

# Countdown to SUNY



11<sup>th</sup>  
Grade Plan

## SUMMER - Prior to your junior year

- **Learn** more about your personality, skills, abilities, likes, and dislikes by taking an interest inventory or personality profile. Be sure to investigate the searches available from the College Board at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/know-yourself> and ACT at [www.actstudent.org/career](http://www.actstudent.org/career).
- **Research** careers by talking with people, searching the Internet, and reading books and magazines.
- **Research** colleges by visiting the College Board and ACT Web sites or check out the SUNY campus search at [www.suny.edu/student/search\\_campus/search\\_campus\\_start.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/student/search_campus/search_campus_start.cfm).
- **Prepare** for the PSAT/NMSQT or SAT by visiting the College Board's SAT Preparation Center at [www.SAT.collegeboard.org/practice](http://www.SAT.collegeboard.org/practice), or take the practice ACT at [www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html](http://www.actstudent.org/testprep/index.html).

## FALL

- **Take** the most challenging courses you can as it is the rigor of your curriculum, along with a solid grade point average, that will be evaluated by college admission committees. Taking challenging courses shows that you are ready for a competitive college environment. Be sure to meet with your counselor to review the courses you've taken and determine what you still need to take.
  - **Maintain** your grades – grades earned in your junior year will be evaluated by college admission officials when you apply for admission. You should be spending a minimum of two hours per night on homework and participating in study groups.
    - **Make** sure you have a social security number.
    - **Establish** U.S. citizenship. For some non-U.S. citizens, now may be the time to consider pursuing U.S. citizenship.

Rigor  
matters

- **Obtain** schedules for the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and ACT and determine which exams you'll take. Complete the registration forms and mark the dates on your calendar – see your counselor for information.
- **Register** to take the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) if you didn't do so in the 10th grade – see your counselor for information.
- **Investigate** Honors and Advanced Placement classes – meet with your counselor to discuss whether these are appropriate for you.
- **Inquire** about national competitions and scholarships, such as the Intel Science Talent Search, by visiting with your counselor.
- **Complete** SAT II subject exams as you finish subject areas – see your counselor for information.
- **Develop** your leadership skills and stay involved. Colleges look for consistency and depth in activities.
- **Attend** college fairs, financial aid nights and college-planning workshops – encourage your parent(s)/guardian(s) to accompany you.
- **Sign-up** to participate in college visits at your high school and collect business cards from the representatives with whom you visit.
- **Establish** an e-mail account specifically for your college search. Remember, a "funky" e-mail address is best left for communicating with friends and family.
- **Talk** to your counselor if you are interested in a military academy to find out about requirements and timelines.

Stay  
involved

## WINTER

- **Prepare** for the SAT or ACT by taking a preparation course – see your counselor for recommendations.
- **Register** to take the SAT or ACT. (If you and your family are experiencing financial hardship, ask your counselor about a fee waiver.)

- **Consult** your counselor about registering to take AP classes during your senior year.
- **Generate** a list of 10-20 colleges and contact them for information. Research costs and make note of upcoming campus visit programs.
- **Organize!** Make folders for your college information, along with deadlines and important dates. Check it often.
- **Send** e-mail messages to your colleges of interest to get on their mailing lists. To request information from SUNY go to [www.suny.edu/student/req\\_info/request\\_info.cfm](http://www.suny.edu/student/req_info/request_info.cfm)?
- **Start early!** Learn about federal financial aid, as well as your potential eligibility and EFC (Expected Family Contribution) at <http://studentaid.ed.gov>.
- **Learn** how the EFC (Expected Family Contribution) works at [www.knowhow2go.org/juniors\\_costs.php](http://www.knowhow2go.org/juniors_costs.php).
- **Research** scholarships at [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and see your counselor for additional information.
- **Beware** of scholarship scams! See [www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0082-scholarship-and-financial-aid-scams](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0082-scholarship-and-financial-aid-scams) for more information.
- **Create** a first draft of your résumé to maintain a record of college courses taken, college programs in which you've participated, awards you've won, projects you've completed, extracurricular achievements, and volunteer work.
- **Review** your senior year class schedule with your counselor to ensure that it fulfills graduation requirements.
- **Start** the certification process if you are interested in participating in college athletics. Consult with your athletic director or coach(es) to determine whether you are a candidate for an athletic program. Be sure to check with your counselor to make sure you're taking a core curriculum that meets NCAA requirements. For more information go to [www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org).

## SPRING

- **Research** Early Decision and Early Action programs and schedule your testing to meet early deadlines.
  - **Continue** to attend college fairs, financial aid nights and college-planning workshops – many spring events are designed for high school juniors.
  - **Utilize** your college list to arrange visits to campuses during spring break and encourage your parent(s)/guardian(s) to attend, too. Remember to send thank you notes following your visit(s).
  - **Contact** your U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator to express your interest in and desire to be nominated to attend a military academy.
  - **Consult** your coach and counselor BEFORE submitting the NCAA Clearinghouse form to compete in Division I or II college athletics. The form may be found at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org).

Have fun, too!

- **Consider** whom you'll ask to write letters of recommendation (current teachers and counselors). Then, provide a summary of what you wish for them to include and politely ask if they can assist. Remember to send each a thank you note.
- **Inquire** about personal interviews or group information sessions at your favorite colleges. Call or write for summer appointments.
- **Take** the SAT or ACT.
- **Search** for summer pre-college programs, workshops and classes at SUNY campuses or apply for internships and summer jobs in your field of interest.
- **Find** a summer job or internship that reflects your career interests.
- **Pace** yourself. Don't spend so much time trying to improve standardized test scores that your grades and involvement in activities suffer – find and maintain a balance.

## SUMMER - Following your junior year

- **Take** the SAT II subject tests if your potential colleges require them and you have finished the curriculum which would help you score well. (If you and your family are experiencing financial hardship, ask your counselor about a fee waiver.)
- **Narrow** your list of colleges to 4 - 8. Make sure these are a right match for you. Just because a relative attended an Ivy League school, doesn't mean it is a good fit for you.
- **Visit** the three schools at the top of your list (be sure to include SUNY). Schedule your visit in conjunction with a family vacation or when colleges are hosting events.
- **Decide** on whether you'll apply as an Early Decision or Early Action candidate and begin preparing your application for admission. These deadlines are typically in early to mid-November of your senior year.
- **Compose** rough drafts of essays and ask your family, friends, and teachers to review your essays for grammar, punctuation, readability, and content.
- **Contact** coaches, if applicable, and include your high school sports schedule and game tapes. Be sure to tell them why you are interested in their program and school.
- **Create** an arts portfolio, if applicable, to showcase your performing, visual or creative arts work. Your portfolio may include essays, photographs, illustrations, slides or other forms of artwork. A portfolio should represent your best creative work from class projects or assignments and be consistent with portfolio instructions given by an individual campus program.
- **Add** your 11th grade courses and test scores to your SUNY Online Academic Record (SOAR).

Plan ahead

*Links to non-SUNY Web sites and information are provided for your convenience and do not constitute an endorsement.*