Priory’s college counselors guide students through a four-year curriculum that emphasizes **self-discovery** and **long term-project planning**. This curriculum includes **course planning, standardized testing preparation, college research, application tools**, and **personal statement preparation**. Students meet individually and in groups with their college counselor several times in increasing frequency as they approach the completion of their applications.
# Table of Contents

I. Introduction to College Counseling  
II. Junior Timeline  
III. Senior Timeline  
IV. Application Types  
V. Application Components  
VI. Testing  
VII. Scoir  
VIII. Financial Aid  
IX. International Application Procedures  
X. Talent-Based Applications  
XI. Resources
Priory’s college counseling department embraces the Benedictine values of...

- Spirituality
- Hospitality
- Integrity
- Individuality
- Community
The college application process is a long-term project that is multi-faceted and unique to each student. This handbook outlines the following areas of your college application journey so you can be prepared and organized.

- Junior and Senior Timelines
- Application Types, Components and Processes
- Scoir
- Standardized Testing
- Financial Aid
- International Applicants
- Talent-Based Applications
- Resources
**Freshman**

Year is a year of transition. It is important to seek support early, if needed. Priory’s college counseling department encourages freshmen to continue doing the activities they enjoy as well as branching out and trying something new. In the spring, parents of freshmen attend College Night before college counselors meet with each student individually to plan the next year’s courses.

**Sophomore**

Year, students take the PSAT in October. The purpose of this test is to demystify the standardized testing process. It is for practice only: the scores will never be shared with colleges. In the second semester, sophomore parents are invited to College Night where we review graduation requirements and what to expect for the rest of the year, as well as introduce the two-year planning process in which the counselors meet with students individually to create an academic plan for junior and senior years.

**Junior**

Year, students take the PSAT in October, which is the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship (see Ch. 6), and can also elect to take a mock ACT exam at Priory. By taking both of these exams, students will get a sense of whether they should prepare for the SAT or ACT. Students will meet their college counselors one-on-one starting in January. Juniors and their parents must attend a mandatory College Night in January; topics discussed include testing, academic, and extra-curricular goals. A panel of college representatives talk about the admissions process at this event. In the spring semester, juniors go through Scoir training. Scoir is a comprehensive college and career readiness tool that all students at Priory use to apply to college.

Junior year involves test prep, test taking, and a strong focus on maintaining and improving grades in a course load that reflects balance as well as academic rigor. We encourage students to continue participating in the activities they enjoy and consider leadership roles. In the spring semester, students are required to attend the Case Studies Program to learn about the admissions decision process from the college perspective. During spring semester, the college counseling team holds workshops and presents the college application process. We review admissions options and educate families regarding the general timelines for private colleges and universities, UCs and Cal States, and out-of-state public universities. Students begin their one-one meetings with their college counselor immediately. By now, students have worked with their college counselors regarding their own standardized testing strategy and timeline and will complete any tests still needed. Students meet with their college counselor to create and solidify their college lists, update their Scoir accounts, and discuss Early Action or Early Decision plans and scholarships.

**Seniors**

are required to attend College Night, which is held during the first week of school. This event outlines the rest of the year in terms of the college application process. We review admissions options and educate families regarding the general timelines for private colleges and universities, UCs and Cal States, and out-of-state public universities. Students begin their one-one meetings with their college counselor immediately. By now, students have worked with their college counselors regarding their own standardized testing strategy and timeline and will complete any tests still needed. Students meet with their college counselor to create and solidify their college lists, update their Scoir accounts, and discuss Early Action or Early Decision plans and scholarships.

For families seeking guidance around financial planning for college, Priory holds a Financial Aid Workshop with a financial aid officer from a local organization who walks families through the process and answers any questions. As admissions decisions come in, the college counselors offer guidance and support to seniors and their families regarding final enrollment decisions.
The big picture...

Priory’s graduate outcomes for its students focus on building strength and ability in the following areas:

- Critical Thinking
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Resiliency

**Enduring Understanding**

A successful college application process is a student-driven journey of self-discovery and self-advocacy. It manifests in acceptance to a school that fits the student’s unique needs, or a well-planned alternative that could include work, travel, service, or a gap year.

