

Admissions

Chapter 1 provides general information and guidelines you'll need to begin planning for education or vocational training after high school. It includes tests you need to take to be eligible and advice on which type of school is right for you.

It's your life

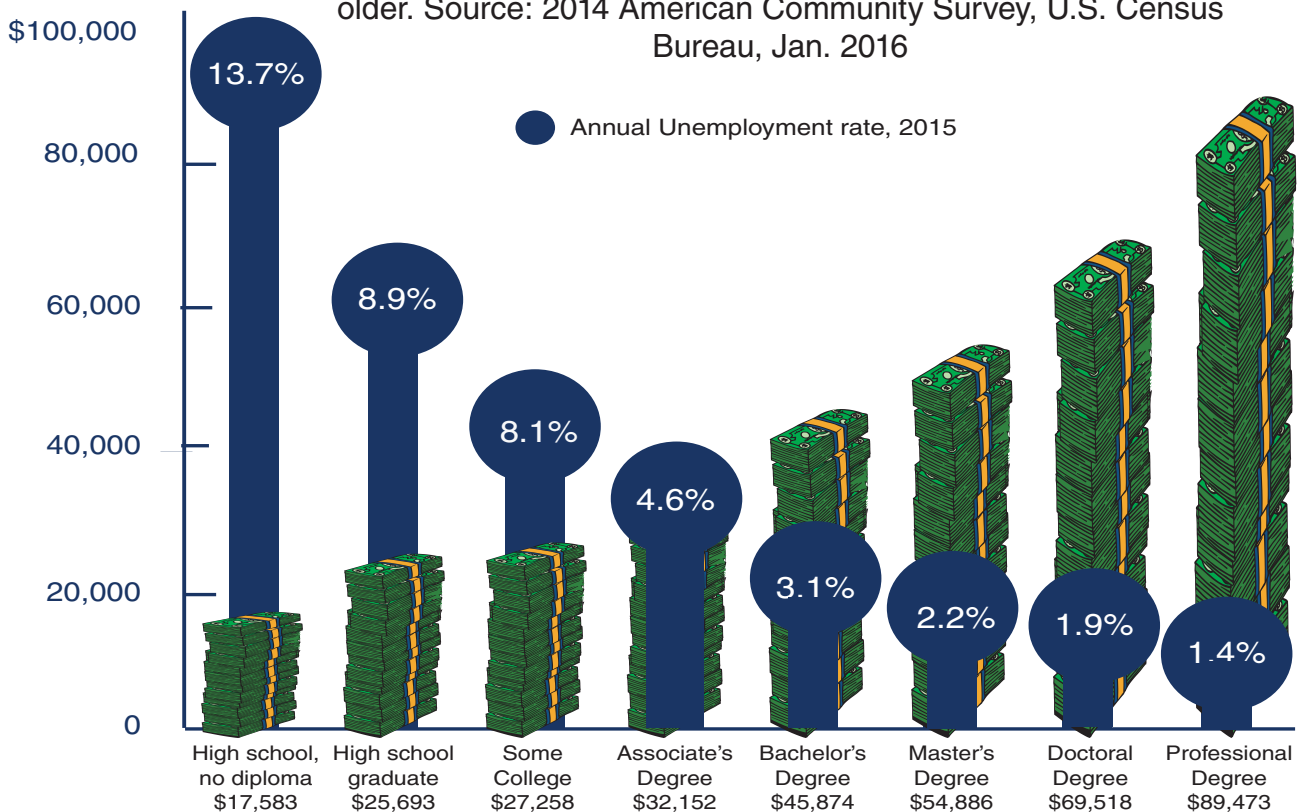
Someone who earns a bachelor's degree will make an average of \$20,181 more each year than someone with just a high school diploma. Over a 40-year working lifetime, that's an additional...

\$807,240



Median Earnings and Unemployment Rate by Educational Level in Alabama

Alabama income by educational attainment. For people 25 and older. Source: 2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, Jan. 2016



This graph gives the 2014 median earnings of people in Alabama over age 25, both sexes, who worked year-round at a full-time job, based on their level of education, compared to the unemployment rate for each level of education. A median is a middle value, so the number of people earning less than the median is equal to the number of people earning more than the median.

College myths

Two myths keep many students from applying to college:

MYTH NO. 1: I CAN'T AFFORD TO GO TO COLLEGE.

MYTH NO. 2: IF I DO GO TO COLLEGE, I'LL SPEND THE REST OF MY LIFE PAYING OFF STUDENT LOANS.

