



THE JUNIOR MEET REFERENCE GUIDE



LOUDONVILLE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

SAT & ACT INFORMATION

The **SAT & ACT tests** are typically required for student entry into colleges and universities. It is not always necessary for students to take both tests. If a student does poorly on one, it is recommended that they take the other one. It is worth noting that many schools have a test-optional policy at this time.

SAT Information

The SAT is a standardized test that is widely used for college admissions in the United States. The test is owned and published by the College Board. This is a nonprofit corporation. The goal of the test is to assess students' readiness for college. The test takes three hours to finish. If the student chooses to take the essay portion, it is an additional 50 minutes.

SAT Scoring

There are two sections on the test, each worth 800 points: Mathematics and Critical Reading & Writing. Total points for an SAT are calculated by combining the section scores. Total points range from 400 to 1600. You can register, check test scores and get other information for the SAT at collegeboard.org

A superscore is an available option for those students taking the SAT more than once. Colleges that superscore the SAT use your best section-level scores, even if they were from different tests.

ACT Information

The ACT is a standardized test that is widely used for college admissions in the United States. The test is owned and produced by a nonprofit of the same name. The ACT is a computer-based test that incorporates optional constructed response questions. (Paper format is still available for test sites that do not have the technology available.)

ACT Scoring

There are four tests: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science Reasoning. There is also an optional Writing test (similar to the SAT essay). The main four tests are scored individually on a scale of 1-36 and a composite score is then provided which is the whole number average of the four scores. The composite score ranges from 1-36. You can register, check test scores, and get other information for the ACT at act.org.

Preparing for the SAT/ACT

- Hudson Valley Community College offers an SAT prep course that typically begins in early March.
- Kaplan Test Prep offers a variety of courses, both in person and online. You can access their information at kaptest.com.
- There are SAT and ACT prep books that can be very useful for individual studies. College Board publishes their own prep book that is called “The Official SAT Study Guide” and can be ordered online. The ACT publishes its own prep book entitled “The Official ACT Prep Guide” and can be ordered online. Be sure to get the most recent edition.

Sending SAT/ACT Scores to Academic Institutions

Most colleges require the SAT or the ACT. You can send SAT and ACT scores to an academic institution by requesting the scores be sent through the test’s website. Please note that there is a charge for sending SAT and ACT scores. If you know which colleges or universities you would like to apply to before you take the SAT you will be able to select a certain number of them to have your scores sent without a charge. LCS does not submit test scores to colleges, universities or to organizations sponsoring a scholarship. Go to collegeboard.org to view your scores.

COLLEGE SPORTS

If you are interested in playing sports at a college or university, you will need to register with the NCAA at eligibilitycenter.org. It is important to notify college coaches during your junior year if you are interested in playing at their school. If you are strongly considering playing sports at college please notify the Director of Student Life.

ROTC PROGRAMS

The Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) is a college and university-based military officer training program. Students will be enrolled in the college or university that they select, as well as be enrolled in that school’s ROTC program. Essentially ROTC programs combine military officer training as well as scholastic studies. Upon ROTC and undergraduate graduation, those students who accept a commission as a regular officer are obligated to serve. If you are interested in ROTC programs, contact the college or university of your choice and notify them of your interest.

NARROWING YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH

Choosing a college or university can be a daunting task. Many times students and families feel overwhelmed, confused and don't know where to start. Below are some questions and things to consider that may help you narrow down your college search.

Do not ask yourself “which college is the best?” Rather ask yourself “which college is the best fit for me?”

1. What **size school** do you prefer?
 - Less than 2,000
 - 2,000-5,000
 - 6,000-12,000
 - 13,000-19,000
 - 20,000+.
2. Rank the following from what is most important to you to the least important for you.
Academics, Location, Spiritual Culture, Social Life, Athletics, Cultural Diversity

3. What **area of the country** do you want to attend school?
Any particular **state**?
4. Do you prefer a school based in a **city, suburban setting, or rural**?
5. Do you want to attend a **faith-based institution**?
6. Do you want to attend a **private or public institution**?
7. Do you want to attend a **2-year or 4-year institution**?
8. Does the college have the **major/degree program** I am interested in?
9. Have your parents or siblings gone to a college you may be interested in?

