

# Sophomore Progress Check

So now you're a sophomore! It's the start of a new year—new classes, new books, new challenges. If your ninth grade year went well, then you will be building on those successes. If it didn't go so well, this is your chance for a fresh start. Take a minute to take stock of where you are:

My Current GPA: \_\_\_\_\_ (between 1.0 and 4.0)      My Year of Graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

Major accomplishments in ninth grade: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When I graduate from high school, I want to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Now take a minute to think about a few things you'd like to accomplish during your sophomore year. Maybe there are some things you'd like to improve (e.g., grades, soccer skills, playing guitar). Albert Einstein is quoted as saying that the definition of insanity is "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." So what will you do differently this year to make these things a reality?

Note a few goals: \_\_\_\_\_      What it will take to accomplish them: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This is also a good time to check on how you're progressing toward high school graduation requirements. Take a look at the table below for an overview of the Future-Ready Core graduation requirements for NC public high schools. Please note that this table does not include other graduation requirements, such as successful completion of End-of-Course tests and local requirements. Check with your school to make sure you are on track.

UNC Minimum Course Requirements (MCR)		
In the provided blank, record how many credits you still need in each area to graduate.		
English ____	4 courses	
Math ____	4 courses in any of these combinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Algebra I and II, Geometry, and one unit beyond Algebra II</li> <li>Algebra I and II, and two units beyond Algebra II</li> <li>Integrated Math I, II, and III, and one unit beyond Integrated Math III</li> </ul>	If you complete Algebra I in 8th grade, it counts toward the UNC Minimum Course Requirements, but you still need four math courses in 9th-12th grades to meet high school graduation requirements.
Foreign Language ____	2 courses in a language other than English	If you only plan to take two foreign language courses, it's recommended to take them during 11th and 12th grade.
Science ____	3 courses in science, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A unit in a life or biological science, such as biology</li> <li>A unit in physical science, such as chemistry, physics, or physical science</li> <li>A laboratory course</li> </ul>	
Social Studies ____	2 courses in social studies, including one unit in U.S. History	

Use the “High School Planning” tool at CFNC.org to keep track of all your courses, activities, and honors. The CFNC planner offers several advantages:

- You can view and print your plans from a single place.
- The information you enter will automatically get transferred into your applications when you apply to colleges online from CFNC.org.
- You can compare your plan with the admissions requirements at all the colleges in North Carolina to make sure you are on track.



Go to the “High School Planning” tool at CFNC.org to update your courses, activities, and honors. Need to do some more detailed course planning? Use the following chart to plan for courses you will need each year to graduate from high school and meet college admissions requirements.

	Fall	Spring	Summer
<b>10th grade</b> English Math Science Social Studies Second Language Computer Skills Health/Physical Education Career/Technical JROTC or Arts Education Electives			
<b>11th grade</b> English Math Science Social Studies Second Language Computer Skills Health/Physical Education Career/Technical JROTC or Arts Education Electives			
<b>12th grade</b> English Math Science Social Studies Second Language Computer Skills Health/Physical Education Career/Technical JROTC or Arts Education Electives			

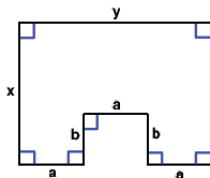
# What is the PSAT?

Maybe you've heard your friends talk about taking the PSAT during their sophomore year. The test is free in most NC high schools and will be administered in October. The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) measures verbal reasoning as well as critical reading, writing, and mathematical skills. The test is divided into five sections and takes two hours and ten minutes to complete. The PSAT allows you to familiarize yourself with the types of questions found on the SAT and provides valuable feedback on areas where you might benefit from additional study or practice.

Try a few sentence completion and math questions like you will find on the PSAT:

*Answers at bottom of page*

- The teacher worried that her student's \_\_\_\_\_ complexion was a sign of ill health.  
A. pallid      B. disconsolate      C. maladroit      D. hale      E. morose
- Although public opinion polls are now the guiding light of political campaigns, occasionally \_\_\_\_\_ politician tries to shape public opinion rather than follow it.  
A. an unscrupulous      B. a desperate      C. a losing      D. an ambitious      E. an experienced
- If  $3v + 2(1-v) = 7$ , what is  $v$ ?  
A. 1      B.  $7/5$       C. 3      D. 4      E. 5
- Which of the following is equal to the perimeter of the figure below?  
A.  $3a + 2(b+x) + y$       B.  $3a + 2b + x + y$       C.  $3(a+b) + x + y$       D.  $3(a+b) + 2(x+y)$       E.  $2(x+y)$



Find more details in  
"College Entrance Tests" at [CFNC.org/PS](http://CFNC.org/PS).