Like most myths, both of these contain some element of truth. But, also like most myths, the truth is lost among all the other parts of the story.

The whole truth about Myth No. 1: You can afford to continue your education after high school — if you make wise choices. You may not be able to afford a college that costs \$60,000 or more a year to attend, but you can find one that will give you a good education at a price you can afford.

In *Getting In*, you'll find information about various ways to pay for education after high school, whether you want a six-month program that gets you ready for a job or a four-year college degree — or more. The programs in *Getting In* are just the major programs. You can find dozens of other programs that might help you.

You have options.

Option A might be going to a four-year university right out of high school. But you decide the cost is too much for you. That doesn't mean you give up.

Look at Option B: a two-year community college that costs a lot less and gets your basic classes out of the way. Then you're only looking at paying for two years at a four-year school.

You can even have an Option C: Get your associate's degree, find a job in your field, then go back to finish your bachelor's degree. Your employer might even help pay your tuition because you're making yourself a more valuable employee.

One thing is certain: If you don't investigate, you'll never know. Get all the facts about costs, your options and the time it takes to complete your program, then decide.



The whole truth about Myth No. 2: You've probably heard or read something about students who owe \$100,000 or more in student loans, which is certainly a scary thought. But the vast majority of students owe much less than that.

Remember two things about students who owe huge amounts in college loans. Many used student loans to pay for degrees so they can be lawyers, doctors or dentists. Most of them will make enough money to be able to pay their loans.

Others owe that much because they made poor choices. They didn't explore all their options (like you're going to do), or they borrowed as much as they could for degrees in fields that don't pay well. Find out what the entry-level salary is for the field you want to go into. That will give you some idea of how much you can afford to pay in student loans. The general rule of thumb is that your monthly student loan payment should not be more than 10% of your monthly income.

Students who earned bachelor's degrees at Alabama public and private nonprofit colleges in 2014 had an average student loan debt over \$29,245. Their payments would run, depending on the interest rate, about \$310. That \$310 a month is less than 10% of the average monthly salary for a Alabamian with a bachelor's degree (\$42,410 per year, or \$3,500 per month).

The biggest problem with student loan debt comes from dropping out of college. That lessens your chances of getting a better-paying job. Do everything you can to finish your degree.

Many students don't keep track of how much they're borrowing. Know what you owe. That will help keep you out of trouble. You can keep track of your federal student loans at the National Student Loan Data System, www.nslds.gov.

Explore your options, finish your degree, know what you owe. Keep those in mind to the educational program that fits your needs and budget without requiring a lot of student loans.

Test time

Tests: you may not care for them. But you'll probably have to take one to get into college. Chapter 3 lists many of the schools in Alabama and which tests they require. You may have already taken the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test or the PSAT. Those were just warm-ups for the ACT and SAT.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ACT AND SAT?

The ACT and SAT are the twin titans of college entrance exams. Nearly all of Alabama's public universities and four-year private colleges require that you take one of them.

The ACT has multiple-choice questions in English, math, reading and science, plus an optional writing test. Scores range from 1 to 36. Visit www.actstudent.org for more information.

There are two types of SAT tests — the SAT Reasoning Test and the SAT Subject Tests.

The SAT has two sections: math and reading/writing. A written essay is optional. SAT Subject Tests are one-hour tests in specific subjects. Check with the school you plan to attend to see if any are required. For more information or to register online, visit www.collegeboard.org.

The SAT Subject Tests are one-hour tests in specific subjects. Check with the school you plan to attend to see if any are required. For more information, visit <https://sat.collegeboard.org/about-tests/sat-subject-tests>.

WHAT ARE THOSE OTHER TESTS FOR?

Two-year community colleges may require the ACT ASSET or ACT COMPASS.

The ACT ASSET is a series of short placement tests. For more information, visit www.act.org/asset/index.html.

The ACT Computerized Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System (COMPASS) is a series of tests given on a computer that cover mathematics, reading, writing skills and English as a second language. For more information, visit <http://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/act-compass.html>.

ACT COMPASS exams will be available through November 30, 2016.

HOW DO I PREPARE FOR THESE TESTS?

The best way is to take challenging courses in high school, study and learn.

You can do other things that will help. Take practice tests online, or buy a book of practice tests for use at home. Some high schools and colleges offer ACT/SAT prep classes for free or a small fee. Familiarize yourself with the sections and directions.