**Bright Idea:** Making decisions without all the facts is a sure way to increase worry and stress. Do your research by attending college rep visits at Priory, visiting college campuses, using Scoir, and talking to your college counselor and alumni.
Junior Timeline

“Organize, don’t agonize.”
-Nancy Pelosi
Junior Timeline

Junior year involves research, standardized testing, and application preparation. Most importantly, remain engaged in academics and continue to pursue the activities you enjoy.

**OCTOBER**

**PSAT:** In mid-October, the PSAT is administered to all juniors on National Testing Day. This day usually falls midway through Priory’s fall break. The PSAT serves to demystify the testing process. It is used for practice only. Priory registers all juniors for this two hour and ten minute test. It is not necessary for students to study for this exam, and **scores are not sent to colleges.**

**MOCK TEST:** Priory offers a practice ACT test that is held on campus on a Saturday in October. Registration is free. After you take both the SAT and ACT practice exams, discuss with your college counselor which test you should prepare for.

**DECEMBER**

**PSAT RESULTS:** When your scores become available online, you’ll get an email with instructions to create your College Board account. Go to the online score portal and use your access code to view your score report.

**JANUARY**

**COLLEGE NIGHT:** College Counseling holds an evening information session for juniors and their families. Discussion topics include transcript evaluation, standardized testing options, Scoir (see Ch. 7), and best practices. College counselors also discuss course selection for senior year and college workshops. Students and parents are asked at this time to complete college questionnaires to enable the counselors to get to know the students. In the questionnaire, students will be able to rank their requests for two academic teacher recommendations.

**TEST PREP:** Most students will begin test prep for the SAT/ACT either through a course or self-study.

**SCOIR RESEARCH:** Students begin to fill in appropriate sections on their Scoir accounts and use the college research, statistics, and personal discovery tools.
COLLEGE COUNSELOR MEETINGS: Upon starting their research, juniors begin working with their college counselor one-on-one.

COURSE SCHEDULING: College counselors meet with juniors individually to ensure optimal academic planning and fulfillment of graduation requirements in the senior year.

Data shows that Priory students score highest on their junior spring and senior fall SAT/ACT sittings. For most students, it is best to start test prep in January of junior year in preparation for the March/April examinations.

CAMPUS VISITS: Many students choose to visit college campuses during the winter holiday (around the third week of February). Most colleges have an online registration form on their admissions webpage for information sessions and campus tours.

FEBRUARY

MARCH

CASE STUDIES: Juniors and their parents attend the mandatory Case Studies event held at Sacred Heart Prep in Atherton. This event brings in college admissions officers from all over the country to provide an inside look in the admissions selection process. The event concludes with a college fair.

CAMPUS VISITS: Many students choose to visit college campuses during spring break. Most colleges have an online registration form on their admissions webpage for information sessions and campus tours.

APRIL

SAT: Most students taking the SAT will sit for their first test at this time.

ACT: Most students taking the ACT will sit for their first test at this time.

MAY

RECOMMENDATION LETTERS: Students will be notified of the teachers who will write a letter of recommendation on their behalf, based on the junior questionnaire students completed in January ranking their teacher preferences.
COLLEGE WORKSHOPS: These mandatory workshops highlight the nuts and bolts of the college application process and the makings of a memorable personal statement. Students will create a Common Application account with their college counselor.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENTS: Juniors are given their summer college assignments that include working on essays and the Common Application. Check College Board and ACT registration websites often so that you can register for fall sittings soon after registration is available for the next school year.

Don’t forget to...

- Attend college rep visits at Priory.
- Complete student and parent questionnaires.
- Check Priory Panther email daily.
- Read the weekly College Counseling Newsletter.
- Make sure your voicemail greeting sounds professional.
- Keep track of all log-in/password information.
- Register for standardized tests far in advance of the test date.
- Communicate openly and honestly with your family and counselor about college needs and wants.

Find out how to register for campus tours through the college or university admissions webpages.

Reduce stress by staying organized.
Use your phone to store passwords and login information, and put deadlines and “college research” time into your phone calendar.
Senior Timeline

“It always seems impossible until it's done.”
- Nelson Mandela
Senior Timeline

Your last year of high school should be focused on taking advantage of the present moment and all it has to offer, as well as taking the appropriate steps to plan for the future. This timeline illustrates many important dates and benchmarks, but does not include the specific

AUGUST

**COMMON APPLICATION**: Students create accounts before August 1st on [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org); however, colleges have until August 1st to update their information. Seniors using the Common App should have as much of this application completed before school starts. Essay sections will take more time.

