



College Handbook For Juniors

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College Planning Timetable for Juniors

Junior Year:

- Attend Career Day in September or October
- Attend Brother Martin's College Day in either September or October
- Attend NACAC College Fair in either September or October
- Research admission standards for colleges
- Meet with your College Counselor
- Discuss plans with your parents
- Take PSAT
- Take ACT and/or SAT at least once
- Meet with college representatives visiting Brother Martin
- Attend Juniors Take the Next Step Program at Brother Martin in the Spring
- Apply for Academy Candidate Packets if applicable
- Consider people to ask for recommendation letters – teachers, employers, clergy, etc .
- Use *SCOIR* and other web sources to research colleges
- Visit colleges either with your parents or by attending the College Run

Senior Year - September through December:

- Check Brother Martin email often for college and scholarship information
- Take the college entrance exams (SAT and/or ACT) - register online at myact.org and collegeboard.org
- Find out if the institution(s) to which you are applying require the SAT II tests
- Attend College Day on Brother Martin's campus and meet with college representatives that visit Brother Martin's campus
- Apply for admission to all of the colleges you selected
- Be aware of scholarship, especially leadership, deadlines (usually Nov. 1)
- Apply for on-campus housing at all colleges to which you are applying
- Complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid and the Louisiana's Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) - available October 1
- Ask the Director of Financial Aid for any special instructions for the financial aid process at specific institutions
- Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require the College Scholarship Service Profile (CSS Profile)

Senior Year - January through May:

- The last testing of the ACT that will qualify for the full Louisiana TOPS Program is the April testing
- Inform the College Counseling Office of any kind of financial award, scholarships, or grants received. This must be written documentation.
- Arrange for College Counselor to send final transcripts

*Please note: Some dates for this timetable are not necessarily final deadlines but are suggested in the best interest for our students.

The vast majority of institutions consider applications for admissions, housing, and financial aid as three separate processes handled by three different university offices: the Office of Admissions, the Housing Office, and the Financial Aid Office.

See your College Counselor when you have questions.

Information Sources

Where to begin the maze of researching colleges? Minimize the legwork by starting early, and be sure to make an appointment with your College Counselor.

There are many college resource books in the Library. In this handbook, you will also find a host of web sites that you can use for college, scholarship, and career research as well as sites that can be useful in the college, scholarship, and financial aid application processes.

Speak to recent Brother Martin graduates, faculty members, parents, and any other adults you know that have attended college. Ask questions about things you want to know. These firsthand sources can provide you with helpful information that you cannot find in printed materials.

College Counselors

The College Counselor and the Assistant College Counselor are your most accessible source of information on colleges and college admission. You should continue to meet with your College Counselor when you are a senior. During that meeting, your College Counselor will help you define your goals and interests, suggest colleges that seem to meet your requirements, guide you in a calendar of college planning, and help you with application procedures.

The College Counselors serve as your liaisons with college admissions offices. Be sure to keep them informed of your activities and accomplishments. Early in your senior year, you will receive an Activities Record and Senior Questionnaire. Please complete these and return them to your College Counselor. These are important tools that are used when writing counselor recommendations. Also, parents are asked to complete a Parent Information Sheet, giving them an opportunity to reflect on their son's experiences and accomplishments. This is also extremely helpful to the College Counselors when writing counselor recommendations.

During your college investigations, your College Counselor will help you in assessing how realistic your college choices are. In assessing the probable admissions decisions of a specific college, the counselor does not intend to either encourage or discourage your application. Where you apply is your decision - whether or not you are accepted is the college's decision. Your College Counselor attempts only to guide you so that when the admissions decisions are made you will have several choices among your acceptances.

SCOIR

SCOIR - pronounced “score” - is the new one-stop online system that provides students with college and career planning tools to use during their time at Brother Martin. Its comprehensive college and career planning solutions optimize student success and enhance school counselor productivity. SCOIR allows students to set personal goals and tasks, search for colleges and scholarships, and explore careers based on personal skills and interests. In addition, SCOIR affords Brother Martin the opportunity to participate in electronic transcript and document exchange in the college application process.

This Platform offers:

- Personalized Student Profile
- Career Search Tools
- College Search Tools
- Campus Community Exploration
- Virtual Visits
- Messaging Feature with counselors

Sign-in Procedures:

- Go to: scoir.com
- Email: Your Brother Martin email
- Password: Your created password from the first time you logged in (Suggest using your Brother Martin password)

After you have signed in, you have access to all of the tabs and features available in SCOIR.

During their Junior year, students should utilize Scoir’s college and career research tools. During their senior year, students will utilize Scoir for requesting transcripts and documents once they have applied to their colleges of interest.

Application Types

Early Decision: It is not an obligation to be taken lightly, since colleges honor one another's binding decisions. If you renege on an early decision obligation to one school, it is unlikely that another competitive school will accept you.

Students can seek release from an early decision obligation on the grounds of financial hardship, if the financial aid package they are offered is genuinely inadequate; however, the burden of proof in these cases is on the student. (By the way, an important drawback to early decision admissions is that they leave applicants with no leverage to negotiate a better financial aid package – the school knows you can't go anywhere else .)

Early decision applicants are expected to submit only one early decision application to one school. They can submit applications to other Colleges under normal application procedures, but agree that they will withdraw all those applications if they are accepted to the early decision school.

Early Action: Early admissions programs, which do not ask applicants to commit to attending if they are accepted, are generally known as Early Action (EA) programs. They give students the benefits of early notification without the obligations of early decision. Even if accepted, students are free to apply to other colleges and to compare financial aid offers.

Rolling Admission: Colleges that use rolling admissions accept applications until they've filled all the spots in their freshman class.

Decisions are then made on a case-by-case basis and you'll usually hear back within 4 to 8 weeks. However, some colleges accept applications under a rolling admission policy and then send out decisions all at once.

There may also be less competition, but this depends on you. If you apply in December, the school won't wait until March to compare you with all the other applicants and you could actually improve your chances of being accepted. Remember though, the reverse also holds true: the later you apply, the more competition there may be for fewer spots.

Applying to a school with rolling admissions late in the game can also impact your financial aid offer. A school's admission and aid policies are not one and the same. In fact, they usually come from offices that are nowhere near one another. If you're accepted after the free money's been doled out, you could be out of luck and limited to taking out loans.

Regular Admission: Colleges using this plan generally have a January, February or March application deadline and notify all of the applicants at the same time. (No later than April 15).

Restrictive Early Action: programs specifically require students not to make EA applications to other colleges, although they are free to apply elsewhere under the regular admissions round.