Get plenty of rest the night before, eat a good breakfast that morning and, whatever you do, don't forget your No. 2 pencils and an ID!

WHAT ABOUT TESTS FOR COLLEGE CREDIT?

You can earn credits before or during college that will give you a head start.

Dual credit courses are offered by colleges and let you earn both high school and college credit. Check with nearby colleges to see if they offer dual credit programs.

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) are college-level courses you take during high school. Visit <http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/home?navid=ap-ipc> for more information about AP tests. If you are a homeschooled student or attend a school that doesn't offer AP, you can still participate. The Alabama Department of Education offers AP courses online through ACCESS Distance Learning. To learn more about ACCESS, visit <http://accessdl.state.al.us/>. To learn more about IB, visit <http://www.ibo.org>.

The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP®), which offers tests for many subjects taken the first two years of college, lets you earn credit for or get out of taking those courses. Visit www.collegeboard.org/clep for more information.

Test dates

Entrance / Placement Tests

Test Name	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration ¹	Registration Fee ²
ACT	Oct. 22, 2016 Dec. 10, 2016 Feb. 11, 2017 April 8, 2017 June 10, 2017	Nov. 4, 2016 Jan. 13, 2017 March 3, 2017 May 5, 2017	Nov. 5-18, 2016 Jan. 4-20, 2017 March 7-20, 2017 May 6-18, 2017	\$39.50, w/o writing \$56.50, w/ writing Late registration fee: Additional \$25
SAT Reasoning and SAT Subjects Tests	Saturdays³: Dec. 3, 2016 Jan. 21, 2017 March 11, 2017 May 6, 2017 June 3, 2017	Nov. 3, 2016 Dec. 21, 2016 Feb. 10, 2017 April 7, 2017 May 9, 2017	Nov. 15-22, 2016 Jan. 3-10, 2017 Feb. 21-28, 2017 April 18-25, 2017 May 16-24, 2017	\$45, SAT Reasoning, SAT with essay, \$57 \$26, Subject Test Fee (per registration) + \$26 Language with Listening Tests (per test) + \$20 All other Subject Tests (per test) Late registration fee: Additional \$28
SAT Reasoning, SAT subject, includes language tests with listening	Nov. 5, 2016	Oct. 18-25, 2016		
ASSET, COMPASS	At the school's discretion			Check with admissions office

Tests for College Credits

Test Name	Test Date	Registration Deadline	Late Registration ¹	Registration Fee ²
IB	Monday-Friday ⁴ : November 2–4, 2016 November 7–11, 2016 Different subject each day, a.m. and p.m.	Check with your guidance counselor before April 1	Check with your guidance counselor	\$89 with \$26 fee reduction for low-income students
	External examinations for candidates for the IB diploma are given in May and November.	Check with your guidance counselor	Check with your guidance counselor	Check with your guidance counselor

¹ Additional fee required.

² Subject to change. Check websites (see page 3) for current fees. See your guidance counselor for information about fee waivers for students from low-income families.

³ Sunday administration will occur the day after each Saturday administration.

⁴ Students who want to take exams scheduled for the same time slot should ask their AP coordinator to call AP Services at 609.771.7300 for information about taking one of the exams on an alternate date.

School choices

Which school should I attend?

You and your parents will have to make that decision based on lots of things — how much it costs, how good an education it offers, how far away it is, etc.

You should find out everything you can about the schools that interest you. Check out their websites first, then go for a visit, preferably while classes are in session. Use the checklist at the end of Getting In as a guide.

Which college you choose will depend on how you answer questions such as:

- Do I want to be close to home?
- Do I want a greater variety of choices at a large university or the personal environment of a smaller school?
- Which school has the best program for my major?
- Do I want to start off at a community college to get the basics out of the way first?
- How much can my family and I afford to spend on my education?
- How safe will I be on campus? (Ask the school for a copy of its campus security report.)

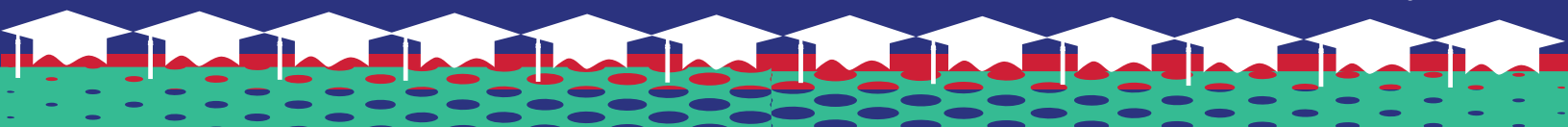
No matter what your answers, you'll probably be able to find a school that fits you perfectly.



