

## Glossary of College Terms

**A-G REQUIREMENTS** - Courses required by the University of California and the California State University system in order to be eligible for admission:

- a. **History** – 2 years required (1 year of world history and 1 year of U.S. history)
- b. **English** - 4 years required
- c. **Mathematics** - 3 years required, 4 years recommended
- d. **Laboratory Science** - 2 years required, 3 years recommended
- e. **Language Other Than English** - 2 years required, 3 years recommended
- f. **Visual & Performing Arts (VPA)** - 1 year required; satisfied by completion of a single yearlong approved arts course from a single VPA discipline, i.e., dance, drama/theater, music or visual art
- g. **College Preparatory Electives** - 1 year required; chosen from the following areas: visual and performing arts (non-introductory level courses), history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science and language other than English (a third year in the language used for the “e” requirement or two years of another language). See the UC website for more details.

**ACT** - A test made up of four sections: English, Math, Reading, and Sciences, as well as an optional Writing test. Scores range from 1-36 on each section. Most colleges accept either the ACT (often with the Writing section) or SAT exams, Registration for this test is fastest and easiest at the ACT website - [www.act.org](http://www.act.org). Come to the CCPA college center for information about fee waivers.

**CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU)** - A public system of twenty-three campuses of higher education in the state of California whose application is due November 30 each year. All of the campuses offer undergraduate levels of study.

**CANDIDATE REPLY DATE** - Applicants to all colleges must let the colleges know their decision by May 1. All financial aid and admissions information should be known by mid-April to allow candidates to make their decision in time for this deadline.

**COLLEGE** - An institution of higher learning that offers two-year or four-year degrees and focuses primarily or exclusively on undergraduate (rather than graduate) education.

**COMMON APPLICATION (Common App)** - A generic application accepted at nearly 400 private universities and colleges. The student, counselor, and teacher portions need only be completed once (online is easiest!), greatly streamlining the application process to the cooperating institutions. Note that many Common Application colleges also require supplements to the application, though.

**COST OF ATTENDANCE** - The total cost of one year at a specific college, including tuition, mandatory fees, room and board, books and supplies, travel and other expenses. Colleges subtract your Expected Family Contribution from the Cost of Attendance to calculate financial need.

**DEFERRAL** - Neither acceptance or denial, a deferral signifies that a college postpones its admission decision about a candidate to the next "round" of applications or until further information is submitted.

**DEFERRED ADMISSION** - The practice at most colleges of permitting students to postpone enrollment for one year after acceptance if they want to work, travel or pursue some other personal interest. Note: The University of California generally does not grant deferred admission.

**DISTRIBUTION (or General Education or Breadth) REQUIREMENTS** - The courses a college requires a student to complete in different disciplines; the student selects which courses to take to fulfill each requirement.

**EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (EOP)** - A state-funded program offered by most states (including California) designed for students demonstrating a long history of low income and educational or other social disadvantages. The program offers specialized services to enhance the academic success of its students. Interested students should apply for this program when they apply to college.

**ELIGIBILITY IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT (ELC)** - An admission procedure instituted by the University of California in which the top 9% of graduates at each participating California high school are automatically eligible for admission to the UC system, though not necessarily to the campus of their choice.

**EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC)** - The amount a student is expected to pay for college that is calculated using the FAFSA (see definition below).

**FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)** – An application for need-based financial aid that is used to calculate a student's Expected Family Contribution. Note that the FAFSA must be completed for all colleges, even those that also require the CSS Profile (see Profile definition) or their own supplemental forms.

**FAFSA CODES** - Six-digit numbers (different from SAT codes) that identify colleges so that financial aid information can be sent to them.

**FINANCIAL NEED** - The amount of need-based financial aid a family qualifies to receive at each college. Colleges typically subtract the Expected Family Contribution from the Cost of Attendance to determine financial need.

**HUMANITIES** - The branches of study, such as literature, philosophy, art history or languages, that investigate human constructs and concerns as opposed to natural processes or social relations.

**IMPACTED PROGRAM** - A term used mostly by the CSU and UC system to indicate a major that receives more applications than there is space available. Impacted program applicants normally must apply during a specified time period, meet certain criteria, and participate in a competitive selection process.

**IVY LEAGUE** - An athletic conference formed in 1954 by eight institutions: Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania and Yale.

**LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE** - A four-year institution that emphasizes a program of broad undergraduate education. Pre-professional or professional training may be available, but it is not emphasized.

**NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association)** - An association dedicated to governing varsity athletics on college campuses. If you plan to play a varsity sport at a Division I or II college, you must register with the NCAA Clearinghouse as you apply to college.

**NEED-BLIND ADMISSION** - A procedure that some colleges and universities follow, whereby they admit candidates on the basis of academic and personal criteria alone, without using financial need as a consideration in selecting students. These provisions do not apply to the admission of foreign nationals

ineligible for federal student assistance.

**PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT and the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test)** - The PSAT was designed to provide a practice test for students in the fall of their sophomore or junior year as a warm-up for the SAT. The NMSQT has been combined with the PSAT, and the Selection Index number (verbal score plus math score plus writing score) is used to select the top scholars in the country for the awarding of National Merit honors and scholarships. Junior year PSAT scores can be used to estimate a student's performance on the SAT because it is a shortened version of the test, and its score scale of 20 to 80 is equivalent to the SAT scale of 200 to 800.

**PROFILE (or CSS Profile)** - College Scholarship Service's application for financial aid, available through the College Board which is required by many private colleges (in addition to the FAFSA) for need-based financial aid.

**RANK IN CLASS** - A methodology used to compare one student's academic performance with the performance of all other students at the same grade level based on cumulative GPA.

**ROLLING ADMISSIONS** - A procedure some colleges follow by considering each student's application as soon as all required credentials have been received, then notifying the applicant of the decision without delay.

**SAT** - A test made up of three sections: Writing, Math and Critical Reading. Scores range from 200-800 on each section. The test, which takes three hours and 45 minutes, is given at local test centers. Registration for this test is fastest and easiest at the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)). Come to the CCPA college center for information about fee waivers.

**SAT SUBJECT TESTS** - Subject-specific tests administered by the College Board and required by many selective colleges. Each test takes one hour. Like the SAT, the Subjects are given at local test centers. Students may take up to three SAT Subjects Tests on a given test date. They may not take the SAT Subject Tests and the SAT on the same day. Come to the CCPA college center for information about fee waivers.

**SCIENCES** - The branches of study, such as math or biology, that investigate natural or logical processes as opposed to human constructs or social relations.

**SOCIAL SCIENCES** - The branches of study, such as psychology, sociology, political science, and economics, that investigate social relations or human

behavior as opposed to natural processes or human constructs.

**TA (Teaching Assistant)** - A graduate student who teaches a college-level class. Larger universities tend to make use of TAs for discussion groups or small sections.

**UNIVERSITY** - An institution of higher learning, often including professional schools, that grants undergraduate as well as graduate degrees in a variety of fields.

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC)** - A public system of ten campuses of higher education institutions in the state of California whose application is due November 30 each year. Undergraduates may study at nine of the campuses (Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Santa Cruz), while the San Francisco campus is dedicated to the health professions only.