DECIDING ON A MAJOR

Deciding on a major/degree program can be both terrifying and exhilarating. It is terrifying to consider that your major may have a long-lasting effect on your life and career. It is also exhilarating to consider your major because there are endless possibilities before you. Below are a few things to remember when deciding on a major.

- The college and major you decide will not make or break your life. Who you are, as an individual, will matter much more.
- Take the Myers-Briggs Test online. It is a personality test and can give you some insight into yourself.
- Do you prefer to work with people in groups/teams or do you prefer to work alone at your own pace?
- Make a list of your passions and what you love to do.
- Write down majors/areas of study/ jobs that you know you don't want to pursue. Write out an explanation of what about them makes you not want to pursue them.
- Write down majors/areas of study/jobs that you are curious about. Write out an explanation of what makes you want to pursue them.

GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COLLEGE

- Use the criteria you want to search online
- For a first glance, do a google search on the college you are interested in. When you click on the name of the school there will usually appear oval tabs that direct you to information. This information is from IPEDS, the ***Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System***. This is a system of interrelated surveys conducted annually by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). **Look through the different tabs: Overview, Admissions, Cost, Programs, Students.**
- The best way to get information about a college/university is on their website.
- Always feel free to call the admission office at the college you are interested in.

VISITING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

It is recommended to begin college visits in the spring of the student's junior year and fall of the student's senior year.

College For A Day

Many colleges will have a “college for a day” option. Typically a prospective student and their family will be assigned to a student host. This host will tour the family around campus, eat meals with you, and bring you to a class you can sit in on and observe. They will typically include a time to meet with your admissions officer and meet with a financial aid representative. These visits are typically set up through the admissions office. I highly recommend these experiences. Many times you can tailor these visits to your preference. For example, you can request to visit a class that is required for your major; you can request a meeting with a coach; you can request a meeting with the Music Department Chair.

Extended Visits

Certain colleges and universities offer extended visits. These are typically posted on their admissions calendar and a large number of prospective students attend. Prospective students typically get assigned to a host student. This host student will have them stay overnight in their dorms and will

help them throughout the day. Typically there are other activities going on during the extended visits and the campus is very active and full of energy. This is a great way to get an idea of student culture on campus and what the dorm life is. It may be more difficult to tailor your visit to meet your needs. Typically there is a registration form that you will have to fill out prior to attending an event like this.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

It is important to get a sense of the college as a whole. You will want to ask questions and learn about what it is like to be a student at the institution. You will want to consider the student's scholastic life, social life (on and off campus), and spiritual life. It is recommended that you ask these questions to your admission counselor, students on campus and faculty.

Scholastic Life

1. How much time do students typically spend on homework?
2. What is the average class size of introductory classes and the average size of major specific classes?
3. Do you have an honors college?
4. What are the internship requirements and opportunities? Are students responsible for finding their internship or is there a support center on campus that helps students find internships?
5. Is there an academic support program on campus? What type of tutoring program do you have?
6. Do you have a writing center and how do I access it?
7. What kind of learning disability resources do you have?
8. What programs are the strongest? What are the most popular majors?
9. What opportunities are there to study abroad?
10. How much access do students have to faculty during their office hours?

Social Life

1. What are the dorm choices?
2. What percentage of students live on campus?
3. Do most students stay on campus or go home over the weekend?
4. What do the students do for fun on the weekends?
5. Is there Greek Life on campus?
6. What percentage of students are from minority groups?
7. What activities/clubs are offered to students on campus?
8. What intramural sports are there?
9. Is it a dry campus? (Meaning no alcohol)
10. Is there parking available on campus for every student? How much does it cost?
11. Are there opportunities to work on campus?
12. What are their student life standards? (Consider: dress code, curfew, alcohol usage, visiting dorms of the opposite sex, drug usage)
13. What food options are there?
14. What measures are taken to ensure the campus is safe?