Diploma or degree?

Think of your goals. Your future employers will consider what kind of degree you have earned. Knowing what you want to take away from college will help you narrow your school choices.

Type	Program Length	Description
Certificate	6–18 months	Nondegree programs usually in a vocational or technical area.
Diploma	15 months–2 years	Nondegree programs usually in a vocational or technical area.
Associate’s Degree	2–3 years	(1) Associate in applied science (AAS) and associate of applied technology (AAT) degrees in technological and vocational majors. These usually won’t transfer toward a four-year degree. (2) Associate of arts (AA) or associate of science (AS) degrees in non-vocational and vocational areas. These will usually transfer to four-year colleges and can be applied toward a bachelor’s degree.
Bachelor’s Degree	4–5 years	The most common are the bachelor of arts (BA) and the bachelor of science (BS).
Master’s Degree	Bachelor’s degree plus at least 1 year	A master’s is typically the first graduate degree you can earn after a bachelor’s. Many public school teachers have a master’s degree.



College talk

These definitions will help you decide the kind of school you want to attend.

College: Any school that offers education after high school or a subdivision of a university, like the College of Business. Colleges may or may not offer graduate degrees.

Some schools offer classes at *extended campuses*, or locations other than their main campus. Your counselor will be able to tell you about extended campuses in your area.

Public universities: Generally, these provide the greatest variety of programs. They offer undergraduate and graduate degrees, and some offer professional degrees in medicine, dentistry, law and other fields. Some also offer associate's degrees.

If you don't mind having some large classes, this might be just the place for you. Your on-campus social opportunities are usually greater too. From sororities and fraternities to clubs and major sporting events, the choices are numerous.

Private colleges and universities: If you like smaller classes and greater access to faculty, you might want to consider one of Alabama's private universities or colleges.

These schools offer bachelor's degrees, while some also offer associate's and advanced degrees. Some private schools have joint programs with public universities in specialized fields.

Private schools generally cost more than public universities, but financial aid is available to help with the costs.

Public two-year colleges: Community and technical colleges offer several cost-effective options. You can start your education at a community college, earn an associate's degree and transfer to a four-year school to complete your bachelor's degree. Another option is to earn a certificate, diploma or associate's degree and move right into the job market. These programs can take from six months to two years to complete.

You can usually find one near you, meaning you can save money by living at home.

Career or technical schools: These are more properly called proprietary schools and are considered a fast track to a career. Technical schools are privately owned and licensed. Some schools offer only one area of study; others offer programs in several areas. They often cost more than public schools, and the credits you earn may not transfer.

Distance learning: You can take courses and even earn degrees *without* the traditional on-campus experience. Distance learning includes courses and degrees offered through television, correspondence and the Internet.

Online courses are offered through the Southern Regional Education Board's Electronic Campus. See page 10 for more information.

Alabama Public Television offers educational concept and workplace skills videos online at <http://www.aptiq.org/IQLEARNING/>.



Athletic considerations

If you plan to play intercollegiate sports, you need to make sure you meet the requirements. The requirements differ depending on the college's affiliation: the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) or the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA).

The following information is a general guide for athletes who will enroll in college after July 31, 2016. For more detailed information, visit www.ncaa.org, www.naia.org or www.njcaa.org.

NCAA

The NCAA has three divisions, and the requirements differ depending on the division the school belongs to.

Athletes attending a Division I or Division II school must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center at http://web3.ncaa.org/ECWR2/NCAA_EMS/NCAA.jsp. At that site you and your high school can establish whether you're eligible. That's also the site you need to visit to see your high school's core courses.

Core courses are those that have content at or above your high school's regular content level. Only the core courses on the NCAA list can be used to figure your core-course GPA.

In addition to your GPA, you'll have to have certain scores on the ACT or SAT. To make sure the NCAA gets your test scores, enter the NCAA Eligibility Center code of 9999 when you register for each test.

For Division I and II athletes, your ACT and SAT scores are combined scores. That means you add the score in each subtest to arrive at a combined score. You can use your best subtest score from several tests. Let's say you take the ACT three times, with the following subtest scores:

Test	English	Math	Reading	Science
1	20	21	19	22
2	22	19	22	21
3	20	20	18	23

You count the best score from each subtest, so you take the 22 from English on test 2, the 21 from math (test 1), the 22 from reading (test 2) and the 23 from science (test 3). You add those together to get a combined score of 88.