## Tip

Use your score report to target areas where you need more courses, extra tutoring, or more study time. Your results could also help you see where to focus as you prepare for the SAT.



### Preparing for the PSAT

So how did you do on the sample questions? Taking challenging courses is the best way to prepare, but reading and completing problem-solving activities are helpful too. Between now and your test next month, you can do sample questions from each area of the PSAT, learn test taking strategies, and more by going to [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/about.html).

### Student Search Service

When you take the PSAT, you will have the option to check “yes” to participate in College Board’s Student Search Service. If you choose “yes,” colleges will be able to gain access to basic information about you including your intended college major. Colleges will not be able to see your PSAT scores. If you choose “yes,” expect to see brochures from a variety of colleges arriving in your mailbox in a few months.

### National Merit Scholarships

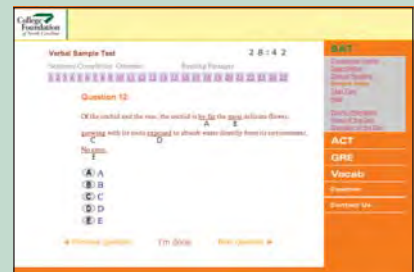
To compete for National Merit Scholarships, you must take the PSAT in your junior year, unless you plan to graduate early. Information about the National Merit Scholarship Corporation is available at [www.nationalmerit.org](http://www.nationalmerit.org).

#### Average Test Scores

Juniors 2009-2010	National	NC	Sophomores 2009-2010	National	NC
Critical Reading	46.9	46.2	Critical Reading	42.0	42.6
Mathematics	48.2	47.8	Mathematics	43.3	44.6
Writing	45.8	45.0	Writing	41.0	41.5

### CFNC.org offers comprehensive test prep for the SAT and ACT.

- Easy-to-use tutorials
- Interactive practice sessions
- Vocabulary builder
- Sample tests
- Progress tracking—start and stop at any time



# Life Outside the Classroom

Sure, your academic courses are the most critical part of school, but clubs, sports, music, and other activities certainly are important, too. Why? They can help you:

<b>Build skills</b>	<b>Explore areas of interest</b>
<b>Discover new talents</b>	<b>Serve others</b>
<b>Get to know other students outside of class</b>	<b>Gain self confidence</b>

Think also about your life as an adult. While a career can be a big part of your life, it is only one part of you as a balanced person. Hobbies, sports, and other activities add variety and allow you to do other things you find fulfilling. Maybe you earn a living programming computers, for example, but you coach little league baseball because you really enjoy sports and teaching kids.

Hobbies and extracurricular activities can also lead to careers. Adem Tepedelen tells his story on CFNC.org:

*“I started out self-publishing music fanzines when I was in high school,” he says. “I didn’t really do them because I wanted to be a writer. I just loved heavy metal [music] and wanted to be actively involved. I had read other underground fanzines and putting my own out seemed like a good way to get free albums and possibly interview bands I liked.*

*“After I finished university,” he continues, “I worked at all kinds of menial jobs, but in my spare time I started to contribute reviews to a well-respected Seattle music magazine. Eventually I went from just being a contributing writer to being one of the editors, slowly learning the ropes and working my way up the ladder.”*

Find a link to the full story at [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10).

## Tip

Colleges and employers are looking for well-rounded students who have shown initiative to serve others and develop talents outside the classroom. Be sure to include your experiences on applications and resumes.



Take a minute or two to write down all the clubs, sports, or other extracurricular activities that you have been involved in this year. They don't have to be ones at your school. Now, write down some activities that you might consider joining next year.

