

Post-Secondary Planning Guide

Wauwatosa Virtual Academy

2021-2022



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Introduction to College Planning

When selecting the right college for you, you should look at three distinct fits:

- 1) Academic
- 2) Financial
- 3) Personal

All of these fits are important. There is not one fit that is more important than the other. The academic fit makes sure that you are going to learn what to do in your chosen career. The financial fit makes sure the college is affordable to you. The personal fit makes sure that you like where you are going to spend the next four years of your life. It is recommended that you apply to at least three colleges/universities. When looking at a fit, this is the criteria:

- Reach Schools:
 - You would be a bottom 25% student for GPA and ACT scores
 - Usually <20% are accepted
- Target Schools:
 - You would be a mid-50% student for GPA and ACT scores
- Foundation Schools:
 - You would be a top 25% student for GPA and ACT scores
 - You would possibly qualify for Honors Program and/or scholarships

Your school counselor is available to help provide information and resources for you.

Big Future

<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>

Big Future is a free comprehensive web resource that improves the college planning process. Its step-by-step approach makes college planning easier to navigate and helps students learn how to overcome barriers that make college seem out of reach.

- Engages students as they explore their own interests and make decisions about college
- Students create a personalized path to college with a detailed action plan so they know what to do when
- Helps families see that college is possible, finds schools that fit their needs, and keeps students on track toward a college education.

College Planning - Junior Year

November to January

- Attend a junior conference with your school counselor to discuss graduation and post-high school plans
- Discuss senior courses. Take the most challenging program possible in which you will be able to achieve success.
- Register for AP Exams by October 30, 2020

March

- Take the All State ACT
- Register for upcoming ACTs (optional) - April, May, June
- Continue to update resume

April

- Retake the ACT - optional
- Register for senior year classes

May

- Take the SAT - optional
- Ask for letter of recommendation from someone at WVA (teacher, counselor, etc.) if needed for college applications
- Register for senior year classes

Summer before Senior Year

- Visit colleges (or do virtual visits!)
 - Work on college essay
 - Work on your resume
 - Retake the ACT/SAT - optional
 - Continue to build your college list
-

College Planning - Senior Year

September

- Continue college research
- Make a list of intended college apps
- Work on your college essays
- Ask for letter of recommendation from someone at WVA (teacher, counselor, etc.) if needed for college applications
- Begin completing applications
- Complete a Common Application
- Attend virtual college visits

October

- Begin submitting college applications
- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) based on 2019 taxes
- Obtain a 2019 Tax Return Transcript (or a statement of non-filing if you were not required to file and did not do so)
- Register for AP Exams
- Continue to attend virtual college visits

November

- Continue submitting college applications
- Begin scholarship applications

December

- Continue submitting college applications
 - Continue scholarship applications
-

January and February

- Apply to additional colleges as necessary
- File 2020 tax returns
- Confirm that your FAFSA has been shared with all colleges where you have been admitted

March and April

- Obtain financial aid award letters
- Submit additional verification documents to colleges as required
- Sign up for and attend a College Choice Conversation with the school counselor

May and June

- Reach a decision to attend the best college you can afford (National College Decision Day is May 1!)
- Complete all enrollment steps for your college

July and August

- Confirm all enrollment steps and financial arrangements
- Contact WVA staff for support as needed

College Planning Resources

Wauwatosa Virtual Academy School Counselor

- Hannah Cohen, (414) 773-3412, cohenha@wauwatosa.k12.wi.us

College Board Big Future (bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers)

- This particular part of the College Board's website helps students understand the relationship between college majors and possible careers. Search by major or career, and then search for colleges according to your preferred criteria.

College Results (collegeresults.org)

- This site compiles federally reported data about colleges' graduation rates, academic profiles, demographic information, and financial outcomes.

Common Application (commonapp.org)

- Students applying to most 4-year colleges will benefit from using the Common Application, since almost 900 colleges use it.