If you're a home-schooled student, you must also register at eligibilitycenter.org and meet the same requirements as other student-athletes. After you register, look under the "Resources" tab for more information.

If you have a GED, you should contact the Eligibility Center for more information.

NCAA Division III schools don't give athletic scholarships. If you want to play sports at a Division III school, you should contact the school to find out what its policies are.



	Division I Guidelines	Division II Guidelines
General Eligibility	High school graduate who has completed 16 high school core courses with at least at 2.3 GPA in core courses and a SAT/ACT score that matches your core-course GPA on the Division I sliding scale. Ten core courses, with at least seven in English, math or science, must be completed before you start your seventh semester	High school graduate who has completed 16 high school core courses with at least at 2.0 GPA in core courses and earned combined SAT score of 820 or ACT sum score of 68
Core Courses		
English	4 years	3 years
Mathematics	3 years, Algebra I or higher	2 years, Algebra I or higher
Natural or Physical Science	2 years, including 1 year of lab science if offered	2 years, including 1 year of lab science if offered
Social Science	2 years	2 years
Additional	1 year of English, math or natural or physical science; and 4 years of English, math, natural or physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy	3 years of English, math or natural or physical science; and 4 years of English, math, natural or physical science, social science, foreign language, comparative religion or philosophy

NAIA

The NAIA requires high school graduates who want to participate in sports to meet two of the following requirements:

- Have at least an 18 ACT or 860 SAT composite score (not counting the essay).
- Have at least a 2.0 high school GPA.
- Graduate in the top half of their high school class.

Home-schooled students must have at least a 20 ACT or 950 SAT composite score. However, if you don't get the required test scores, you might be able to request a waiver.

GED graduates must also meet the ACT/SAT requirements.

NJCAA

To be eligible to play sports at an NJCAA school, you must have earned a high school diploma or a GED. A home-schooled student should contact the college about being certified as eligible to participate in athletics.

Remember: The information on this page relates only to becoming eligible for your first year of intercollegiate sports. After you begin playing, you must meet other requirements to keep your eligibility.



Online degrees

YOU CAN TAKE CLASSES AND EARN DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES — ALL FROM THE COMFORT OF YOUR OWN HOME — WITH THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD'S *ELECTRONIC CAMPUS*.

Alabama is one of 16 member states, so you can earn selected online degrees from schools in other SREB states. Some participating schools charge out-of-state tuition for nonresidents; others charge a single tuition rate for all students regardless of residence.



All courses at the *Electronic Campus* are regionally accredited, but before you try to transfer these credits, consult your advisors — both at your online school and the school to which you want to transfer the credit.

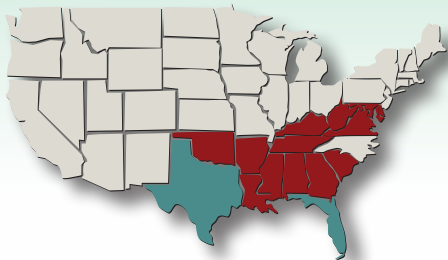
For more information and an up-to-date list of programs, visit www.electroniccampus.org.

The SREB's *Electronic Campus Initiative* provides online degrees from out-of-state schools at in-state tuition rates for programs approved by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education.

If you need financial aid to pay for online courses, contact the school offering them.

If the major you're interested in isn't offered at a public university in Alabama, you may be able to pay in-state tuition at an out-of-state school through the Academic Common Market. **ALABAMA, ARKANSAS, DELAWARE, GEORGIA, KENTUCKY, LOUISIANA, MARYLAND, MISSISSIPPI, OKLAHOMA, SOUTH CAROLINA, TENNESSEE, VIRGINIA** and **WEST VIRGINIA**. **FLORIDA** and **TEXAS** participate at the graduate level. For information about and certification for the Academic Common Market, write to the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, P.O. Box 302000, Montgomery, AL 36130-2000; call (334) 242-2209; or visit www.sreb.org/academic-common-market.

-  Academic Common Market States
-  Graduate-Level Participant States



Military options

To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Maybe you want to serve your country in the military. That doesn't mean you can't get a higher education. All branches of the military have programs to help men and women serving their country go to college before joining the service, while they're in the service and after they leave the service. Most also offer programs that can help your spouse and children pay for their college education.