My current extracurricular activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Other activities I might consider for the future: \_\_\_\_\_

---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---



---

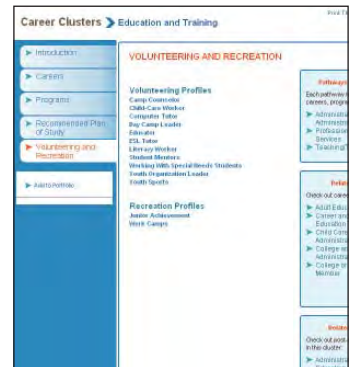
**Volunteering**

Look for opportunities to make a difference in your school or community. There are numerous organizations that need volunteers to carry out their mission whether it's to feed homeless people or teach children to read. Even if you have only a few hours a week, it can make a big difference. It can also be another avenue to explore careers. Volunteer with a business to see if any of the jobs there interest you.

**Go Online**

To get some more ideas about volunteering and other activities, go to [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10).

Notice that these opportunities are arranged by career clusters. Pick some that are interesting to you, and answer the question below.



What new opportunities for volunteering or recreation did you find?

---



---



---



---



---

## Habits of Mind

Author and educator John Holt once said that a “true test of character is how we behave when we don’t know what to do.” Successful students are able to **persist, strive for accuracy and precision**, and both **question and pose problems** even when they don’t know what the outcome will be. These three characteristics are based on Costa and Kallick’s 16 Habits of Mind. Costa and Kallick state that a “Habit of Mind” is the ability to behave intelligently when confronted with problems when the answer is not known. A person who behaves intelligently uses many skills in dealing with problems. We picked three habits that are especially important for high school students.

### Persisting

People who get things done effectively and efficiently stay on task and don’t give up. Persistent people identify a problem, determine how best to go about solving it, and then get to work. What’s great is that a persistent person is flexible enough to switch gears when they see that their current strategy or plan isn’t working. A person who does not possess this habit of mind might give up before they even start and say “I can’t do this” or “it’s too hard.” Or they might start on a project and keep going even when it is clear that things aren’t working.

### Tips on being persistent

- Don’t give up before you start; if you get overwhelmed, ask for help.
- Identify the problem and brainstorm on your own or with others on ways to solve the problem.
- Evaluate your progress mid-stream. Are things going as planned?
- If you get off track, go back to brainstorming and choose another course of action.
- Evaluate the outcome of your project. What worked and what could you have done better?



**Striving for accuracy and precision**

Ever hear the cliché, “Presentation is everything”? Well, maybe presentation isn’t EVERYTHING, but it certainly makes a difference. For example, if a potential employer sees spelling errors in your resume or cover letter, it sends the message that you are likely to do sloppy work. Also, teachers find it much easier to grade a well-written paper than one that is full of errors. Read the introductory paragraph below. Can you find the seven errors?

*There are several main varieties of camera. Undoubtedly the most popular and fastest growing is the digital camera People like them for a number off reasons including the ability to see a picture immediately, ease of transferring them to their computer for editing and emailing, and cost savings from ont having too print bad photos. This paper will examine some of the most poplar features of digital cameras and provide tips for choosing one.*

What are some other ways you can be accurate and precise in your schoolwork? In your extracurricular activities? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Questioning and posing problems**

Humans have a great capacity not only to solve problems, but to find problems to solve (or even create them!). When good students struggle with a problem, they know how and are willing to ask questions to clarify things. They may ask questions to gather support of current evidence, determine another point of view, make connections between things, or play out hypothetical situations. See if you can guess which question goes with the four categories mentioned in the previous sentence? Draw a line to match the category with the question:

**Hypothetical**

What is the relationship between oil and water?

**Alternative Point of View**

What research data do you have to support your claim that blood is thicker than water?

**Connections**

How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

**Support of Current Evidence**

When we read a biography, from what perspective do we learn about the subject? The authors? Or the subject of the biography?

# Earning College Credit in High School

One way to challenge yourself academically, to make higher education more affordable, and to potentially shorten your time in college is to earn college credits while you're in high school. You actually have a number of options...

**Advanced Placement (AP):** AP is a program that enables high school students to complete college-level courses for college placement or credit. Typically, a student takes an AP course at his or her high school and then takes the appropriate AP exam. The exam scores range from 1 to 5, and students scoring a 3 or better will often be able to earn college credit. You will need to check with your specific college, as some require a higher score. There are 37 AP courses and exams across 22 subject areas. For more information about AP courses, contact [www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html).