Internet Resources

Exploring Colleges:

ACT	act.org
Campus Tours	https://campustours.com/
College Board	https://www.collegeboard.org/
Big Future	https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/
College Express	https://www.collegexpress.com/
College Plan	https://collegeplan.org.org/
College Scorecard	https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/
College Stats	https://collegestats.org/
Go College	http://gocollege.com/
Jesuit Colleges	https://ajcunet.edu/
NACAC	https://www.nacacnet.org/
Niche	https://www.niche.com/
Princeton Review	princetonreview.com
UNCF	https://uncf.org/
University Links	https://ulinks.com/
US News	https://www.usnews.com/education?top_nav_Education

Athletics:

NAIA	https://play.mynaia.org/
NCAA	https://www.ncaa.org/eligibility-center/
NCSA - College Recruiting	https://www.ncsasports.org/

Financial Aid and Scholarships:

Award Letter Comparison Tools	https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college
FAFSA	https://studentaid.gov/
Fastweb	https://www.fastweb.com/
Federal Student Aid	https://studentaid.gov/
FSA ID Creation	https://studentaid.gov/fsa-id/create-account/launch
College Scholarships	https://www.collegescholarships.com/
Louisiana Education Loan Authority	https://lela.org/
NET Price Calculators	https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/get-started/net-price-calculator

Test Preparation:

ACT	act.org
College Board On-Line	www.collegeboard.org
Princeton Review	princetonreview.com

Other Useful Sites:

Common Application	commonapp.org
Academic Common Market	https://www.sreb.org/AcademicCommonMarket

College Representatives on Campus

Each year, colleges will send representatives to Brother Martin High School to talk with prospective students. When meeting with college representatives remember to be respectful and ask questions. The representative whom you meet may be a member of the admissions committee and/or scholarship committee that reviews your applications. Make a good first impression.

College representative usually schedule their visits during periods 4 and 5. These visits will be announced during daily announcements and posted on *SCOIR*. Most representatives will set up their table and materials in the mall and meet with students during their unstructured time. Occasionally college representatives will request a classroom setting so that they may give a formal presentation. Students are encouraged to speak with college representatives during their unstructured periods.

Brother Martin College Day/College Fairs

The College Day Program will be held in the fall for all students. The college fair will take place during periods 4, 5, and 6. Students are encouraged to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to speak directly to college admissions officers.

The National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) sponsors a College Fair during the same week as our College Day. Juniors and seniors are encouraged to look at the list of schools in attendance and plan to attend in order to visit with school representatives that are not present at Brother Martin's College Day.

Career Planning

Choosing a career requires continuous exploration and self-evaluation. Just as you will be selecting a college and a major field of study, you must look at your interests, aptitudes, and personal preferences when deciding on a career.

Essentials to sound career planning are:

Avoiding Pitfalls

- Overplaying a single aspect - the common inclination is to focus on only one part of a job
- The misconception that some occupations are more respectable than others
- Allowing “money” to be the sole reason for choosing a career
- Avoid a close-minded opinion of an occupation before complete investigation

Analyzing Yourself

- Examine your strong points and weak points
- Engage in the Career Search on the internet

Analyzing Prospective Careers and Majors Thoroughly

- It is not necessary to decide on a career or a major to find the right college. The statistics indicate that 80% of all freshmen will change their major prior to graduation. If you are sure about your major, it will help to narrow down the number of colleges. The best advice is to find a college at which you will feel comfortable and that will offer you a variety of opportunities.

Career Day is held every fall for the entire student body. Freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors have the opportunity to get in-depth information on three different careers yearly.

The College Resource area houses a strong selection of books and magazines that enable the students to research a prospective career.

Scoir offers a “career interest profile” that all juniors will be required to complete. The results of this interest inventory and the information about possible careers will be valuable when narrowing your career focus.

College Admissions Testing (SAT/ACT)

The purpose of the college entrance exam is to provide the college admissions officers with a common measure of ability to understand and compare applicants from varying educational backgrounds. (High schools, of course, have different grading practices and standards; within a high school, graduates have taken different courses). The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and the American College Testing (ACT) programs provide that common measure of ability. SAT, a test of verbal, quantitative and writing abilities, is administered by the College Board. ACT is an examination with sections in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. The ACT and SAT also include an optional writing component. The admissions officer may combine your SAT or ACT score with your high school grade point average (GPA) to figure out your probability of success on the campus. Colleges strive to admit students who will most likely graduate.

You must apply to take these tests online. On the application, you will include Brother Martin's Code (192-015) to ensure that Brother Martin receives a copy of your test results for your transcript. Also, you should have your scores sent to the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) for your TOPS certification. Do this by indicating code 1595 on the ACT registration and 9019 on the SAT registration. Both ACT and SAT are given on Saturday mornings during the academic year. Brother Martin High School is a testing site for the ACT. You will take the SAT at another local high school. Before the test date, you will receive an admissions ticket through the mail or email, which you must take to the test center with proper identification (i.e. driver's license).

All Brother Martin students will take the ACT in the spring of their junior year. These tests may be taken more than once. Usually the highest "composite" score for ACT and combined score for SAT for a single testing will be accepted, but check college catalogs or college representatives to find out how the university or college handles multiple ACT and SAT scores. (Some colleges and scholarship programs will combine the highest sub-scores from different ACT and SAT test dates, seeking to achieve a higher composite/combined score). All juniors will take a mandatory ACT test in the spring. This official ACT will take place during a regular school day. Please refer to the school calendar to check for this year's testing date.

Use all available resources and options to reach your educational and career goals. There are books in the College Resource Area and Library that, when used properly, can help improve scores. Also, there are software programs available for purchase at local bookstores and courses that provide a structured course of study. College Board has an extensive web page that can help you prepare for the essay portion of the SAT I. It includes tips about effective writing and the scoring process. It can be accessed at:
<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sample-questions/essay>

Students with documented physical or learning disabilities may be eligible for special testing and/or extended time for the ACT and SAT tests. Students needing more information about this should see their guidance counselor. Accommodations available to them include extended time, other test formats such as Braille, audiocassette, large-print, or a reader. A special application must be submitted to request these accommodations and only the testing agency can grant permission for these accommodations.

Other Important Tests

The SAT II (formerly Achievement Tests), one-hour subject matter tests, also offered by the College Board, are infrequently used in admissions, but they may be required for college placement. Some colleges award credit or exempt students from course requirements on the basis of these tests. If a college to which you are applying requires these tests, you should take them by January of your senior year. To register for the SAT II tests, go to www.collegeboard.org.

Advanced Placement (AP) tests have no direct impact on college admission. In fact, the results of AP tests are generally not available until after you have been admitted to college. The test is simply the final examination for a college level course taken in high school (an AP course), and students receiving scores of 4 or 5 on the AP grading scale will be considered to receive college credit. While some students not enrolled in an AP course may take the AP and do well, this generally requires work beyond the normal classroom requirements. A number of AP courses are offered at Brother Martin High School.

Reporting Admissions Test Results

Although your Brother Martin transcript includes all of your test scores, most colleges want an official report sent directly to them from the testing agency. It is your responsibility as an applicant to report your SAT I/ SAT II or ACT scores by indicating colleges as score recipients on the registration forms or by completing an Additional Score Report (available online with the testing agencies). The Additional Score Report is for colleges or scholarship programs you did not include on the registration.

Be aware that when the colleges get a copy of your scores from the testing agency they also get notification of what order their college was in your list. Therefore, when listing the colleges to receive your scores, do not randomly list the schools. Put thought into ordering them in your order of preference. Remember that the colleges/universities that have selective admissions are the ones that will pay attention to the order.