Federal Student Aid (studentaid.ed.gov)

- This is the federal Department of Education's online resource about financial aid, student loans, and the FAFSA.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (fafsa.ed.gov)

- This is the free financial aid application required of all students who are U.S. citizens, permanent legal residents, or current visa holders. This determines eligibility for government grants and loans but does not obligate or guarantee financial aid by itself.

College Entrance Tests

Most colleges will require that you take either the ACT or the SAT. In the state of Wisconsin, it is required that you take the ACT. You will take this in March through Wauwatosa Virtual Academy. You do not need to take both the ACT and the SAT, as colleges will take one or the other.

ACT

- Two Options:
 - Writing
 - All State ACT includes the writing portion
 - Writing portion is not necessary for every school
 - Only need to take the writing portion once
 - Non-Writing
- Scoring
 - Score Range is from 1 to 36
 - Four Sub-Scores (Math, Reading, English, Science)
 - One Composite Score
 - National Average: 21
 - Wisconsin Average: 21
- Register at www.act.org

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration (fee required)
December 11, 2021	November 5, 2021	November 6 - 19, 2021
February 12, 2022	January 7, 2022	January 8 - 21, 2022
April 2, 2022	February 25, 2022	February 26 - March 11, 2022
June 11, 2022	May 6, 2022	May 7 - 20, 2022
July 16, 2022	June 17, 2022	June 18 - 24, 2022

Did you know practicing for the ACT can improve your score? You can take practice tests at ACT Academy, use the ACT prep book, or take a prep class online to get comfortable with the test.

- <http://academy.act.org/>
- [ACT Prep Book](#)
- [Magoosh ACT](#)

Why MATC or WCTC?

Milwaukee Area Technical College & Waukesha County Technical College

Affordable

- Outstanding value compared to four-year options
- MATC Associate's Degree - 3 credits = Approximately \$475.00 per semester
- WCTC Associate's Degree - 3 credits = Approximately \$410.00 per semester

Accessible

- MATC - 4 locations: Downtown Milwaukee, Mequon, Oak Creek, West Allis
- WCTC - conveniently located in Pewaukee, WI
- Day, evening, weekend, and online courses

Comprehensive

- Over 160 programs covering 16 career clusters
- Gain transfer credits that can go towards a Bachelor's Degree
- Complete the first half of a Bachelor's Degree (Liberal Arts and Sciences)
- Apprentice in a traditional trade
- Employment skills

Practical

- Hands-on training
- Instructors have "on-the-job" experience
- Programs that partner directly with employers
- Small class sizes

*****If you are outside the Milwaukee area, search online for the technical college nearest you*****

The Application Process

There are many parts of a college application. Be sure to check with each individual school for their specific requirements. Be aware of application deadlines and remember your deadline is also your School Counselor's deadline to submit counselor recommendations and school reports.

- 1) Application - You send in one of the following:
 - a) School's Own Application
 - b) Common Application
 - c) Coalition Application
- 2) Essay - You send in
- 3) Test Scores - You send in
 - a) Can be sent via: www.act.org
- 4) Resume - You send in
- 5) Application Fee - You send in
- 6) Transcript
 - a) Common Application and Coalition Application - Counselor uploads transcript for you
 - b) Email Tina Shaffer at shaffeti@wauwatosa.k12.wi.us with the name of school and person/address to be sent to and she will send in your transcript
- 7) Counselor Recommendation - Your counselor will send in for you
- 8) Teacher Recommendation - Your teacher will send in for you
- 9) Submit Application(s) by the deadline. Late applications delay the process and may jeopardize your admission.

Speak the College Admissions Language

If you are unfamiliar with the college admissions process, it does seem to have a language all of its own. Following are some definitions to help you learn the lingo.