**Learn & Earn High School:** These are small, autonomous schools located on university and community college campuses, where students earn an associate's degree or two years of college credit while in high school. Students will also earn a high school diploma at the same time. Currently, there are 60 Learn & Earn high schools across North Carolina. Learn & Earn is an initiative through the governor's office, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to encourage students to earn a college degree debt-free. For more information about Learn & Earn High School, go to [www.learnandearn.nc.gov](http://www.learnandearn.nc.gov).

**Learn & Earn Online:** Qualified students in participating public schools can take a variety of online college credit courses at no cost to themselves or their families. Students earn both high school and college credit for completed courses. These classes are offered through the NC Community Colleges and UNCG iSchool. For more information about Learn & Earn Online, go to [www.learnandearn.nc.gov](http://www.learnandearn.nc.gov).

**Huskins Program:** This program allows students in grades 9-12 to take a college-level class during the regular school day, typically at their high school or a local community college. Courses are approved through a cooperative program agreement between the high school and the community college. For more information about the Huskins Program, visit [www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Programs/educ\\_minors.htm](http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Programs/educ_minors.htm).

**Dual Enrollment:** This program is designed to provide an opportunity for students 16 years of age or older to take relevant course work related to their postsecondary plans on a community college campus. Students may earn both high school and college credit at the same time. These classes are also tuition-free. For more information about Dual Enrollment, visit [www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Programs/educ\\_minors.htm](http://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/Programs/educ_minors.htm).

*For more information about these programs, visit [www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org).*

Find the options available at your school and write them down here. Check with your school counselor if you don't know.

---

---

---

---

---



Check out the podcast at [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10) where you will hear students talk about their experiences earning college credit in high school.

Meet with your school counselor and parents to decide if early college credit is right for you. Write down some of the courses you would be interested in taking during high school.

---



---



---



---

### Online Learning

As you explore the possibility of earning college credit while in high school, you will likely come across programs that use online learning.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) offers online, videoconferencing, and televised college-level courses at no direct cost to students or to schools. These online learning options allow students to take high school courses and earn college credits or both, making students more competitive in applying for college or in the workplace.

#### **These are the distance learning programs currently available in North Carolina:**

- North Carolina Virtual Public School (NCVPS) for high school courses not offered at the student's school
- Learn & Earn Online courses available through the NC Community College System to earn both high school and college "dual credit" during the regular school day
- Learn & Earn Online through UNCG iSchool, another way for high school students to earn college credits while still in high school

School administrators or counselors select the courses their schools will offer. For the Learn & Earn Online program, facilitators are assigned to troubleshoot equipment problems, act as a liaison between the students and the instructors, and help keep students on task. Students are able to register for online courses during their regular registration time and are scheduled to be in a computer lab with a facilitator during the instructional day. Before enrolling, students may be asked to complete a questionnaire to determine if online learning is right for them. Students interested in taking online courses should first consult with their school counselor.

Download your free copy of "Online Learning" at [CFNC.org/PS](http://CFNC.org/PS).

# Careers and Your Interests

Think of the most boring thing you've ever done. Now, imagine doing that for eight hours a day, 40 hours a week, for the next 40 years. Yuck! That's why it's so important to seriously explore your career options. You have thousands of career possibilities, most of which you've never even heard of. What about a biotechnology business director or a knowledge engineer? As you explore, ask yourself some of these questions:

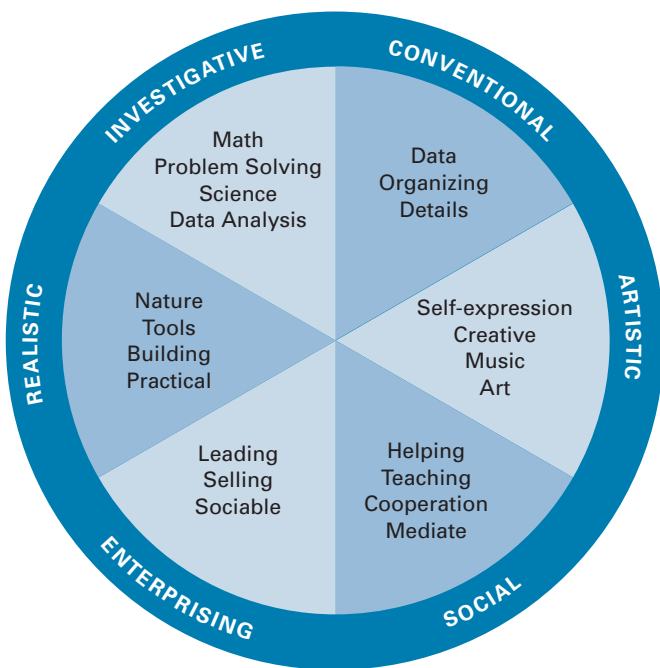
**Abilities:** What are you good at?