Dates to Remember 2026-2027

ACT Test Dates:

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Deadline(Late fee applies)
September 19, 2026	August 14	September 1
October 17, 2026	September 11	September 29
December 12, 2026	November 6	November 29
February 27, 2027	January 22	February 9
April 10, 2027	March 5	March 23
June 12, 2027	May 7	May 25
July 10, 2027	June 4	June 22

SAT Test Dates:

Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Deadline(Late fee applies)
Aug. 22, 2026	Aug. 7, 2026	Aug. 11, 2026
Sept. 12, 2026	Aug. 28, 2026	Sept. 1, 2026
Oct. 3, 2026	Sept. 18, 2026	Sept. 22, 2026
Nov. 7, 2026	Oct. 23, 2026	Oct. 27, 2026
Dec. 5, 2026	Nov. 20, 2026	Nov. 24, 2026
March 6, 2027	Feb. 19, 2027	Feb. 23, 2027
May 1, 2027	Apr. 16, 2027	April 20, 2027
June 5, 2027	May 21, 2027	May 25, 2027

College Exploration

College Exploration

Continue your research into a variety of colleges by reading published material as well as talking to your College Counselor, guidance counselor, parents, teachers, alumni, and undergraduates you know . Explore colleges and your opportunities on the internet. Use the web sites in this book to conduct college searches. Use the following section “College Selection,” to consider colleges with a wide variety of characteristics.

Campus Visits

For a better understanding and valuable insight into the colleges and universities that you have researched, visit them. There is no substitute for gaining a closer look, going on campus, seeing the facility, and talking with students and faculty . To plan a visit, call the Office of Admissions to request an interview/information session and a tour of the campus. All colleges offer these tours, but please inquire at individual institutions for days/times that tours are given.

High School Resume

Just as the transcript shows your academic achievement, the high school resume shows your achievements outside of the classroom. Many college and scholarship applications require a resume or require the completion of their form showing all the information traditionally presented on a high school resume.

There are many ways to organize and format your resume. Basically, the resume should reflect simplicity and clarity. The form is your option. *SCOIR* has a resume builder that can help you compile a resume in an organized and succinct format. See your College Counselor if you would like further explanation of this *SCOIR* feature.

Remember to include:

- Name, address, phone number
- Education
 - Name and address of high schools attended
 - Dates you attended
 - Cumulative Grade Point Average
 - Highest ACT composite
 - Academic Honors and Awards
- Extracurricular Activities/Memberships -including leadership, honors and awards (both high school and outside of school) - presented in chronological order
- Community Service/Work Experience
- Unique Experiences (travel, camp, etc .)
- Hobbies and Interests
- References (Name/address/phone number - secure permission from person before using)

College Run

The College Run is an opportunity for upperclassmen to visit various universities in various regions of the United States, while enjoying a trip packed with fun-filled activities. The trip is 10 nights, 10+ college visits and

activities, such as MLB baseball games and amusement parks. Each college visit will include a presentation from the Admissions Office and a campus tour. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit several schools that would be difficult to visit during the school year. Information is distributed to Sophomores and Juniors during the fall semester.

Applying for Academy Appointments

Some students may find excellent educational opportunities at one of the military academies. The Army, Navy, Air Force, Merchant Marines, and Coast Guard each have their own academies, West Point, the Naval Academy, the Air Force Academy, the Merchant Marine Academy, and the Coast Guard Academy respectively. All academies offer a free four-year college education to the students they accept. Students interested in applying to one of the academies should start the process during the spring of their junior year. Students appointed to an academy receive four years of college tuition, room, board, fees, and a monthly salary, part of which must be used for expenses. After graduation from an academy, a student is obligated to be on active military duty for five years.

With the exception of the Coast Guard Academy, admission requires a nomination by an eligible nominating authority. Because of the extremely keen competition for an academy nomination, students are urged to apply to every nominating authority which their eligibility allows, (i.e., students' two senators, their congressman, Presidential nomination, Vice Presidential nomination, Academy commandant, Children of Deceased or Disabled Veterans Organization nomination, etc.). It is recommended that the student initiate the application process for this highly competitive nomination. As young adults anticipating attendance at an academy, students are expected to exhibit a high degree of maturity and responsibility. This initial act should reflect their actual desire to attend. Students should send a written request for an application to their state senator and/or representative in April of their junior year to allow adequate time to meet all requirements. The information for applying for a nomination may also be found on your senator or congressman's website.

Students begin the application process by completing a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire. Students should contact the academy of their choice soon after January 31 of their junior year. If the student is determined eligible by the Pre-Candidate Questionnaire, he should then begin the application. It is not unusual to have to begin the application process before a nomination is obtained. This process is different from the usual college application process and should be started either in the spring of junior year or the summer before senior year.

United States Air Force Academy
2304 Cadet Drive Suite
200 USAF Academy, CO
80840-5025
Phone: 719-333-2520
<http://www.usafa.edu>

United States Military Academy
Admissions Office
Bldg 606 Thayer Road
West Point, NY 10996
Phone: 845-938-4041
<http://www.usma.edu>

United States Coast Guard Academy
Admissions Office
31 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320-8103
Phone: 860-444-8500
<http://www.cga.edu>

United States Naval Academy
Admissions Office
52 King George St
Halsey Field House
Annapolis, MD
21402-1318
Phone: 410-293-1858
<http://www.usna.edu>

United States Merchant Marine Academy
Admissions Office
300 Steamboat Road
Kings Point, NY 11024 - 1699
Phone: 516-773-5391
<http://www.usmma.edu>

College Selection

There are many considerations in the selection of a particular college or university. The intention of this section is to make the student aware of both personal and academic factors that might play a part in his college decision. Not all of these factors listed are important to each graduate, so each should be weighed according to individual priorities. Using the resources we have previously discussed, you can decide which colleges meet your criteria.

Personal Considerations

The following information attempts to focus on those non-academic considerations in choosing a college. Read them carefully and be fair to yourself in appraising those that apply to you. The College Resource area has publications on colleges that will be helpful in answering many of the following questions. College websites and *SCOIR* can also be helpful in answering many of these questions.

- How important are existing friendships with peers going to other colleges? Will they influence your decision?
- Family Traditions. Are they tied to a particular college, university, or religion? Is that important to you?
- What is the extent of campus facilities for personal, social, and academic needs?
- What is the degree of personal discipline, independence, and aggressiveness required of a student?
- Area of the country in which school is located and proximity to home (travel to and from home) .
- Geographic considerations of climate and clothing needs, and whether the school is located in an urban, suburban, or rural area. How does the cost of living vary in the cities or communities under consideration? (Dallas vs. Sherman; Houston vs. Austin)
- Is the school co-educational or primarily male or female? What are the ratios?
- What is the size of the school? Small? Medium? Large?
- What transportation is available? Are automobiles allowed for freshmen? Do you have a car? What are available transportation services? (Shuttle, bus service, mass transit)
- Dorm availability or general living options - Are there dorms and what type --apartments, special freshman housing? What are the regulations concerning each? What is housing proximity to library, student union, and other campus activity centers?
- What are expenses - tuition, travel, room and board, miscellaneous?
- What extracurricular activities are available? (Athletics, fraternities, band, social groups, debate clubs, union activities, student government, etc .)
- What religious organizations are active and what provisions are there for religious services?
- Is military training or ROTC offered?
- Are fraternities national or local? Can you transfer affiliation to another university? What are their room and board requirements and facilities? Are there time requirements of this affiliation and will they affect your scholastic plans?
- Living Quarters. What do you have to furnish? Is there an adequate study facility? How are roommates selected?

Are conditions to your standard or need? What are facility rules and curfews?

- Are cultural activities available to suit your interests? (Lectures, concerts, plays, etc.)
- What is the school's reputation? (Academic, social, or a good balance)
- Have you talked to graduates or undergraduates of the college? What are the impressions given?
- What percent graduate from college?
- Are there guidance counselors for personal problems? Are there health services for pre-existing conditions?
- What is the participation of the student body in policy-making? Is it important to you?
- Is part-time work available and how is it arranged?