**COLLEGE MEETING**: Seniors meet with college counselors during Priory orientation day to schedule their first one-on-one meeting of the year.

**COLLEGE NIGHT**: Seniors and their parents attend this mandatory information night to review application timelines, Priory procedures, and other important details.

**COLLEGE APPLICATION WORKSHOPS**: College Counseling hosts various college application workshops throughout the fall semester. Seniors are expected to attend these workshops.

SEPTEMBER

**COUNSELOR MEETINGS**: Meet one-on-one with your college counselor as needed to ensure your college list is appropriate and balanced, and that you are staying organized and up-to-date on all of the deadlines.
### October

**SAT/ACT:** Many students will take the SAT or ACT again in October. Be sure to register for this exam early as this is a popular month to take standardized tests.

**COLLEGE VISITS:** The Fall break is a great opportunity to visit college campuses. If you are planning to apply Early Decision (see Ch. 4), it is imperative to visit the campus before you make an ED commitment.

**FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOP:** Families with financial need are invited to attend a meeting with the college counselors and a financial aid officer from a local organization.

**FAFSA:** The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is available for seniors and their parents to fill out on October 1st (see Ch. 8).

**EARLY ACTION/ EARLY DECISION:** A few colleges have an EA/ED deadline of October 15th. Make sure to take note which schools you are applying to have this deadline.

### November

**FIRST QUARTER GRADES REPORT:** Some colleges require submission of first quarter grades for applicants. It is important to stay on top of your coursework to show that you are continuing to be engaged in class.

**EARLY ACTION/ EARLY DECISION:** Most EA and ED deadlines fall during the first week of November. All components of the application must be submitted by the deadline.

**SAT SUBJECT TEST - LANGUAGE:** For students wishing to take a language-based Subject test with listening, November is the only time these tests are offered. Students should register on [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) well in advance. College counselors can also guide students in making this decision.

**FINALIZE COLLEGE LIST:** By the middle of November, seniors should have a solidified list of colleges to which they will apply. This list must be accurate in Scoir, so that we can send your supporting school documents in on time.

**UC/ CAL STATE DEADLINE:** The deadlines for all UC and Cal State universities is November 30th. All components of the application must be submitted by the deadline; Priory students are encouraged to apply several days before the deadline in order to avoid technical issues. UC Berkeley may follow-up with...
students on time and request two teacher letters of recommendation, due January 1st.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DECEMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARLY ADMISSIONS DECISIONS:</strong> EA and ED decisions begin to come in. Students must notify their counselor as soon as they find out about admissions decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JANUARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MID-YEAR REPORTS:</strong> First semester grades and forms that address any possible changes in academic or disciplinary standing since the application was submitted are sent to colleges that request them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FEBRUARY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>REGULAR DECISION DEADLINES:</strong> Most RD deadlines fall during the first two weeks of January and sometimes the first two weeks of February. All components of the application must be submitted by the deadline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MARCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAFSA DEADLINE:</strong> The deadline to file the FAFSA is March 2nd; however, some colleges may have an earlier deadline.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADMISSIONS DECISIONS:</strong> UC/Cal State and Regular Decision admissions decisions begin to arrive in mid-March and last through April. Students should notify their college counselor as soon as they find out about admissions decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAY/JUNE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENROLLMENT DECISION:</strong> Students must notify the college of their choice of their decision to enroll by May 1st. Students may make an enrollment deposit at only one college.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRAP UP MEETING:</strong> College counselors meet with students to wrap up any further details.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINAL TRANSCRIPTS:</strong> Priory sends out all final transcripts directly to colleges where seniors will be enrolling in the fall.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application Types

“When you make a choice, you change the future.”
- Deepak Chopra
EARLY DECISION
Many colleges and universities offer an Early Decision plan, which is a binding agreement. This means students may apply only to one school under an ED plan and MUST enroll if accepted. Students should apply ED only if they are 100% sure they want to enroll, have visited the campus, have completed standardized testing, do not need their 7th semester to improve their GPA, and will be satisfied with any financial aid offered. Early Decision deadlines are usually in early November.

EARLY DECISION 2
Early Decision 2 is an alternate choice to Early Decision; it differs only in deadline date. It is primarily offered by liberal arts colleges. The deadline is usually January 1st for these applications. Talk to your college counselor for details about ED 2.

