

Educate Yourself: College Admissions

Admissions: Key Terms Defined

Award Letter: A letter telling you what financial aid (if any) your college is offering to you (includes types and amounts of aid offered, specific program information, etc.). You may choose to accept some or all of what is offered.

Credit (or Credit Hour): A unit of measurement institutions give for fulfilling course requirements. Most colleges require that you complete a certain number in order to graduate.

Cost of Attendance: Includes any cost associated with attending college: tuition and associated fees, room and board, books and supplies, etc.

Early Action: If you apply early action and are accepted, you may compare admissions and financial aid offers and wait to commit to the college until later in the year.

Early Decision: If you apply early decision, you must attend the college or university if you are accepted and must withdraw any applications sent to other schools. You won't be able to compare financial aid offers.

Enrollment Status: Indication of whether you attend full or part time. In general, you must attend at least half time (or in some cases full time) to qualify for financial aid.

Expected Family Contribution: Amount students and their family are expected to contribute toward cost of attendance.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students must fill out the FAFSA to find out how much federal aid they are eligible to receive. Visit www.fafsa.ed.gov for more info.

Open Admissions: Students are admitted regardless of academic qualifications.

Out-of-State Student: Generally applies to students attending a public university outside of their home state. Out-of-state students must pay a higher tuition rate unless they establish legal residency for that state.

Rolling Admissions: There is no set admissions deadline date; qualified students are accepted until classes are filled.

Undergraduate Student: A student who has not completed a baccalaureate or first professional degree.

FastTip:

If you come across an unfamiliar term or you simply have a question about the application process, ask your guidance counselor for assistance or call the college directly.

Pick Your College: More Questions to Consider

Financial Aid Questions

What type of financial aid packages does the school offer? Are there a variety of options?

What tuition increases are planned in the next few years, if any? What has been the average tuition increase in years past?

What kind of work opportunities are available?

Are there refunds available if you need to leave school for any reason?

Academics/Career Questions

How does the school help graduates find jobs?

What percentage of graduates from the school find jobs in their field of study?

What is the retention rate (how many students come back after their freshman year)?

What is the classroom environment like? Is there much interaction between teacher and students? Are you able to visit the campus and sit in on a class?

How many computers/computer labs are there? Are they up-to-date and accessible to all students?

Room/Board/Lifestyle Questions

How diverse is the campus? How does the school promote diversity?

What is the crime rate on campus and in the surrounding neighborhood?

What student organizations are on campus?

What are the hours of the student health clinic? What about 24-hour emergency care?

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