Academic Considerations

Academic considerations should be the primary factors in college selection, yet we know that a balance of all requirements--academic, social, personal--is needed. Without an understanding of the academic atmosphere, a subjective decision is difficult. We urge you to read carefully these academic considerations and weigh their relative importance to you.

- Will you be more comfortable at a junior college or a four-year college?
- What are your personal study habits? Do they fit with the school attitude?
- Do you know your degree direction? Does the school have adequate curriculum for it? Does it satisfy your specialized interests? Are you aware of job availability in possible career fields relating to those degree directions?
- Is the school fully accredited?
- What are its colleges and graduate professional schools?
- What are admission standards? (Most competitive, less competitive)
- What is the extent of course and program offerings? How soon can you get into courses in your degree plan program?
- Are there advanced placements? What type are they: Credit by exam? Summer school credits? Do they require or will they accept achievement tests for placement?
- Are there special academic programs available? (i.e., accelerated programs, Plan II, honors, developmental)
- Is there a foreign study program?
- What scholarship programs are available?
- How is the academic year divided? (Semester, quarter, block system) What is the normal course load and what provisions are required to take more or less?
- What are faculty and class sizes? Is class format lecture or discussion? What is the ratio of students to professor?
Remember that published ratios are sometimes misleading, and may be averaged, particularly for first-year students. Are labs required?
- What is the attrition rate of the freshman class?
- What is the diversity of students and faculty? (scholastic, geographic, graduates vs. undergraduates)
- Are credits transferable to other schools you might consider for transfer? Are they applicable to your degree plan? (Remember D's don't transfer).
- Find out what percent of graduates, of those who apply, are admitted to professional schools.
- Are there foreign language requirements for either high school graduation or college in meeting admission standards or degree requirements?
- Is there a career placement service for graduates?

Types of Schools

Start your college search by recognizing the many different types of colleges. Students usually do not consider this before submitting their applications. Although most students go to a four year college or university, you should at least consider other alternatives. You may find that another type can best fit your needs.

Universities

Universities offer many degree programs and have many colleges within the university structure. Check the catalog to decide what each college within the university offers and what the admission procedure is for each. You might find that you do not apply to the university but rather directly to that specific college that is part of the university. Specific undergraduate colleges within a university system may include: Engineering, Architecture, Business, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Education, Nursing.

Large universities offer both advantages and disadvantages. Their size generally enables them to offer a more comprehensive curriculum, a greater degree of flexibility and a choice of courses, and a greater research opportunity. They have large libraries and quite often more famous names on their faculties. However, to some students the size may be overwhelming and often there is less opportunity for close association with professors. Generally there is greater competition to participate in some extracurricular activities.

Colleges

Colleges are divided by departments and usually offer one or two degrees (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science) in many academic disciplines. This would include a major in departments such as math, English, literature, science, foreign language, politics, history or electrical engineering. There are various types of colleges (liberal arts, technological, military, education) that have smaller enrollment than most universities and offer fewer degrees. Most offer no Ph.D program, but offer graduate degrees.

Small colleges say their professors devote more time to undergraduates, classes are more intimate, students get to know each other more easily, and the curriculum is not diluted by too many subjects. However, if you are concerned about the size of the classes because you feel that you may need help, you would be wise to find out from students at the college you have in mind just how helpful the teachers are. Even at small colleges, faculty members are often not accessible. Also to be considered is whether you may find the limited number of degrees offered a disadvantage. More than 50 percent of students switch their majors in college.

Junior or Community Colleges

Junior or community colleges offer two basic programs:

- 1 . The Transfer Program is designed to prepare the student for transfer after two years to a four year college or University. Good academic standing enables the student to make this transfer without loss of credit.
- 2 . The Terminal Program is for students who want specialized training that leads to career opportunities at the completion of two years. (Some programs take less time). The catalog describes the courses available, among which are: secretarial, hotel management, automotive mechanics, data processing, and many others.

Independent Colleges for Professional Degrees in Visual and Performing Arts

At an independent arts college, all resources of the institution focus on the needs of the developing professional artist. Because these colleges are usually smaller, faculty and students interact closely. There are many opportunities for specialization and extensive work in a particular field.

Technical

Technical schools specialize in one or more of the branches of engineering technology: aeronautics; air conditioning, heating and refrigeration; automotive, diesel, and steam technologies; construction; chemical

technology; electronics; mechanics and metallurgy; tool designing; computer technology; and others. One of the greatest occupational demands in the years just ahead will be for technicians.

Courses run from one to three year. Some schools offer work/study cooperative programs. Night courses are available at many schools, too.

For admissions to a technical institute, you should have a good record in mathematics through algebra and geometry.

Vocational

Vocational schools offer additional postgraduate training in most fields. Courses run from a few weeks to several years. Business and secretarial schools offer typing, stenography, bookkeeping, data processing, word processing and other business-related courses. At other schools, you can learn acting, police work, dressmaking, mortuary science, cosmetology, upholstering, welding, modeling, selling and other various skills.

The College Resource area maintains an extensive collection of directories and reference sources in which you can find information about all types of colleges, universities, and other types of postgraduate schools. Some of these sources contain comparative descriptions of various schools. From these sources, you can get a brief sketch of nearly any school and answers to many important questions to be considered in the screening process .

College Comparison Worksheet

COLLEGE NAME			
Location -distance from home			
Size -enrollment -physical size of campus			
Environment -type of school (2- or 4-year) -school setting (urban, rural) -location & size of nearest city -co-ed, male, female -religious affiliation			
Admission Requirements -deadline -tests required -average test scores, GPA, rank -notification			
Academics -your major offered -special requirements -accreditation -student-faculty ratio -typical class size			
College Expenses -tuition, room and board -estimated total budget -application fee, deposits			
Financial Aid -deadline -required forms -percentage receiving aid -scholarships			
Housing -residence hall requirement -food plan			
Facilities -academic -recreational -other			
Activities -clubs, organizations -Greek life -athletics, intramurals -other			
Campus Visits -when -special opportunities			