EARLY ACTION
Early Action plan is similar to Early Decision except the agreement is not binding. This means the student does not have to enroll if accepted and may wait until May 1st to notify the college about the enrollment decision. Some colleges and universities offer Restrictive Early Action (REA), which is a non-binding early action admission option that restricts applications from other early plans. Colleges will clearly articulate these restrictions in their early action policies and agreements with students. Early Action deadlines are usually in early November.

REGULAR DECISION
Regular Decision deadlines fall between December and the first few weeks of February. Students are usually notified of admissions decisions in March and April. Regular Decision allows students to take additional standardized tests into late fall and for colleges to consider 7th semester (fall of senior year) grades.

ROLLING ADMISSION
Some schools offer rolling admission, which means there is not a set deadline. These colleges evaluate applications and make decisions as applications are submitted. Students can apply as early as August and usually receive an admission decision within 4-6 weeks.
Application Components

“Determine that the thing shall, and will be done and then...find the way”

-Arbenham Lincoln
Application Components

The Transcript
The most important part of your application is your high school transcript because admission officers are looking for engaged learners for their faculty to teach. Colleges look at your transcript within the context of Priory, as they consider your grades, level of rigor, and upward or downward trends. Colleges also receive Priory’s School Profile, which is a detailed description of our course offerings, our GPA weighting scale, and other information integral to evaluating our transcripts, academic curriculum, and understanding our school.

Standardized Tests
Although more and more colleges are becoming test-optional, most four-year colleges and universities still require either an SAT or ACT score. Some highly selective schools may require or recommend SAT Subject tests. Students should look at the college websites to review testing requirements.

Extra-Curricular Activities
Colleges like to see depth of commitment and even leadership in the lives of prospective students. Remember, it’s about depth, not breadth, when it comes to your life outside of academics. Serious commitments developed over time speak volumes.

Letters of recommendation
Many colleges ask for one or two letters of recommendation from a teacher, as well as a letter of evaluation from the college counselor. Work with your college counselor to select the best teacher(s) to write for you. Students will be notified of the teachers who will write a letter of recommendation on their behalf based on the junior questionnaire completed in January. Follow up with the teacher as the deadline approaches and provide them with any additional information necessary. Remember to write thank-you notes to teachers who have taken the time to write letters on your behalf.

College counselors write detailed letters for each senior that include information about the student provided in one-on-one meetings over the course of their high school career, the junior
questionnaire, and any other materials or information the student provides.

**Personal Statement & Supplements**
Most private colleges and many public universities require a 500-650 word personal statement that answers a prompt designed to let admissions officers see a side of you that is not otherwise expressed in other areas of the application. Some colleges ask for supplemental essays in addition to the personal statement. Supplements are usually between 250-600 words.

**The Common Application**
The Common Application is used by over 800 colleges and universities throughout the world. It is online at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). College counselors submit supporting documents to the Common App colleges via Scoir. The main information section and the personal statement are used for every school, and supplemental essays are school-specific. UC/Cal State, out-of-state public, and non-Common App colleges have their own online applications.

**How many schools should I apply to?**
There is no single answer to this question, but we believe a thoughtfully considered list will have no more than nine colleges. As you create your college list, ask yourself...

**What do I need to be successful?**
- Small classes?
- Accessible professors?
- A collaborative environment?
- Proximity to a large city?
- More writing-based assessments?

If you haven't already, now is the time to think about how you best learn and what you need and want in a college environment to ensure that you are positioned for the best possible learning experience.

It is imperative that all the colleges listed on your Common App are also listed on your Scoir “applying” list. Otherwise, your college counselor will not be able to upload and send documents to those schools.
The Coalition Application

The Coalition Application (www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org) is a college application platform that some colleges and universities are using in addition to the Common App. At the time of this iBook publication, only the following three colleges are using the Coalition Application exclusively for the 2019-20 cycle. These are:

Virginia Tech
University of Washington
University of Maryland

Because this application platform is still relatively new, the college counselors at Priory and nearly all of the local independent schools in the area are suggesting students continue to use the Common App unless they are applying to one of the above universities. All Coalition App schools, with the exception of the ones listed above, state that they will not favor one application type over another in the review process. Students using the Coalition App must follow special procedures regarding school document submission.

Students who are applying to one or more of the three universities that will be accepting the Coalition Application exclusively should do the following:

- Let your college counselor know right away.
- Create an account here.
- Attend Priory’s Coalition App workshop
- Watch these videos to learn more about the application components.
“I believed in studying just because I knew education was a privilege. It was the discipline of study, to get into the habit of doing something that you don’t want to do.”