Types of Admission Options				
STUDENTS: Which college admission process best <i>suits</i> you?				
Non-Restrictive Application Plans			Restrictive Application Plans	
Regular Decision	Rolling Admission	Early Action (EA)	Early Decision (ED)	Restrictive Early Action (REA)
DEFINITION:	DEFINITION:	DEFINITION:	DEFINITION:	DEFINITION:
Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.	Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.	Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.	Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.	Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.
COMMITMENT:	COMMITMENT:	COMMITMENT:	COMMITMENT:	COMMITMENT:
NON-BINDING	NON-BINDING	NON-BINDING	BINDING	NON-BINDING

Acceptance Rate: The percentage of applicants a college accepts for admission.

Accreditation: Certification that a college meets the standards of a state, regional, or national association.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA): This agreement, sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, states that in order to allow students to consider their college options, students have until May 1st to accept any college's offer of admission.

Common/Universal Application: Standardized application forms accepted by many colleges. After you fill out the Common or Universal Application, you can send it to any college that accepts it as the institution's own application.

Competitive College (or Highly Selective): A college with a rigorous, highly selective admissions process. Competitive colleges typically admit fewer than 25% of applicants.

Deferred Admission: A student's option to defer an offer of admission. Check with your school of choice on the length of the deferment.

Personal Statement: Sometimes referred to as a college application essay, personal statements are essays that give admissions officers insights into your character, personality, and motivation.

Retention Rate: The percentage of students who return to a college for their sophomore year. An indicator of student satisfaction.

Student-Faculty Ratio: The number of students at a college compared to the number of faculty. Some colleges see this as an indicator of class size and professor accessibility, but a lower ratio doesn't guarantee either. For true indication of class size and professor accessibility, speak with students and professors at a college.

Supplemental Material: Items you include with your college application to provide more information about your talents, experiences, and goals. Materials could include work samples, additional essays, newspaper clippings, music CDs, or art slides. Verify if a college welcomes (or requests) these materials before sending.

Transcript: AN official record of classes you have taken and the grades you have received. Usually you must provide a high school transcript with your college application.

Waitlist: A list of students a college may eventually decide to admit if space becomes available.

Yield: The percentage of accepted students who go on to enroll at that college. Competitive colleges have high yield rates.

Financial Aid Process

There are three main types of financial aid that students can apply for:

- Scholarships
- Grants
- Loans

Scholarships

These are usually based on merit and can be found from a variety of places:

- Schools you are applying to
- Local organizations
- Family workplaces
- Goingmerry.com

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid

All students are encouraged to apply for financial aid as some institutions will require completion of the FAFSA form in order to qualify for their campus scholarships. It can be filled out any time after October 1st and can be found at www.fafsa.gov. The report will generate an EFC (Expected Family Contribution) number. This number is what schools and the government use to calculate the amount of needs-based financial aid a student qualifies for. There are two types of financial aid available from the FAFSA:

- Grants - Grants are money that does NOT need to be paid back and is distributed based on financial need.
- Loans - Loans are money that students DO need to pay back after graduation
- Work Study - Provides part time jobs for undergraduate/graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay educational expenses.

Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship programs are another post-secondary option. Only a portion of your skills are learned in the classroom. Most of your training will be on-the-job. Being employed is the primary requirement during your apprenticeship. You are actually getting paid a competitive wage while learning your trade. A Wisconsin Technical College is usually where the classroom instruction time takes place.

Who: You must be 18 years old. Most people start after graduating from high school instead of going to a four-year university or college.

Five (5) Steps:

- 1) Get Prepared:
 - a) Take courses in math, science, and technology
- 2) Graduate from High School
 - a) Graduate with highest GPA possible
 - b) Programs are competitive
- 3) Find a Trade
 - a) Construction Sector
 - i) Contact local Trade Committee
 - ii) Complete application
 - iii) Aptitude test is required
 - b) Industrial, Service, and Utility
 - i) Apply directly to employer
 - ii) Job Center of Wisconsin
 - iii) Find your own
- 4) Know the Entrance Process
 - a) Entrance processes vary by trade, occupation, and geographic area
 - b) Visit dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship for more information
- 5) Start Your Career
 - a) Very competitive
 - b) There usually is not a definitive start date