Factors That Colleges Consider When Making Decisions

- The single most important credential in the applicant's folder is your academic record, particularly the junior year and the first half of the senior year. Usually you can help your admission chances by making a strong effort to improve during this time. However, the courses taken throughout all four years are equally important and will receive scrutiny by admissions officers.
- College Board examinations such as the SAT and ACT also play a major role in the college admissions process.
Most schools pay close attention to the SAT and ACT scores mainly because, when used with high school grades and rank in class, they are reliable predictors for college success.
- Extracurricular activities, both at school and at home, play a role in the admissions process. Colleges frequently state they look for students who will make a significant contribution to the college community. Because around 70 to 80 percent of all students can handle the academics, colleges often look for that extra dimension- musicians, editors, actors, photographers, athletes, and others with a developed and usable talent as well as students with leadership qualities. Students with superior ability in these areas can expect to receive review by faculty with expertise and careful consideration by the admissions office.
- For most competitive colleges, recommendations are an essential part of an applicant's file. The exceptions to this rule are large state universities, where written recommendations are often not required or given as much weight. Recommendations describe not only achievements and skills but also character, integrity, and patterns of growth. Teachers' reports also play an important role in the selection process, particularly when the teachers know the student well and are willing to detail potential in specific areas.
- Children of alumni may receive careful or special consideration at most colleges. The obvious reason is the institution benefits immeasurably by having some students who represent a continuing tradition of loyalty and understanding. A legacy or family tie does not guarantee admission, but it does insure an extra close "look." With two equal candidates, the legacy would probably have the edge. However, these students must still meet the high academic and personal standards required by the college, and legacies must compete against legacies to claim a place in the class.
- On-campus interviews are fairly helpful to both the candidate and the college. Applications can sometimes be bland; thus the interview can become important. Some college admissions directors feel failure to visit a campus within 150-200 miles of a student's home indicates the lack of a true interest in the college. This is truer of small, private colleges than it is of large universities; yet, a visit to the campus of a large school will also be beneficial to compare facilities and get a feel for the complexities of student life there. Many colleges send representatives to secondary schools to conduct interviews and, in some case, this interview will be sufficient.
- Correspondence with colleges should be initiated by the student, not his parents. Colleges see this as a reflection of a student's sense of responsibility and independence. It also indicates such items as accuracy, clarity, courtesy, and maturity. If there is a particular problem on the school record or the application that needs further clarification, the parent should feel free to write the college. Just as colleges keep files on students, students should keep files on the colleges. Included in the files should be copies of letters, notes, and drafts of essays. Your College Placement Counselor can be helpful with correspondence with colleges, filling out applications, and writing the required essays.
- Colleges that require student essays consider them a very important element in the admission of the student. Essays broaden an admissions officer's insight into the student's maturity, academic ability, and personality.

Transcripts

Colleges and universities consider the high school transcript to be the most useful source of information in evaluating a student's high school academic performance. This official document contains a complete list of all courses and grades, a cumulative grade point average (GPA) for all coursework, class rank, and expected date of graduation from Brother Martin High School.

The cumulative grade point average (GPA) that appears on the transcript is computed using the student's two semester grades for each course. These grades are awarded quality points (A = 4, B = 3, C = 2, D = 1, F = 0). These points are added and the sum is divided by the total number of grades. The end result is the student's cumulative grade point average. This GPA reported in the top right corner of the transcript is weighted, meaning that the grades in all honors courses receive an additional quality point (A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2). An F still receives 0 quality points.

Many colleges/universities and scholarship programs will recalculate the student's GPA upon receiving his transcripts. The most common reasons for doing this are as follows:

- To obtain a cumulative grade point average on a 4 .0 scale - This method removes the additional quality point awarded for honors classes. This is done to compare all applicants on the same scale, as high schools differ in their methodology of awarding quality points for honors classes .
- To obtain a grade point average on the student's core courses (on a 4 .0 scale) – Many state institutions, including LSU, will do this. They are only interested in the student's grades in English, math, science, social studies, foreign language, and computer science and want all applicants evaluated on an equal scale.
- To obtain a grade point average using a specific formula - The TOPS program seeks to give some additional credit for honors classes. They have developed a specific formula for awarding quality points to honors classes.

When the student receives a copy of his transcript from his guidance counselor he should review it, noting the cumulative GPA, his rank, and checking that all student information (I .e. Social Security number) is correct. Students and parents wanting to know the student's core GPA (on a 4 .0 scale) or his TOPS GPA should contact the College Counselor.

Other Admission Considerations

Some selective colleges ask you to write a short essay to describe yourself, a significant experience, or an achievement that has special meaning to you or to discuss some issue of personal, local, or national concern and importance to you. Keep it simple and straightforward. Try not to deal with difficult ideas such as your philosophy of life or how to solve the world's problems. Do not try to con the admissions staff with high-flown statements or obvious flattery.

After reviewing your school record, recommendations, test scores, and motivation, the college admissions committee's first concern is whether you can handle their academic program with success.

In the more highly competitive colleges where academically qualified candidates outnumber the spaces available, the next question is which of the academically qualified applicants to admit. A number of other admissions factors then become important:

- Special talents: A recording of a musical or dramatic performance, several slides of your art work, a sample of your creative writing, or evidence of exceptional athletic ability is important to submit to an admissions committee. If your talent is in athletics, a contact with the college coach of your sport, as well as with the admissions office, is important.
- Geographical mix
- Exceptional academic talent: Independent research, a science fair project, or National Merit recognition may be the thing which singles you out as the candidate to accept.
- Diversity of backgrounds and cultures

State institutions where numbers prohibit individual considerations of each applicant may use other methods to determine admissions. A formula, based on school records and testing, may be used as the basis for admission by these colleges. Examples of institutions using such admissions criteria are the University of Texas, Texas A & M, and the University of Colorado.

College Athletics

Many Brother Martin student-athletes wish to pursue playing sports in college. We have alumni who have successfully played at competitive Division I, Division II, and Division III schools (NCAA). We also have graduates who have done so at NAIA and NJCAA schools.

Many factors need to be considered when a student is thinking about playing sports in college. Very few high school athletes will earn a college athletic scholarship. Generally state winners or nationally ranked athletes may be recruited by colleges in Division I schools. However, if you have enjoyed being on an athletic team and hope to continue playing in college as a “walk on”, you may wish to consider the Division II, III or NAIA colleges where you would have a greater chance of continuing to enjoy the sport, but where academics will be the deciding factor in your admission .

Students are encouraged to speak to their coaches, the Athletic Director, and the College Counselor for help. Your search for the right college or university should focus upon your educational needs and athletic opportunities simultaneously. The key to making a good choice is to know yourself and to be realistic.

Some of the questions athletes need to ask of themselves are:

- Do I want to play a sport in college?
- Am I passionate about this (or these) sport(s)?
- Am I physically and mentally capable of playing at a higher level?
- How much time am I willing to commit to this sport each day?
- Do I want to play more than one sport in college?
- At what level would I like to play?
- Do I meet all eligibility requirements for the level at which I wish to play?

Division I Academic Standards

Division I schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:



DIVISION I

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (Including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
4 years	3 years	2 years	1 year	2 years	4 years

2. Complete your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in eight academic semesters or four consecutive academic years from the start of ninth grade. If you graduate from high school early, you still must meet core-course requirements.
3. Complete 10 of your 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits, including seven in English, math or science, before the start of your seventh semester. Once you begin your seventh semester, any course needed to meet the 10/7 requirement cannot be replaced or repeated.
4. Earn a minimum 2.3 [core-course GPA](#).
5. Ask your high school counselor to upload your [final official transcript](#) with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet [specific criteria](#) after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division I and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

ACADEMIC REDSHIRT

You may practice during your first regular academic term and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment but may NOT compete during your first year of full-time enrollment. You must pass either eight quarter or nine semester hours to practice in the next term.

NONQUALIFIER

You will not be able to practice, compete or receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.



Division II Academic Standards

Division II schools require you to meet academic standards. To be eligible to practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship in your first year of full-time enrollment, you must meet the following requirements:



DIVISION II

MAKE IT *YOURS*

1. Earn 16 NCAA-approved core-course credits in the following areas:

ENGLISH	MATH (Algebra I or higher)	SCIENCE (including one year of lab, if offered)	EXTRA (English, math or science)	SOCIAL SCIENCE	OTHER Any area listed to the left or courses listed in additional discipline (world language, comparative religion or philosophy)
3 years	2 years	2 years	3 years	2 years	4 years

2. Earn a minimum 2.2 **core-course GPA**.
3. Ask your high school counselor to upload your **final official transcript** with proof of graduation to your Eligibility Center account.