Spiritual Life

(All questions are important to ask a Christian institution. Questions 8 – 10 are pertinent for non-Christian institutions.)

1. Is the school affiliated with a denomination?
2. How often is chapel? Who are some of the past chapel speakers?
3. What is the worship like during chapel?
4. What faith-based courses are students required to take?
5. What denomination are the students primarily a part of?
6. What opportunities are there for spiritual growth?
7. What percentage of students attend church regularly?
8. What options are there for churches in the area?
9. Are there religious and/or faith-based groups on campus?
10. Are their counseling services on campus? How much does it cost?
11. How would students explain the quality of life at the institution? (Is everyone in competition with each other, do students struggle with anxiety & depression, is everyone primarily concerned with partying, is there a sense of community & belonging).

Financial Aid Office & Student Accounts Office

1. What scholarships are available?
2. When are the deadlines for scholarship applications?
3. What are your need-based scholarships?
4. What scholarships are available for athletic or fine arts excellence?
5. What payment plans do you offer?
6. When is the best time to have the FAFSA completed?
7. When do you send out your financial aid packages?
8. If a student has college credits from a dual-enrollment program, will they impact the financial aid package?
9. What is the average debt a student leaves your college/university with?
10. What is the average out of pocket expense students pay? (After grants, federal loans, and scholarships are applied, what is the average amount owed?) Some colleges may refer to this as their discount rate.

Admissions Office & Registrar Office

1. Is there a limit to how many credits I can transfer in?
2. What honor programs are offered and what are the requirements and deadline to apply.
3. What scholarships do you offer?
4. When and how do I sign up for classes?
5. Will these courses transfer? (You should present which courses you will/have earned college credit for. See section below on Transferring College Credit from LCS.)

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

Determining how to pay for college can feel like a daunting task. The information provided below is meant to help you begin to better understand your options. As you research the cost of attendance (COA), remember that the majority of students will not pay the total price. In fact, it is not uncommon for students to receive scholarships, grants and federal loans that cover up to 40% - 60% of the COA.

Financial Aid Resource

The Vice President of Financial Aid at the College of St. Rose has created an excellent website that contains financial aid information. Check out [Financial Aid King](#) (The website is not St. Rose exclusive.)

Financial Aid - General Information

Student Financial Aid typically refers to grants, scholarships, and federal student loans. Financial aid can be classified as merit-based aid or need-based aid. Merit-based aid is a broad term that includes all the scholarships, grants and discounts that a college offers and admits a student without consideration of financial need. This aid is based on the student's skills and abilities. Need-based aid is awarded to students based on their financial need.

Grants & Scholarships

Grants and scholarships provide money that does not have to be repaid. A scholarship or grant may be awarded on the basis of need, or it may be given for academic achievement or talent. Students who seek private scholarships need to search for them on their own using websites and scholarship guides. College scholarships and grants are included in college financial aid packages. Typically they do not have to be applied for separately. However, some of the largest college scholarships do require a separate application. Students should contact the financial aid office at their prospective college or university to find out if there is a separate application.

Federal Aid

Federal aid can be in the form of loans or grants. Federal student loans are required to be repaid. The repayment period begins once the student leaves school (graduates or drops to less than half-time enrollment). Federal grants do not need to be repaid. In order to receive federal aid, parents must fill out and submit the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid" (FAFSA). The FAFSA is used to determine the student's eligibility for federal aid.

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

Many colleges participate in the Federal Work-Study Program under which students are employed, typically on campus, for 10 to 15 hours a week. Eligibility is based on need.

Timeline for Financial Aid

Summer Before Senior Year

- Research scholarship opportunities

September

- If you are going to apply Early Decision to a college, ask that college if they have forms for an early estimate of your financial aid eligibility.
- Create your FSA ID - <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa/filling-out/fsaid>
- Gather what you need to complete the FAFSA. You can find what you need at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/help/info-needed>
- Research if your top colleges have additional applications for their largest scholarships

October

- Submit your FAFSA as soon as you can after October 1.
<https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa>
- Apply for private scholarships

Winter & Spring

- Continue to apply for private scholarships
- Compare financial aid package

APPLYING TO COLLEGES

Students will begin to apply to colleges in late August and throughout the fall. Some colleges offer “Early Action.” Early Action is a non-binding early decision program in which a student can receive an admission decision from one or more colleges and universities earlier than the standard response date but is **not required to accept the admission offer or to make a deposit before May 1**. The deadlines for Early Action are typically in the Fall. Be sure to check all deadlines with each college you are applying to.