The National Guard and the Reserves also provide financial aid to help their members further their education.

Your options range from the highly competitive service academies to Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs that prepare you to enter your chosen branch of service as an officer to courses offered on and off base where you're stationed.

Many colleges will accept part of your military training for credit with their academic programs, too.

If you think the military might be the path for you, talk with your parents, your counselor and a recruiter to find out what your options are.

You can also check the financial aid programs section of Chapter 2 to learn more about ROTC programs and Alabama National Guard programs. More information about these programs can be found in *Affording Higher Education*, another online book from KHEAA-Alabama.



Apply yourself

OK, you've decided to go to college and you've picked a school. What next?

EARLY DECISION, EARLY ACTION

This is for students trying to get into selective schools.

With **EARLY DECISION**, you make a commitment to enroll in a school if you're admitted. You withdraw all other applications and make a nonrefundable deposit. A possible disadvantage to Early Decision is that it may take away your leverage in appealing your financial aid package.

With **EARLY ACTION**, you apply to your preferred school and receive a decision before the normal response date.

For more information about **EARLY DECISION** and **EARLY ACTION**, contact the admissions office of the school you're interested in attending. You can also visit the National Association for College Admission Counseling at www.nacacnet.org.

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

- Complete an application for admission on the school's website or get a paper application from the admissions office.
- Pay close attention to deadlines. Addresses, phone numbers, websites and e-mail addresses for Alabama colleges are provided in Chapter 3, as are the deadlines for each school.

Have your transcript and exam scores sent to the school. After you've been accepted, notify the school of your decision to attend and let other schools you've applied to know you won't be attending. Get a housing application if you're going to live on campus, and submit it as soon as possible. Find out about deposits, orientation and registering for classes.

If you have questions or don't understand something, ask your parents, school counselor or the admissions director at the school.

Admissions essays

According to the UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute,

24% *of students don't get accepted to their first-choice college*

Many private colleges require students to write an essay as part of the admissions process. It's not just busy work. It can make the difference between being admitted or not and may affect how much financial aid you receive. The more selective the college, the more impact the essay will have on admissions and merit-based scholarships.

"We look for a nicely polished essay," one admissions counselor at a private university said. "Use proper punctuation and capitalization. Reading your essay out loud is a great way to catch awkwardly worded sentences that might make your essay seem lackluster."

Have a teacher read over the essay. Don't let your parents write the essay for you: the school will know if you didn't write it yourself. And be creative.