EARLY ACADEMIC QUALIFIER

If you meet **specific criteria** after six semesters of high school, you may be deemed an early academic qualifier for Division II and may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

QUALIFIER

You may practice, compete and receive an athletics scholarship during your first year of full-time enrollment.

PARTIAL QUALIFIER

You may practice and receive an athletics scholarship but may **NOT** compete during your first year of full-time enrollment.



Financial Aid and Scholarships

Financial Aid

Financial Aid is assistance based solely on needs (the family's ability to pay versus the cost of attending a college). To determine the amount of need, a college requires your family to submit a confidential financial statement. This consists of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This form is available online <http://www.studentaid.gov>

Completion of the FAFSA requires information from your parents' tax return from the prior fiscal year. Therefore, this form cannot be filed until October of your senior year. Some colleges will also require the College Scholarship Service, Financial Aid Profile. This is available online at <http://student.collegeboard.org/cuss-financial-aid-profile>. Finally, an institutional financial aid application may be required by the specific college.

There are three kinds of financial aid available:

- Grants that are awarded to the student and do not have to be repaid.
- Loans that a student must repay after leaving college.
- Work-Study, which is part-time work that is often related to a student's field of study

Scholarships

A scholarship is a monetary award granted on the basis of outstanding achievement. Scholarships are typically awarded for achievement in academics, leadership, athletics, community service, student talent (i.e. music, art), potential achievement in a specific academic subject, ethnic background, residence and/or essay writing ability. A majority of the scholarships that our graduates receive are college/university based. When applying for admission to the colleges of your choice make certain to inquire about scholarship opportunities and applications. Sometimes the application for admission also serves as the application for scholarship, however often there is a separate scholarship application. Contact the department of the major that you will be studying. Often they have scholarship funds available as well.

As your College Counselor receives scholarship information (particularly scholarships that are not university based), it will be shared on Education Management. Also, students should investigate scholarship possibilities using the reference books and websites listed in the handbook. Your College Counselor is a valuable source for scholarship opportunities. It is wise to periodically discuss the latest scholarship opportunities with her.

Scoir will allow you to search national scholarship opportunities. Do not forget to use this feature in your scholarship search. See your College Counselor if you have additional questions about this *Scoir* feature.

Three Steps to Tap into Financial Aid and Scholarships:

To apply for grants and scholarships, you'll most likely have to fill out financial aid forms such as the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the CSS/Financial Aid Profile. Outside scholarships usually have their own application forms and application processes.

- **Complete the FAFSA (<https://studentaid.gov/>)**

You must fill out the FAFSA to qualify for federal aid. Many states and colleges use the FAFSA to award aid as well. Results will be forwarded to the colleges that you specify. Information requested is based on data from your, as well as your parent's, income tax

return from the prior tax year . Therefore, it is necessary for you and your parents to complete your income taxes .

- **Find Out Which Financial Aid Forms Your College Requires**

(<https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>)

Apply for your college's gift aid by filling out the required forms. In many cases, this will be the FAFSA, but some colleges require the CSS/Profile or their own forms. Contact the college's financial aid office to find out what is required . If the college requires its own form, obtain an application for financial aid from the college's Financial Aid Office. This can usually be done online . Return it to the Office of Financial Aid at that specific college . (Remember that you must be accepted by the Office of Admission before you will be considered for financial aid .)

- **Research and Apply for Outside Scholarships**

Start by talking with your school counselor about how to find outside scholarships. Use free online searches, such as the College Board's Scholarship Search and the *Scoir* scholarship search tool . To apply for an outside scholarship, you'll probably have to fill out an application form, and you may also have to submit financial aid forms .

When the Financial Aid Office receives the forms described above, the financial aid officer will be able to work up a financial aid package to meet your specific needs . Remember that financial aid is granted on a first-come, first-served basis . This means that you must apply early . Usually the college financial aid officer offers a financial aid package which consists of a combination of grants, loans, scholarships, and part-time work . In completing financial aid application forms, students are encouraged to apply for all forms of financial aid since this gives the financial aid officer the opportunity to work up a financial aid package to meet each student's needs .

The college will try to offer financial aid that will pay the difference, if any, between the agencies' computed family contribution and the college student's budget (tuition, room, board, transportation, books, etc.). Since college costs vary, the amount of your financial aid package may also vary from college to college. The only constant will be the expected amount of family contribution. Students and parents may compute their estimated family contribution (EFC) on the FAFSA website.

Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS)

TOPS is a comprehensive program of state scholarships for Louisiana residents. Eligibility requirements and award amounts are outlined on the following pages.

To apply for TOPS awards, you must submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) by July 1st after your senior year. The ACT score used for TOPS application must be obtained prior to your high school graduation (April testing in your senior year) in order to receive any TOPS funding for which you are qualified. When registering for the ACT, you must enter code 1595 to send scores to the appropriate agency. When registering for the SAT, you must enter code 9019 to send scores to the appropriate agency.

Remember that your TOPS GPA is not the same as your cumulative GPA, which appears on your transcript. TOPS recalculates your GPA based on the TOPS Core Curriculum. Classes used for the Core Curriculum are listed on the following pages.

Levels of TOPS Awards

AWARD LEVELS



TOPS OPPORTUNITY

4 YEAR AWARD

- TOPS Core Minimum GPA: **2.50**
- Minimum Composite ACT Score: Score equal to the previous year's state average, **but never less than 20**
- Completion of TOPS OPHE Core Curriculum
- Minimum SAT Score: **1030**
- Minimum CLT Score: **66**



TOPS PERFORMANCE

4 YEAR AWARD

- TOPS Core Minimum GPA: **3.25**
- Minimum Composite ACT Score: **23**
- Completion of TOPS OPHE Core Curriculum
- Minimum SAT Score: **1130**
- Minimum CLT Score: **80**



TOPS HONORS

4 YEAR AWARD

- TOPS Core Minimum GPA: **3.50**
- Minimum Composite ACT Score: **27**
- Completion of TOPS OPHE Core Curriculum
- Minimum SAT Score: **1260**
- Minimum CLT Score: **91**



TOPS EXCELLENCE

4 YEAR AWARD

- TOPS Core Minimum GPA: **3.50**
- Minimum Composite ACT Score: **31**
- Completion of TOPS OPHE Core Curriculum
- Minimum SAT Score: **1360**
- Minimum CLT Score: **101**



TOPS TECH

2 YEAR AWARD

- TOPS Core Minimum GPA: **2.50**
- Minimum Composite ACT Score: **17 OR**
- Minimum WorkKeys Score: **Silver Level**
- Completion of TOPS Tech JumpStart Core Curriculum or TOPS OPHE Core Curriculum
- Minimum SAT Score: **920**
- Minimum CLT Score: **54**

AWARD REDUCTION

Your award may be reduced by one or two semesters because: 1. Your application was submitted after the deadline; 2. You qualified for TOPS based on an ACT score achieved in May, June, and/or July of the year you graduated from high school; or 3. You enrolled in an out-of-state college. See pages 5 and 6 for additional information.

AWARD AMOUNTS

TOPS OPPORTUNITY AWARD

AWARD AMOUNT: TOPS Award Amount

The TOPS Opportunity Award pays the TOPS Award Amount, which is based on the cost of tuition set by the administering agency for a student at that particular institution for the 2016-2017 academic year unless increased by an Act of the Legislature.