Almost all colleges use some form of an electronic application. Some schools have their own online portal. Students can go to the school’s website, create an account, and begin the college application process. However, most schools use a website, called The Common Application (www.commonapp.org). Students make an account for the common app and fill out applications on the website. All LCS students are required to make a common app account, fill in the general information requested, and fill out the FERPA form within the common app. Once a student has applied to a college and filled out the FERPA form, they will login to their Naviance account to request documentation from LCS.

NAVIANCE

Naviance is a comprehensive college and career readiness solution that helps schools align student strengths and interests to postsecondary goals. Naviance will be the primary tool that students use to request transcripts, school reports, and recommendations. This tool also provides information about scholarships and career research that will narrow that search and empower the students. Students will learn how to use Naviance during their senior seminar course.

GORDON GRAPEVINE CONSORTIUM

Loudonville Christian School is a member of Gordon College’s “Gordon Grapevine Consortium”. The Gordon Grapevine Consortium (GGC) is a strategic partnership with Christian schools and Gordon College (Wenham, MA). As a member, LCS students receive specific benefits from Gordon College.

- Students will receive a \$2,000 (\$1,000 for those living off campus) GGC scholarship at Gordon for each high school year you attended LCS. The total amount of the scholarship will be divided equally between the four years of attendance at Gordon.
- LCS students get priority consideration for Gordon summer programs such as Elevate and La Vida.
- LCS students have priority access to dual enrollment courses offered online.

Students who are academically at the top of their class, and plan to apply to Gordon, should do so before the Early Action date (November 1). Doing so allows the student to apply to Gordon’s top honors programs – Global Honors Scholars, A.J. Gordon Scholars, and Clarendon Scholars.

TRANSFER COLLEGE CREDIT FROM LCS

Students who have earned college credit from Davis College, Roberts Wesleyan and/or University at Albany—SUNY (UHS) will have to request a transcript from these colleges upon graduation. You can do this online at the college’s web page. LCS transcripts will not include what courses were taken for

college credit. When determining if a course will transfer, it is important to submit the college course name, course number, and course description. Students will have to contact the registrar’s office at their prospective college to know what courses will transfer into the degree program.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Some students decide to attend a community college for two years and then transfer to a four-year school. While this can be a wise choice for some students, in some cases it creates difficulties when trying to transfer credit, can students end up spending more. It is important to understand that if a student has earned a year's worth of college credit at LCS, a community college may not be a wise choice. Many times students at LCS earn their general education credits through our dual-enrollment program. If a student were to then attend a community college, they would be earning similar credits. This often creates a scenario where many of the credits will not transfer to a four-year school because the student will have more credits than the school's maximum amount of transfer credit. Earning dual-enrollment credit at LCS can enable a student to attend a four-year school and graduate within 2-3 years.

SENIOR COURSE SELECTION

There are a variety of course options for your senior year. We encourage you to make choices based on which courses will best prepare you for college and in particular for your area of study. Each student is required to take 6.0 credits their senior year. We encourage you to prayerfully consider which courses will be most beneficial to your studies at LCS.

NEXT STEPS

1. Sign up for the SAT or ACT.
2. Fill out the student perspective sheet.
3. Fill out the parent perspective sheet.
4. Use the "Narrowing Your College Search" and "Deciding on a Major" sections to make a list of 5 colleges you are interested in.
5. Begin researching and visiting these colleges in the spring of junior year and fall of senior year.
6. Create a resume. This resume will be used for faculty writing your recommendations.
7. Over the summer, begin writing college essays.
8. Start college applications in late summer/early fall. Fill out the common application.