**Values:** What is important to you?

**Interests:** What do you like to do?

**Outlook:** Which careers will be in demand?

Circle six or seven of the words below that you find most appealing. Then write down the names of a few careers you've considered.



### Careers You've Considered

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

In which area (slice of the circle) did you circle the most words?

- Conventional       Enterprising  
 Artistic             Realistic  
 Social                 Investigative

## Tip

After you take the Interest Profiler, be sure to follow the links on the left (What They Do, Is This for You?, What to Learn, Money and Outlook, and Connections).

Now go to [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10) for a link to Interest Profiler assessment (180 questions, 10-20 minutes). Compare your results with the choices you made above.

Top Two Personality Types	Related Careers	Educational Requirements



# Exploring the World of Work

Take a minute to imagine yourself 15 years from now. How old will you be?

Look at the current time. What do you think you will be doing at this time of day?

Most likely you will be engaged in some type of work. While it's oftentimes a challenge to get a real idea of what it's like to be in a specific career, there are some ways you can learn more about the world of work while in high school.

**Working part-time** is a great way to earn some extra spending money and learn about careers. If possible, try to find a job that relates to what you might like to do when you finish high school. For example, if you want to be a veterinarian, you might call some local vets and ask if they need some part-time help. Tip: Sometimes you can find a part-time job even when there is not one advertised in the newspaper.

**Volunteering** is a good alternative to working part-time. Although you may not earn any money, you will be compensated by the work experience you get and reference letters from the organization you help. It's also a great way to get involved in your community and something that you can continue when you are in college and beyond.

**Job shadowing** is a way to learn about careers that may be less time-consuming than working or volunteering. To arrange for a job shadowing experience, just contact someone who does what you would like to do when you complete high school or college. Make an appointment to come spend part of a day with them at their workplace to learn firsthand what they do.

**Interviewing** can help you learn more about what people do at their workplace including why they became interested in their career and what educational background is necessary for that particular job. You can use interviewing when you are working part-time, volunteering, or job shadowing to learn more about whether or not a specific career might be a good fit for you.

Of these four ways to explore careers, which have you already done that has been helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

How was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

Which strategy do you think you'd like to try this spring or summer? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

You can download "Exploring Careers" for more details and tips at [CFNC.org/PS](http://CFNC.org/PS).