-Wynton Marsalis
The SAT

The SAT is one standardized exam that students may take for their college admission. Students may choose to take the SAT with or without essay though the University of California universities require the essay portion. The exam is about 3 hours and 50 minutes (including the essay section) long and consists of the following sections:

- Math
- Evidence-Based Reading and Writing
- Essay (optional)

Students must register for the SAT on www.collegeboard.com several weeks in advance of the test date. Pay close attention to “Test Day” reminders to make sure you bring everything you need, including photo identification.

For more information regarding the SAT visit: https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/inside-the-test

SAT Subject Tests

SAT Subject tests are subject-specific exams to assess a student’s knowledge in that discipline. Most colleges do not require Subject tests, but look closely at school websites so you are prepared. Language tests with listening are offered in November only.

Subject tests are 60 minutes long, and a student can take up to three tests in one sitting.

Click here for a complete list of subject tests and dates: http://sat.collegeboard.org/register/sat-subject-test-dates

FAQ’s

1. Should I take the SAT or the ACT? - After taking the PSAT and a mock ACT, students should meet with their college counselor about what seems to be the better test for the particular student.

2. When will I find out my score? - Usually, SAT scores are released within a month of the test date.
ACT

The ACT is another standardized exam that students may take for college admission. The exam is about 3 hours and 30 minutes (including the optional essay section, which University of California universities require) and consists of the following sections:

- English
- Math
- Reading
- Science
- Essay (optional)

Students must register for the ACT on www.actstudent.org several weeks in advance of the test date. Pay special attention to “Test Day” reminders so you have everything you need on the day of the exam.

For more information regarding the ACT visit:
http://www.act.org/content/act/en/students-and-parents.html

AP Exams

Priory administers AP exams on campus in May. Depending on the college, students may earn college credit with scores of 3 (out of 5) or higher. Check with colleges to see how they handle AP credits. Priory policy states that students enrolled in AP courses must take the exam. Students who opt out from taking their exam will not earn an AP designation on their transcript.

Students are required to sign in to My AP (https://myap.collegeboard.org/login) and enroll in their class sections, using the unique join code for each class given by their AP teachers.

For more information about AP exams and process visit:
https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/

More and more colleges and universities are becoming test-optional. For a complete list of schools that do not require standardized tests from some or all students, go to www.fairtest.org.

All Priory students should take the “optional” essay section of the SAT or ACT, if they plan to apply to a UC or the four other colleges that require or highly recommend it. As of the summer of 2019, most colleges do not require the essay for the SAT or ACT.
Courses, Tutors, Self-Study

No matter what path you choose to take for test prep, it is important to prepare. Priory holds free mock tests and a fee-based course offered by a local test prep company that begins in January and is designed to prepare you for the April ACT test date. Listen to announcements for registration details.

Other options include private tutoring or self-study. Talk to your college counselor about what will work best for you.

The college counseling department does not endorse any particular test-prep company but can offer suggestions on options available in the area.

Submitting Scores to Colleges

Many colleges accept self-reported scores on students’ applications. Scores are verified once a student enrolls at the college. For colleges that do not accept self-reported scores, students must send scores to colleges through the College Board or ACT. There is a charge to send scores; however, fee waivers are available for eligible students. When sending SAT scores, do not choose the “score choice” option. Most colleges and universities will consider your best scores anyway, so there is no need to “hide” certain scores.

Scores are available online approximately 4 weeks after the exam. Send score reports through the same websites where you registered for your tests. Scores often take 1-2 weeks to send, so be sure to keep this in mind and send all scores by application deadlines.

The CEEB code for Priory is 052527. You will use this for all standardized tests and most college applications.
“Organizing is what you do before you do something, so that when you do it, it is not all mixed up.”

-A. A. Milne
SCOIR

Scoir is a web-based college research and organization tool for students. Priory students must use Scoir as it is the portal for college counselors to submit school documents and letters of recommendation to most private schools and some public universities (not every college is on Scoir).

Access to Scoir

The login email is the student’s priorypanther.com account. The “applying” list must be accurate to ensure college counselors send documents to the correct schools in a timely fashion.