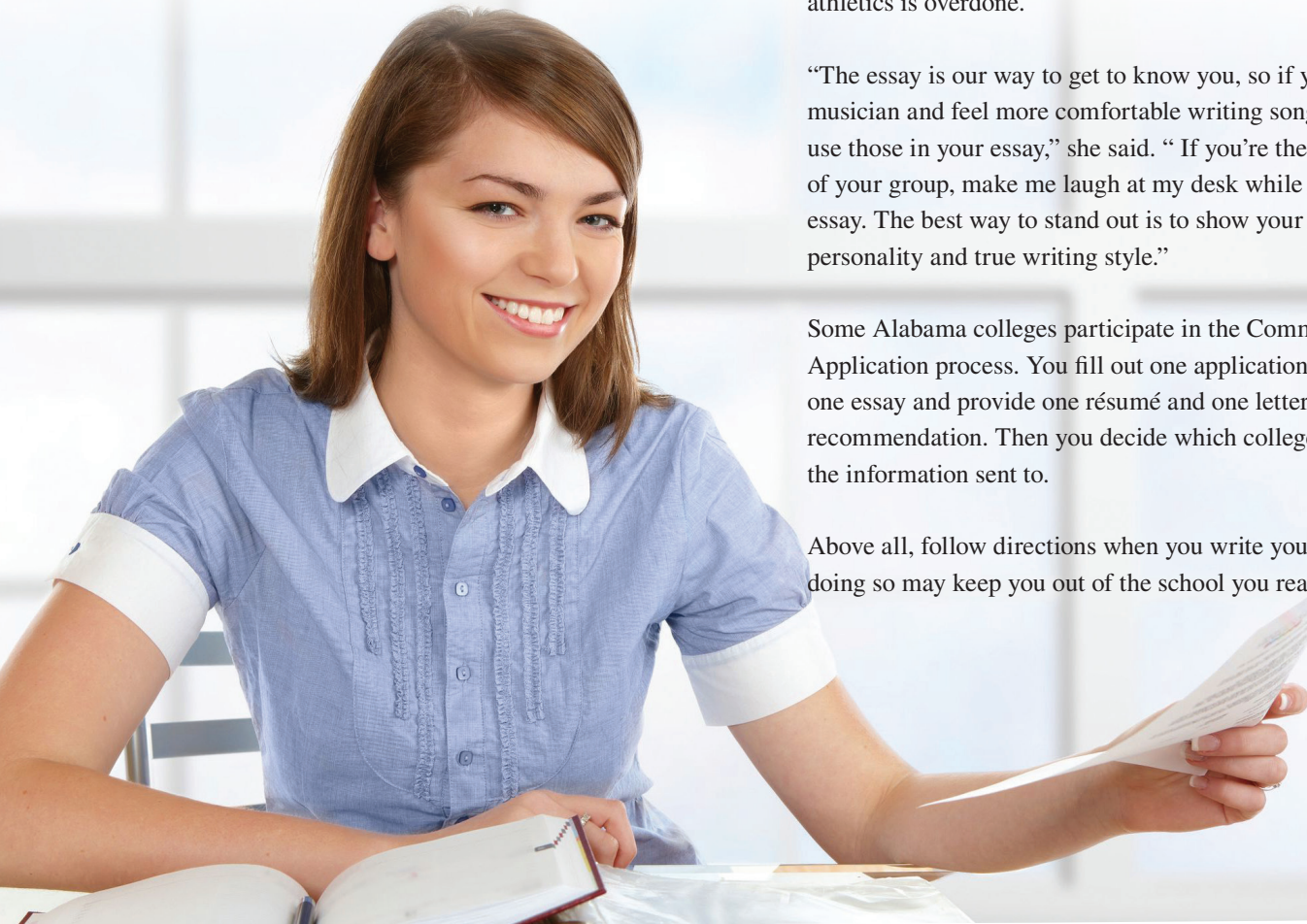
"It doesn't have to be a traditional essay," the counselor added. "Some of the best I've read have been poems, song lyrics and fake interviews with famous people."

Most schools try to make essay topics fairly broad so you can be creative. They want to know about an experience that has influenced your life or a role model whom you look up to. Writing about how you overcame adversity in school or athletics is overdone.

"The essay is our way to get to know you, so if you're a musician and feel more comfortable writing song lyrics, then use those in your essay," she said. "If you're the comedian of your group, make me laugh at my desk while reading your essay. The best way to stand out is to show your genuine personality and true writing style."

Some Alabama colleges participate in the Common Application process. You fill out one application, write one essay and provide one résumé and one letter of recommendation. Then you decide which colleges you want the information sent to.

Above all, follow directions when you write your essay. Not doing so may keep you out of the school you really like.



Picking a major

If you're not sure what to major in when you reach college, you're not alone. Some experts say as many as 80 percent of all incoming freshmen haven't decided on a major and that more than half of all freshmen will change majors at least once.

When you're thinking about picking a major, consider:

- What you like to do.
- What you do well.
- What kind of growth is expected in the fields you're considering.
- How long it will take to finish your education — two years, four years or longer.

Most decisions in life involve tradeoffs. Would you rather earn a high salary doing something that really doesn't make you happy, or will you settle for lower pay and more happiness? How you answer such questions may affect what major you choose.

One way to get an idea of what majors might interest you is to study the catalogs in which colleges tell about the programs they offer. Most catalogs will include descriptions of the classes involved in each major, and most schools have their catalogs online.

Above all, keep an open mind. Something you didn't like in high school may fascinate you when you get to college. Maybe the subject is presented differently; maybe you've changed.

Most colleges require students to take general studies, although they use different names for those requirements. General studies usually include:

- Oral and written communication.
- History.
- Natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry and physics.
- Social sciences, such as economics, political science and sociology.

- Mathematics or logic.
- Arts and humanities, such as literature, theater or music.
- Foreign language.

Schools require you to take general studies so you become more well-rounded. But having to take general studies also lets you sample courses in different areas. You may end up choosing a major because one of your general studies courses spurred your interest in a field you hadn't considered before. You can also use these general courses to broaden your experience. Instead of taking U.S. history to fulfill general study requirements, take East Asian or African history. At larger universities, that may mean you'll have a professor as a teacher, not a graduate student.