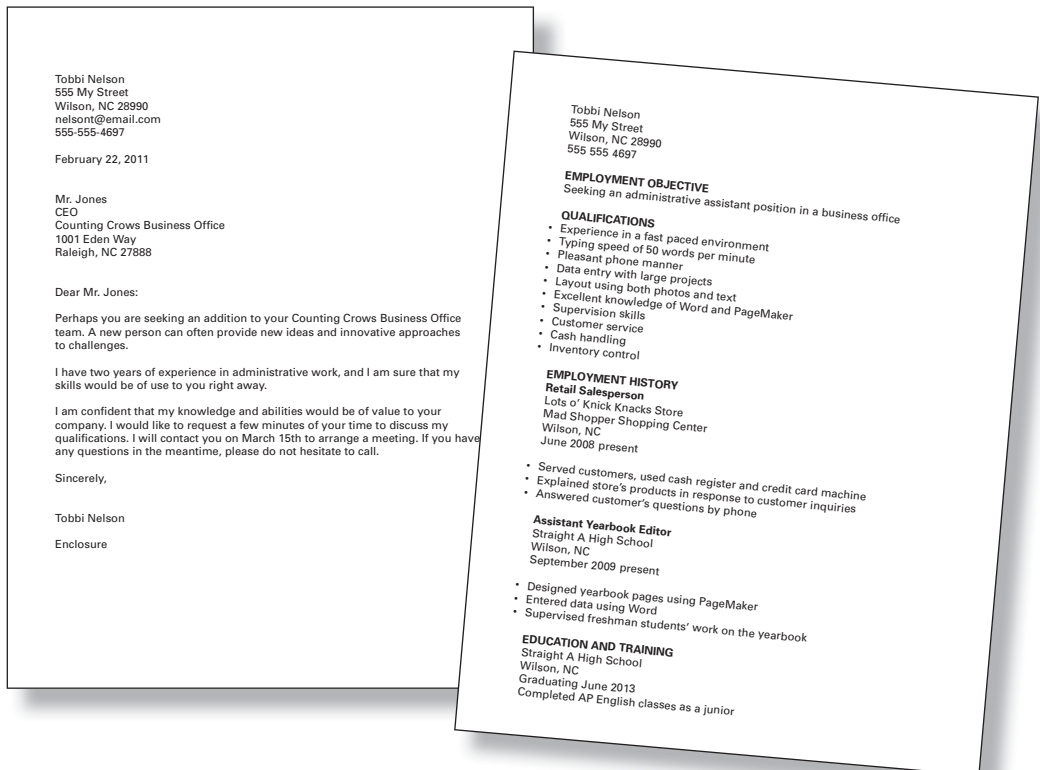


## Writing Your Resume

When you apply for a job during or after high school, you will likely need to submit a resume and complete an application. A resume lets the employer know what work and educational experiences you have had and how well you might fit with the job to which you are applying. Resumes are important since the employer will see that piece of paper before they even consider meeting you. It is your chance to put your best foot forward.

Go to [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10) to use Resume Builder and get started on creating your own resume. You can include part-time work, volunteering experiences, extracurricular activities, awards, and skills.

Print out your resume and have your school counselor, parent, or other adult give you feedback. Remember to keep your resume updated! Every time you have a work experience, add it to your resume.



# College Admissions

Assume you are the president of a college (congratulations). You have space for 4,000 students due to the number of classroom buildings on campus, the dormitory rooms available, and the number of professors on your staff. Now imagine that there are 6,000 students who want to attend your college! How would you choose who could attend?

This is the situation for many colleges; there are simply more students wanting to attend than they can accommodate. For other colleges, they have space for the number of students who want to attend, but they know that unless they select students who are ready to do college-level work, the students won't succeed.

These are just a few of the reasons why colleges have admissions requirements. One helpful way to think about how colleges differ in their admissions requirements is to think about them on a continuum. Colleges with an open door policy will want proof that you are a high school graduate and will have you take placement tests, but you are assured admission if you follow their procedures. At the other end of the continuum, colleges look closely at things such as GPA, class rank, leadership potential, test scores, rigorous high school courses, extracurricular activities, talents and interests a student could bring to the campus, and perhaps an essay or portfolio that gives insight into the student as an individual.



Why SHOULDN'T we admit them?

Why SHOULD we admit them?

Colleges fall all along this continuum. The key is to be familiar with admissions requirements early so that you can make sure you are on track during your junior and senior years.

## Grade Point Average

Many colleges use your high school grade point average (GPA) to determine how well you might perform at their college. Some colleges have a minimum required GPA, whereas others only provide data about the average GPA of admitted students so that you can see how you compare.

## Calculating Your GPA

The grades you earn are assigned points: A=4, B=3, C=2, and D=1. Your GPA is the sum of all your earned points divided by the number of course units you take. So an A in History, a C in English, a B in Biology, and an A in a foreign language would give you a GPA of 3.25. Weighted courses increase the numerator, thus increasing your GPA.

Course	Grade	Grade Points	Units
History	A	4	1
English	C	2	1
Biology	B	3	1
Spanish	A	4	1
		13	4
<b>Grade Pts/Units = 13/4 = 3.25 GPA</b>			

### College Entrance Tests

Entrance tests include the SAT or ACT and are required for most four-year colleges. A college placement test (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, or COMPASS) is required for community colleges. Some colleges have minimum required scores for the SAT and ACT, but many do not. Placement tests, on the other hand, determine your current skill level in English, math, and reading; they are used to place you in appropriate courses.

