

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

After narrowing down your list of colleges, you need to apply for admission. Getting the college application process started is easier with a little planning and preparation.

START EARLY

Start your applications early. Most students do the majority of their application work during the fall of their senior year. Deadlines for most colleges are between January 1 and February 15 but can be earlier if you are applying for early admission.

CHECK YOUR RAI

If you are applying to Iowa State University, the University of Iowa or the University of Northern Iowa, you will need to have a Regent Admissions Index (RAI) of at least 245 and have taken the minimum number of required high school courses to qualify for automatic admission.

The RAI is a combination of your ACT or SAT test score, high school rank, high school cumulative GPA and the number of completed high school core courses. An alternative formula is available for students whose high schools do not provide class rank. If your RAI falls short, you may still be offered admission after the university conducts an individual review of your application. You can calculate your RAI at www.regents.iowa.gov/RAI/.

SUBMIT ALL REQUESTED DOCUMENTATION

Make sure that you submit all requested documentation when completing your college applications. Requested documents typically include:

- Application fee or waiver
- Letters of recommendation
- Official ACT and/or SAT scores
- Official high school transcript
- Official college transcripts for dual credit courses (if applicable)
- AP exam scores (if applicable)

TAKE YOUR TIME ON ESSAYS

Some colleges or universities require you to write a personal essay as part of their application process. These essays can be on a variety of topics, but all provide an opportunity for you to tell the admissions committee about who you are as a person. Be honest, be concise and write thoughtfully from the heart. This is your opportunity to distinguish yourself from the crowd of applicants!

5 FIVE MISTAKES TO AVOID ON COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

1. FAILING TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION

When completing online applications, don't assume that it was successfully submitted. You should receive a confirmation or response that it was received by the school.

2. NOT PROOFREADING

For something as important as your college application, make sure to spell check and proofread for grammatical errors. Nothing is worse than misspelling the name of the school or your intended major!

3. FOCUSING ON QUANTITY VS. QUALITY

Admissions officers want to know where your passions lie and your level of commitment. This is more likely to be evident through consistent involvement in a few activities or volunteer opportunities than a large number that appear your senior year.

4. REPEATING YOURSELF

Every part of the college application is valuable to the admissions process. Avoid repeating the same thought over and over. Make sure each section is focused and has purpose.

5. BEING UNTRUTHFUL

Never lie on your college application. This includes exaggerating activities, inflating your grades or class rank or plagiarizing an essay.