To log onto Scoir visit:

https://app.scoir.com/signin

College Search

Scoir allows students to research colleges and organize their college list all in one convenient location. One of the most used features is College Search. Students can search thousands of schools by entering specific preferences into database fields. Based on the information the student provides, Scoir will produce lists of schools that match those parameters. This is an excellent way to do a preliminary search, and then go through and compare and contrast colleges. This is the first step towards building a college list, which can be done within your Scoir account.

Statistics and Data Analysis

Scoir also provides admissions data for colleges so you can see where your GPA and test scores fall with respect to students who were admitted from Priory. Please talk to your college counselor in order to understand the full context of this data.
Financial Aid

“... because in the United States of America, no one should go broke because they chose to go to college.”

- President Barack Obama
Financial Aid

Types Of Financial Aid

1. **Merit aid includes grants and scholarships**, which do not have to be repaid; they are gifts. Grants are usually awarded on the basis of need. Scholarships may be awarded on the basis of need or some other criteria such as academic achievement, community service, leadership, or talent. If you do not think you will qualify for need-based aid, you may still qualify for merit aid. Some colleges require that you still complete and file a FAFSA and/or CSS PROFILE in order to be considered for a merit-based scholarship, even if you do not qualify for need-based aid.

2. **Loans** must be repaid. Repayment of federally subsidized loans is deferred until approximately six to nine months after a student graduates. Federal loans often carry a lower interest rate than most other loans. You must file the FAFSA and sometimes the CSS PROFILE in order to be considered for a federal student loan. For more information on federal student loans, go to [https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/](https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/)

3. **Work-Study** is a federal program where the student earns money through a job arranged by the college. The salary is paid by both the college and the federal government.

---

**California State Aid**

The Cal Grant is a need-based grant and offered to California residents who choose to attend college in California. Eligibility is based on FAFSA results coupled with a student’s GPA.

For information on current income ceilings and amounts available in each category, go to: [https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/cal-grant-income-and-assetceilings](https://www.csac.ca.gov/post/cal-grant-income-and-assetceilings)

For information on Cal Grant options, go to: [https://www.csac.ca.gov/cal-grants](https://www.csac.ca.gov/cal-grants)
Forms

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** - This form is available on October 1st of the year preceding the student’s college enrollment and must be completed online. It should be completed by March 2nd. Tax information will be based on the PRIOR PRIOR YEAR (PPY), and then re-entered after it has been submitted if there are changes to be made. The ability to file the FAFSA in October and use tax records from the year prior to the October date is a recent change in the FAFSA process. This form must be completed to be considered for any type of federal financial assistance. There is never a fee to complete this form. If you are asked to remit a fee, you are on the incorrect website. This is where to find the FAFSA: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

**CSS Profile** - This form is available through the [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) website and is used by some private colleges to assess need-based aid. There is a fee of $25 to send an initial report, and $16 for additional reports. Deadlines vary depending on the college. Students who used an SAT fee waiver are considered for a CSS Profile fee waiver based on their SAT fee waiver eligibility. Visit the college’s financial aid webpage to see if they require the CSS Profile in addition to the FAFSA. [https://profileonline/collegeboard.com](https://profileonline/collegeboard.com)
International Applications

“Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.”

- Malcolm X
International Applications

This section is dedicated to the processes and procedures for international students at Priory who will be applying to colleges in the United States. The main parts of the application remain the same, but there are additional components for applicants who are not citizens of the United States. Below is a list of what most colleges will require you to submit along with your application.

1. Affidavit of Financial Support - Since you are not a U.S. citizen, you are ineligible for federal aid, so colleges want to make sure that you are able to financially afford tuition and fees. Documentation usually involves a copy of bank statement(s), notarized by a bank official, and a statement of support from the student’s parent(s) or guardian(s).

2. Passport - Colleges will ask for a photocopy of the photo page of your passport.

3. English Proficiency - Although some colleges waive the English proficiency requirement if you have studied in an English language-based high school for four years, most colleges ask that you take the TOEFL or IELTS within 1-2 years of applying for admission. For information on taking the TOEFL, go to: http://www.ets.org/toefl, IELTS: https://www.ielts.org/

4. Previous School Transcripts - Colleges ask for transcripts that show grades from your high school years. Although most colleges accept copies of international transcripts submitted by your college counselor, some may still request official copies sent directly from the foreign high school to the college.