### Courses and Extracurricular Activities

Your high school course work and extracurricular activities are also important when it comes to college admission. Make sure you choose challenging courses and do your best in them. All 16 campuses in the University of North Carolina system have minimum course requirements (described below). North Carolina's 36 independent colleges and universities have varying requirements; check each one for details. North Carolina's 58 community colleges have an open door policy, though admission to some programs (such as nursing) is competitive. In addition to your course work, it's a good idea to engage in extracurricular activities to be a more well-rounded applicant.

Go to [CFNC.org](http://CFNC.org) to view all of the NC colleges. Choose one or two colleges and note the admissions requirements below:

#### College

---



---



---

#### Admissions Requirements

---



---



---

### UNC Minimum Course Requirements

#### Six course units in language, including

- four units in English emphasizing grammar, composition, and literature, and
- two units of a language other than English.

#### Four course units of mathematics, in any of the following combinations:

- algebra I and II, geometry, and one unit beyond algebra II,
- algebra I and II, and two units beyond algebra II, or
- integrated math I, II, and III, and one unit beyond integrated math III.

(The fourth unit of math affects applicants to all institutions except the University of North Carolina School of the Arts.) It is recommended that prospective students take a mathematics course unit in the 12th grade.

#### Three course units in science, including

- at least one unit in a life or biological science (for example, biology),
- at least one unit in physical science (for example, physical science, chemistry, physics), and
- at least one laboratory course.

#### Two course units in social studies, including one unit in U.S. History.

*For fall 2013 and beyond, minimum GPA is 2.5, minimum SAT is 800 (mathematics and critical reading combined), and minimum ACT is 17.*

# College Costs and Ways to Pay

Time for a pop quiz! Name three colleges and then guess how much it costs to attend for one year.

College	Cost Estimate (one year)
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

You will be asked to check your answers online in a few minutes, but let's first make sure you know about the different types of expenses you will have in college. Check your answers at the bottom of the next page.

### Match Them Up!

Draw a line to match each word on the left with its description on the right.

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| A. Textbooks     | 1. The cost for the classes you will take   |
| B. Board         | 2. The cost to live in a dorm at the college  |
| C. Tuition       | 3. Another name for the cost of your food on campus (in the cafeteria, snack shops, and other college facilities that provide food) |
| D. Miscellaneous | 4. Books you will need to buy or rent for your classes  |
| E. Room          | 5. Things like clothes, shampoo, and transportation that you will have to pay for   |

The costs of colleges vary widely and include more than just tuition and books. If you go to a residential college (one where you live on campus), for example, you also have to pay for room and board. Plus, you might have costs associated with a lab class or athletic team. In general, it is less expensive to attend a community college than a four-year college and less expensive to attend a four-year public college than a four-year independent college or university (private college). How much you end up paying, however, really depends on financial aid you receive and whether you are considered an in-state or out-of-state resident for tuition purposes. NC colleges range from around \$5,000 per year to over \$30,000 per year. You might receive enough financial aid to afford attending a college that you initially thought was too expensive. Look for the best college for you, apply for financial aid, and see what happens.

**Ways to Pay for College****Scholarships and Grants**

Sometimes known as “gift-aid,” this is money that does not need to be repaid.

**Work-Study**

Earn money while in college by working part-time on campus or in the community.

**Education Loans**

Low-interest loans are available for students and parents and must be repaid.

**Installment Plans**

Colleges may offer monthly tuition payment plans.

**Family**

Students and parents can plan ahead and save to pay their share.

**Watch the Video**

You can watch videos about all the ways to pay for college. Go to [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10).

Okay, now it’s time to see how close your college cost guesses were. Go online to [CFNC.org/9-10](http://CFNC.org/9-10), and you will find profiles of all NC colleges. Look at Costs and Financial Aid for details and write your findings below:

**College****Cost Estimate (one year)**


---



---



---



---



---



---

*Now is a good time to talk with your parents about college costs and the NC 529 Savings Program to prepare for college. They’ll think you are really smart!*

# Visiting Colleges

What if you were getting ready to buy a house, and your real estate agent said “No, I wouldn’t bother with touring the homes; just take a look at these nice brochures I’ve made and choose which one you want to buy.” You’d probably think they were crazy! “This is a huge investment,” you might say, “and I need to see these firsthand.”