If you pick a major and then decide it's not for you, you can switch. However, you might have to go longer to finish your degree if the courses you took for your old major don't count toward your new major. Talk with your advisor before you make the switch, though. He or she should be able to help ease the transition.

"Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life."
— Confucius



What to expect

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE

Every school has its own system of showing a class schedule. The sample schedule below shows the information included on most schedules. This student is taking 14 credit hours; 12 hours is generally considered full-time for an undergraduate.

When you plan your schedule, you need to consider travel time between buildings. On a small campus, that's no problem. On a large campus, though, travel time may be important.

SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE

Each class usually has a section number.

These are the days the class meets each week. Many schools use "R" for Thursday.

These are the number of credits you'll receive for completing the class. They're also referred to as "hours."

CRS NO	SUBJ	CAT NO	SEC	TITLE	DAYS	TIME	BLDG	INSTR	CRED
0738	SPAN	101	01	BEG SPAN I	MTWTF	10-10:50	LB105	GOMEZ	4.0
9203	ENGL	101	09	INTRO COL WRTG	MWF	11-11:50	WH218	JOHNSON	3.0
0610	HIST	201	02	US HIST I	MWF	2-2:50	CC509	HEDGPETH	3.0
3300	BIOL	103	03	INTRO BIOL-LAB	TR	2-3:15	MH102	GARRETT	3.0
8143	HPER	150	01	BEG TENNIS	TR	4-5:15	SB TN CT	NEWMAN	1.0

You'll probably need the course number when registering for classes.

The catalog number represents the course level/difficulty. The higher the number, the more advanced the class is.

Use a campus map to locate the buildings where your classes will meet. It'll have a guide to building abbreviations. The numbers here tell you the room number.



Graduate on time! Complete at least **15** credits a semester, or **30** a year.

Know the courses you need to graduate and meet with your advisor to map out a plan to earn your degree on time.

- You'll save money, since taking 15 credits costs the same as taking 12 credits at most of colleges.
- Try to schedule your core classes first so you don't lose time if you decide to switch majors.
- You're more likely to graduate on time and enter the workforce sooner.
- You'll avoid the cost of an extra year, which could save you thousands of dollars.

Moving on

TRANSFERRING BETWEEN COLLEGES

Let's say you start off at an Alabama public college with plans to transfer to another one. Your big question: "Will my credits transfer?"

Yes, they will — if you follow the guidelines of the Alabama Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) and the STARS Computer Advising System, a web-based database at <http://stars.troy.edu> that provides AGSC transfer information.

AGSC has established credit-hour distribution requirements for freshman/sophomore general studies that are accepted by every public college and university in the state. The chart below shows how many credit hours you must earn in each of five areas in order to satisfy the general studies requirements at Alabama public colleges. The requirements are explained in more detail at http://stars.troy.edu/areas_I-V.html.

AGSC Credit Hour Distribution Requirements for Alabama Public Colleges		
Area	General Studies	Hours
I	Written Composition	6 semester
II	Humanities and Fine Arts	12 semester
III	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	11 –12 semester
IV	History and Social and Behavioral Sciences	12 semester
V	Professional, Pre-Major and Elective Courses	19 – 23 semester

Even better are the transfer templates for many majors. A template lists all courses for a particular major and specifies what courses to take the first two years. Following this template guarantees that your credits will be accepted and applied toward your degree by the school you transfer to.

If your major has a template, you and your advisor should have no trouble deciding what classes to take before you transfer. A list of majors with pre-approved templates can be found at http://stars.troy.edu/ratified_templates.html. To learn more about the requirements for your major, consult a college catalog or your advisor.

Keep in mind — completing these courses does not guarantee that you will be accepted at another school or, if you are accepted, that you'll be admitted to that major. In addition, students are encouraged to choose a major early and stay with it. Changing majors may require you to go back to pick up needed requirements.

For more information about transfer or to get a personalized transfer guide visit the STARS website at http://stars.troy.edu/get_the_guide.html or call (334) 670-3690.

OTHER TRANSFERS

DO NOT rely on AGSC guidelines if you're transferring from an Alabama public college to an Alabama private college or to an out-of-state school. The AGSC guidelines are for transfers between Alabama public colleges only.

If you're planning to transfer out of state or to an in-state private college:

- Consult an advisor at the college where you plan to complete your degree.
- Find out that school's transfer requirements.
- Give this information to your advisor at your first school.

The advisor at your first school will then be able to help you pick courses that will transfer, but *it's your responsibility* to make sure your advisor gets this information.