LAICU AWARD AMOUNT: Weighted Average of the TOPS Award Amount

If a student attends a college within the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU), the award amount will be the weighted average award amount, which is calculated by dividing the amount paid to all students who were enrolled at a public four-year institution during the 2016-2017 academic year by the number of students paid.

LA NATIONAL GUARD AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition Exemption + \$600 Annual Book/Materials Stipend

Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard will receive the tuition exemption as mandated by Louisiana state law. Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard and eligible for the Opportunity Award will receive a sum of \$300 per semester (\$600 per academic year) to be applied toward the cost of books and other instructional material.

TOPS PERFORMANCE AWARD

AWARD AMOUNT: TOPS Award Amount + \$400 Stipend

The TOPS Performance Award pays the TOPS Award Amount, which is based on the cost of tuition set by the administering agency for a student at that particular institution for the 2016-2017 academic year unless increased by an Act of the Legislature plus an annual stipend of \$400.

LAICU AWARD AMOUNT: Weighted Average of the TOPS Award Amount + \$400 Stipend

If a student attends a college within the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU), the award amount will be the weighted average award amount, which is calculated by dividing the amount paid to all students who were enrolled at a public four-year institution during the 2016-2017 academic year by the number of students paid, plus an annual stipend of \$400.

LA NATIONAL GUARD AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition Exemption + \$600 Annual Book/Materials Stipend + \$800 Annual Educational Stipend

Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard will receive the tuition exemption as mandated by Louisiana state law. Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard and eligible for the Performance Award will receive a sum of \$300 per semester (\$600 per academic year) to be applied toward the cost of books and other instructional material. In addition, Louisiana National Guard Performance Award recipients receive \$400 per semester (\$800 per academic year) for other educational expenses.

TOPS HONORS AWARD

AWARD AMOUNT: TOPS Award Amount + \$800 Stipend

The TOPS Honors Award pays the TOPS Award Amount, which is based on the cost of tuition set by the administering agency for a student at that particular institution for the 2016-2017 academic year unless increased by an Act of the Legislature plus an annual stipend of \$800.

LAICU AWARD AMOUNT: Weighted Average of the TOPS Award Amount

If a student attends a college within the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU), the award amount will be the weighted average award amount, which is calculated by dividing the amount paid to all students who were enrolled at a public four-year institution during the 2016-2017 academic year by the number of students paid, plus an annual stipend of \$800.

LA NATIONAL GUARD AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition Exemption + \$600 Annual Book/Materials Stipend + \$1600 Annual Educational Stipend

Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard will receive the tuition exemption as mandated by Louisiana state law. Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard and eligible for the Honors Award will receive a sum of \$300 per semester (\$600 per academic year) to be applied toward the cost of books and other instructional material. In addition, Louisiana National Guard Honors Award recipients receive \$800 per semester (\$1,600 per academic year) for other educational expenses.

TOPS EXCELLENCE AWARD

AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition and Fees or \$12,000 (whichever is less)

If a student attends a public institution in Louisiana, the award pays an annual amount equal to tuition and fees as reported to the Board of Regents in the annual mandatory survey on tuition and fees, or \$12,000, whichever is less.

LAICU AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition and Fees or \$8,500 (whichever is less)

If a student attends a private institution within the Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (LAICU), the Award pays an annual amount equal to tuition and fees as reported to the Board of Regents in the annual mandatory survey on tuition and fees or \$8,500, whichever is less.

LA NATIONAL GUARD AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition Exemption + \$600 Annual Book/Materials Stipend + \$2000 Annual Educational Stipend

Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard will receive the tuition exemption as mandated by Louisiana state law. Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard and eligible for the Excellence Award, will receive a sum of \$300 per semester (\$600 per academic year) to be applied toward the cost of books and other instructional material. In addition, Louisiana National Guard Excellence Award recipients receive \$1,000 per semester (\$2,000 per academic year) for other educational expenses.

TOPS TECH AWARD

AWARD AMOUNT: TOPS Award Amount

The TOPS Tech Award pays the TOPS Award Amount, which is based on the cost of tuition set by the administering agency for a student at that particular institution for the 2016-2017 academic year unless increased by an Act of the Legislature.

LA NATIONAL GUARD AWARD AMOUNT: Tuition Exemption + \$600 Annual Book/Materials Stipend

Students who are serving in the Louisiana National Guard will receive the tuition exemption as mandated by Louisiana state law. Students who are eligible for the TOPS Tech Award will receive a sum of \$300 per semester (\$600 per academic year) to be applied toward the cost of books and other instructional material.

PROPRIETARY AND COSMETOLOGY SCHOOL AWARD AMOUNT: Weighted Average of the TOPS Award Amount

If a student attends an approved proprietary and cosmetology school, the award amount will be the weighted average award amount, which is calculated by dividing the amount paid to all students who were enrolled in a technical program of study during the 2016-2017 academic year by the number of students paid.

LOUISIANA ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (LAICU):

There are currently no TOPS Tech eligible programs at any LAICU institutions.

AWARD AMOUNTS BY INSTITUTION



**TOPS
OPHE**



**TOPS
TECH**

How to Register for a STUDENT HUB ACCOUNT



- 1 **CLICK HERE** to access www.mylosfa.la.gov.
- 2 Hover over **Applications** and choose **Student**.
- 3 Scroll down to the bottom of the page.
- 4 Click the **Register Here** Button.
- 5 Select **Student** or **Parent**.
- 6 Select if you are registering with a 10 digit Louisiana Secure ID (LASECID) or the 6 digit LOSFAID.
 - **High School Students** will most likely register using a LASECID.
 - The LASECID can be obtained from your high school counselor.
 - If you attend an approved private high school, use your social security number to register.
 - **College Students** typically register using a LOSFAID.
 - To obtain the LOSFAID, e-mail LOSFA at custserv@la.gov with your full name and date of birth.
- 7 Enter the LASECID or LOSFAID, Student's First Name, Student's Last Name, Student's Date of Birth, and High School Attended. **DO NOT ABBREVIATE THE HIGH SCHOOL NAME!** (Example: if you attend Swamp High School, do not put SHS or Swamp. Type out Swamp High School.)
- 8 A pop-up box that says "**Information – Student Found**" should show if the information you entered is correct.
- 9 Enter your information to create your account. This includes a login name, password, password verification, challenge question, e-mail address (use an e-mail that you will have access to after high school graduation) and type of e-mail (Choices are: Parent Home, Parent School, Parent Work, Student Home, Student School, Student Work).
- 10 Click **Register** to finish.
- 11 Once finished, login using your login name and password.
- 12 Once you are logged in, under the Welcome Text, you should see your LOSFAID has been automatically assigned to you.
- 13 Once you have created your account, you will have access to your **TOPS Tracker** (high school transcript information) and **ACT Scores**. This information will populate once your school has a signed consent form on file for you. Please update your home address and telephone number under the contact information tab.

Academic Common Market

The Academic Common Market (ACM) is a tuition-savings program for college students in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) member states who want to pursue degrees that are not offered by their in-state institutions. Students can enroll in out-of-state institutions that offer their degree program and pay the institution's in-state tuition rates. Hundreds of undergraduate and graduate programs are available for residents of SREB states.

- Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia are SREB member states
- The ACM program is not competitive or merit-based, but applicants must meet state residency and college Program requirements.
- The ACM eliminates unnecessary duplication of academic programs among participating states, recognizing that it is impractical for any institution or single state to develop or maintain degree programs in every field of knowledge.
- The ACM supports existing degree programs that have the capacity to serve additional students.
- The ACM provides access across state lines for programs not available in a student's home state.
- First-professional degree programs, such as law, medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and optometry, are not offered in the ACM and cannot be requested.
- Some institutions and states may impose additional acceptance requirements, such as full-time enrollment status or GPA requirements.
- The list of degree programs and schools available with the ACM for Louisiana residents changes yearly. Use the following [URL](#) to find an accurate list of degree programs and schools that are available through the ACM. You can easily search programs available for your home state by clicking Search for Programs.

ACT® Glossary of College Terms

Key Terms Used in the College Planning Process

Accreditation – Recognition of a college or university by any of the regional or national accrediting bodies, indicating that the institution as a whole has been judged to be meeting its objectives.

The ACT® – A group of tests administered by ACT and required or recommended by most colleges as part of the admission process. The tests measure educational development in English, mathematics, reading, and science and are given at specified test centers throughout the year. An optional Writing Test is offered.

AP – Granting of credit and/or assignment to an advanced course on the basis of evidence that a student has mastered the equivalent of an introductory course.

Aid Package – A combination of aid (possibly including a scholarship, grant, loan, and work) determined by a college financial aid office.

Candidates Reply Date – A policy among subscribing institutions that permits students to wait until May 1 to choose, without penalty, among offers of admission/financial aid.

Class Rank – A rating that compares your cumulative grade point average to other members of your class. Class rank is often used as a college admissions and scholarship standard.

College Calendar – The system by which a college divides its year into periods of time for instruction and awarding credit. Common systems include the traditional semester (two per year); the early semester (two per year with the first ending before Christmas); the quarter (three terms of approximately 12 weeks each); the trimester (three terms per year, the third term replacing summer school); and 4-1-4 (two equal terms of about 16 weeks each, with a 4-week interim term) .

College Readiness Standards – The minimum score needed on an ACT subject area test to indicate a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher, or a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher, in the corresponding credit-bearing college course.

College Transfer Courses – Courses intended for transfer of college credit to bachelor's degree programs elsewhere.

COMPASS™ – A comprehensive computer adaptive testing system from ACT that helps place students into appropriate college courses and maximizes information needed to ensure student success. It measures students' mathematics, reading, and writing skills and reports results immediately.

Credit by Examination – A program through which many colleges grant course credit based on results of the CEEB College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), Regents College Examinations (RCE), DANTES Subject Standardized Tests (DSST), or another examination developed by colleges .

Credit Hour – A unit of academic credit that often represents one hour of class time per week for a period of study (semester, quarter, etc. . .).

Deferred Admission – The practice of some colleges of allowing an accepted student to postpone enrollment for one year.

Early Action – An application process that permits students to make application to an institution of preference and receive a decision during the senior year, well in advance of the normal response dates in the spring. The candidate is not committed to enroll at that particular institution.

Early Admission – Admitting students of superior ability into college courses and programs before they have completed the standard high school program.

Early Decision – An application process in which a commitment is made by a student to the institution that, if admitted, the student will enroll. Only a student who can make a deliberate and well-reasoned first choice decision should apply under an Early Decision plan because the institution will usually require a nonrefundable deposit well before May 1st.

EPAS™ – ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System consists of three tests EXPLORE (8th/9th grades), PLAN (10th grade), and the ACT (11th/12th grades). These tests help students identify their academic strengths and weaknesses, identify careers in line with their interests, and provide an important indicator of readiness for college.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) – The number used in determining eligibility for federal student aid. You can calculate your expected family contribution using the Financial Aid Need Estimator located at www.act.org/fane

Federal Direct Loans – Loans made by the federal government directly to qualifying students and parents through participating colleges. Stafford and PLUS loans are available under the Direct Loan program.

Federal Pell Grant – Financial assistance awarded by the federal government on the basis of need and designed to provide the “floor” of an aid package for postsecondary education. The grant may be used toward tuition, room and board, books, or other educational costs and requires no repayment.

Federal Perkins Loan Program – Loans funded by the federal government and awarded by the institution. The loans feature low interest rates and are repayable over an extended period of time.

Federal PLUS Program – Provides low interest federal loans to credit-approved parents of eligible undergraduate students. Repayment begins 60 days after loan funds are paid to you. Loans are available from participating banks, lending institutions, and participating Direct Lending schools.

Federal Stafford Loan Program – Provides low-interest federal loans to eligible students through banks, lending institutions, and participating Direct Lending schools. The interest is paid by the federal government for qualifying students while they are enrolled at least half time. Students who do not qualify for these interest allowances are responsible for the interest while they are enrolled. Repayment begins after the student leaves school.

Federal Work-Study – A government supported financial aid program coordinated through financial aid offices in which an eligible student (based on need) may work part time while attending class at least half time, generally in career-related jobs.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – The application required for students to be considered for federal student financial aid. The FAFSA can be filed online starting October 1st. The FAFSA is processed free of charge, and is used by most state agencies and colleges.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – An indicator of a student's overall scholastic performance. The GPA is computed by multiplying the number of grade points earned in each course (generally, A=4, B=3, C=2, D= 1, F=0) times the number of course hours/credit hours, then dividing the sum by the total number of course hours/credit hours taken .

Grants – Awards based on financial need that do not require repayment. Grants are available through the federal government, state agencies, and educational institutions.

Honors Program – Any program offering opportunity for superior students to enrich their educational experience through independent, advanced, or accelerated study.

Independent Study – An arrangement that allows a student to earn college credit through individual study, usually planned with and supervised by a faculty adviser.

Major – The subject of study in which a student chooses to specialize; a series of related courses, taken primarily in the junior and senior years.

NCAA Initial Eligibility Certification – In order to participate in intercollegiate sports at NCAA Division I and Division II colleges, student-athletes must submit their high school transcript, the “Student Release Form,” and ACT/ SAT scores to the NCAA Eligibility Center. When registering for either test, students should enter “9999” as one of the college choices to have test scores sent to the Eligibility Center.

Open Admission – The policy of some colleges of admitting virtually all high school graduates, regardless of academic qualifications such as high school grades and admission test scores.

Prerequisite – A course that must be taken before enrollment in another related course. (Example: French I is a prerequisite for French II)

Rolling Admission - An admission procedure by which the college considers each application as soon as all required materials have been received. The college then notifies each applicant of acceptance or rejection as soon as possible.

Student Aid Report (SAR) – Information received approximately 3-6 weeks after your FAFSA has been processed. It reports the information from student applications and, if there are no questions or problems with an application, the SAR reports the Expected Family Contribution (EFC).

SAT – A test of verbal, written, and mathematical abilities given by the College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB) throughout the year at specified test centers and required or recommended by many colleges as part of the admission process. A Writing Test was introduced in March 2005. It was mandatory until 2016, but now it is optional (like ACT).

Scholarships – Awards to students based on merit or merit plus need, which do not need to be repaid.

Transcript – The official record of high school or college courses and grades, generally required as part of the college application.

Wait List – A term used by institutions to describe a process by which they may initially delay offering or denying admission. Instead, the institution extends the possibility of admission in the future. Colleges offer admission to wait list candidates if insufficient numbers of regularly admitted candidates accept their offers of admission.



**College Placement Office
Mrs. Colleen Martinolich
4401 Elysian Fields Avenue
New Orleans, Louisiana 70122
504-283-1561 ext. 3062
www.brothermartin.com**