head here for greater detail and an example award letter.](#)

Class Rank—A measurement of how your academic achievement compares with that of other students in your grade. This number is usually determined by using a weighted GPA that takes into account both your grades and the difficulty of the courses you've taken.

Course Load—The total number of high school or college credits someone is taking.

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.

[Direct Admit Wisconsin](#)—Direct Admit Wisconsin is an initiative by the Universities of Wisconsin to proactively offer admission to qualifying high school students in between their junior and senior years of high school. Direct admission removes the traditional application process and instead uses data provided by the high school to admit students to universities. For more information, visit the Direct Admit Wisconsin website.

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 for 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.

FAFSA— Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the most common form of financial aid available to college students. *For more FAFSA related definitions refer to the section above:* [Navigating the Financial Aid Process.](#)

Gap Year— an intentional period of time devoted to personal growth through experiential learning opportunities. Gap years can have many benefits for students depending on life circumstances. Visit <https://www.gapyearassociation.org/> for more resources in helping your student plan for a gap year.

Gift Aid—Another term for any type of tuition assistance that doesn't require repayment. Scholarships, grants, and pell grants are examples of gift aid.

Grants—The federal government provides grants for students attending college or career school. Most types of grants, unlike loans, are sources of financial aid that generally do not have to be repaid. Grants can come from the [federal government](#), [your state government](#), your college or career school, or a private or nonprofit organization. It is recommended that students apply for as many grants as they are eligible for. Apply for these grants as soon as possible because many of these funds are on a first-come-first served basis.

Orientation—A day or multi-day event in late summer that helps new freshmen and transfer students meet other students, become familiar with campus services, and register for classes.

Placement Testing —Before starting college, new freshmen may be required to take placement tests to determine which levels of reading, math, writing and/or foreign language courses they will register for. Placement test results help determine whether you would benefit from remedial classes. Remedial classes allow you to improve your skills in a subject so you can take on college work in that area. If a student scores high enough on a placement test they have the ability to essentially skip some introductory courses based on their skill level.

Priority Deadline—Applications received prior to this date are guaranteed to be processed. Applications received after the priority deadline are not guaranteed to be processed. It usually depends on the space available.

Rolling Admission —Institutions accept applications and admit students at any time during a specific time period until all available spots are filled. Colleges that use a rolling admission policy usually notify applicants of admission decisions quickly.

Scholarships—A form of gift aid that doesn't need to be repaid. There are thousands of them, offered by schools, employers, individuals, private companies, nonprofits, communities, religious groups, and professional and social organizations.

“Test-blind”: Test scores won't be considered by a school in the evaluation process (even if a student submits them). Here's a [list from FairTest of test blind schools](#).

“Test-optional”: a school allows students to decide whether to submit test scores, and if a student chooses not to do so, it won't be counted against them. According to the College Board, [about 80% of applicants](#) chose to submit test scores to test-optional colleges.

Undergraduate Student —A student pursuing a bachelor's degree, which is generally the first four years of a college education.

Vocational Training or Education—A vocational school, also called trade school or career school, is a form of education that is designed to teach students the valuable skills they need to perform a particular task or job. These schools usually provide practical, hands-on training that focuses on a single field or trade. Vocational colleges typically offer programs that can be completed in two years or less.

Wisconsin G.I. Bill—The WI G.I. Bill provides tuition waivers for certain eligible veterans, spouses, or dependents to attend UW System institutions or Wisconsin's Technical Colleges. Details on eligibility and application procedures are listed in the WI G.I. Bill brochure.

Wisconsin Guarantee—The Wisconsin Guarantee offers guaranteed admission to all Universities of Wisconsin (UW) universities for all who qualify. First-year applicants from Wisconsin high schools who are in the top 10% of their class at the end of 11th grade, or Wisconsin residents who are homeschooled and receive an ACT score in the national 90th percentile ranking or higher, or are a National Merit Scholarship finalist will be guaranteed to all UW universities except UW-Madison.

Additionally, first-year applicants from Wisconsin high schools who are in the top 5% of their class at the end of 11th grade, or Wisconsin residents who are homeschooled and receive an ACT score in the national 98th percentile ranking or higher or are a National Merit Scholarship finalist will be guaranteed admission to UW-Madison provided that they apply on or before the Early Action deadline.

8. References

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