5. Visa - After you are admitted and enrolled in the college of your choice, see Priory’s Admissions Office which handles the transfer of your I-20.
Talent-Based Applications

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

-Nelson Mandela
Talent-Based Applications

Athletics

If you are in the running for an athletic scholarship to an NCAA Division I or II school, there are many rules and regulations to which you must adhere. For a thorough outline of procedures and guidelines, go to: www.eligibilitycenter.org

Grades 9 & 10 - Talk to your coaches as well as your college counselor early on if you are considering collegiate sports.

Grade 11 - Register with the NCAA Eligibility Center (link above) at the beginning of the school year. Make sure with your college counselor that you are still on track to meet core course requirements. You should be fine if you are fulfilling Priory’s own graduation requirements. When taking standardized tests, request that scores be sent to the NCAA Eligibility Center (code: 9999). Ask your college counselor to send your transcript to the NCAA eligibility center at the end of junior year.

Grade 12 - During senior year, communication with colleges ramps up. Be sure to abide by NCAA recruitment rules as explained by division on the NCAA website: www.ncaa.org.

Remember, even if you have a “likely letter” from a college, you must still complete the admissions application. Once you have been accepted as a college athlete at a Division I or Division II school, notify your college counselor.

Consider the time commitment, travel schedule, and physical demand of college athletics as you weigh the pros and cons of deciding to play a college sport.

Your registration with the NCAA Eligibility Center includes academic certification as well as the certification of amateurism. The fee is $65 for domestic college-bound athletes.
Visual Arts

Students interested in pursuing the following (but not limited to) majors may be asked to submit a portfolio in addition to the application:

- Studio Art
- Graphic Design
- Fashion Design/Marketing
- New Media
- Film Studies
- Photography
- Fine Arts

Most portfolios are submitted online using www.slideroom.com. Some colleges ask you to create new work that is specific to their prompts. Others ask that you submit pieces that you have created on your own. Talk to your art teacher about the best pieces to include. The colleges you are applying to will have specific guidelines about how work should be labeled. In the rare case that a school requires a mail-in submission, it may or may not be returned to you. Film applicants usually submit a short video of their work and possibly a piece of creative writing.

Performing Arts

If you are interested in applying to a school for performing arts, or to a performing arts program, it is likely that you will need to audition. Auditions may be held on the college’s campus, and sometimes audition opportunities are available in major cities. Call the college or department to get more information on the audition schedule, as well as details regarding expectations and evaluation. Do not delay contacting colleges about auditions, because you will likely be coordinating several auditions in different cities across the country and need a realistic timeline. Colleges differ on how much they balance the audition portion of the application against academics. It is wise to apply broadly.
“Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.”

-Kofi Annan
Online Resources

**Standardized Testing**
- The College Board: [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)
- ACT: [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

**Online Applications and Information**
- Scoir
  [https://www.scoir.com/](https://www.scoir.com/)
- The Common Application
  [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
- Coalition Application
  [www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org](http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org)
- University of California
  [https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/)
- California State University System
  [www.calstate.edu](http://www.calstate.edu)

**Financial Aid**
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  [www.fafsa.edu](http://www.fafsa.edu)
- Free Help for the FAFSA
  [www.studentaid.ed.gov/resources#complete](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/resources#complete)
- Federal Student Aid Information
- California Student Aid Commission
  [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov)
- California Cash for College
  [www.californiacashforcollege.org](http://www.californiacashforcollege.org)
- CSS Profile
  [https://profileonline.collegeboard.com](https://profileonline.collegeboard.com)
- Fast Web (scholarships database)
  [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)
- Going Merry (scholarships database)
  [www.goingmerry.com](http://www.goingmerry.com)
The best way to interpret “reach,” “possible,” and “likely” schools is by reviewing the Priory data that has been compiled over the years. Your college counselor has access to Priory statistics that include the GPA, test scores, and admissions decision for past graduates.

While past data is helpful to understand where schools fall on your list, there are no guarantees. College admission decisions are based on much more than GPA and test scores. Continue to consult with your college counselor to ensure you have a balanced college list.

It is important to remember that you are more than a compilation of scores and numbers and that your application will be viewed holistically.
Additional Resources

For the College Application and Research Process:

- Fiske Guide to Colleges

- Admission Matters
  http://www.admissionmatters.com/

- Colleges That Change Lives
  https://ctcl.org/

- College Essay Guy
  https://collegeessayguy.com

- A Pocket Guide To Choosing a College
  http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/mobile_pocket_guide.html