Well, college is a large investment of your time and money too. Every college looks great in brochures and online, but you can get the inside scoop by taking a tour of the campus, talking to students, eating in the dining hall, and checking out dorm rooms, classes, and labs. You might even arrange to talk to a professor in the department in which you are interested.

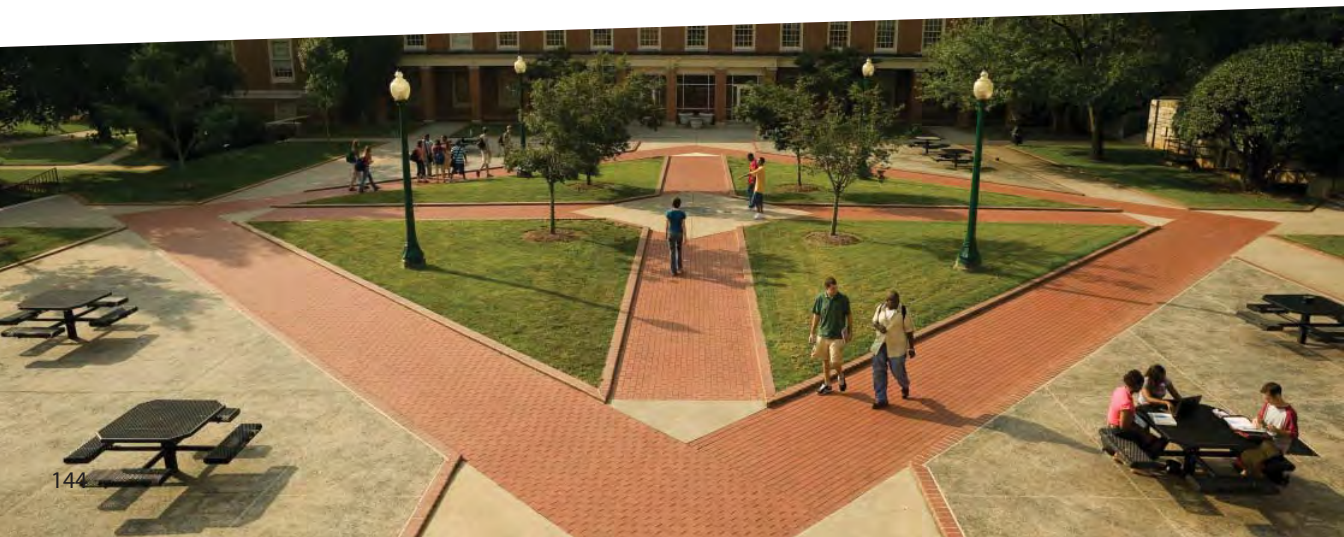
## Ways to Visit

**School Group** – Many high schools arrange trips to college campuses for groups of students. Watch for opportunities or talk with your school counselor for options.

**College Open House** – This is a visitation event scheduled by a college that often lasts one or two days. They can be quite large, sometimes with hundreds or even thousands of students and parents in attendance.

**Personal College Visit** – You might want to schedule a visit just for you and your family. You will get to see a more typical day on campus, but there might be less going on as compared to a college open house event.

To make the most of your visit, prepare questions based on your interests and the research you’ve already done about the college on your own. Use the visit to “fill in the blanks”— find out things you couldn’t learn online. Check out colleges at [CFNC.org](http://CFNC.org) prior to your visit.



**Your College Visit To-Do List**

- Talk to students about their experiences. Are students helpful and friendly?
- Ask faculty about facilities, equipment, and classes. Are they helpful and open with answers?
- Tour residence halls, science and computer labs, and the student union building. Are they in good condition?
- Sit in on a class. Is the faculty member approachable? Are the students engaged?
- Eat in the cafeteria. What are the meal plan options?
- Read student bulletin boards and the college newspaper, and ask for an alumni magazine.
- Think about how you feel on campus. Do you feel comfortable? Would you fit in?
- Take notes about what you like and dislike about the campus. Taking pictures is also helpful, especially if you visit several campuses.

Other questions you want to ask:

---



---



---

Research the opportunities to visit colleges you are considering by going online or calling the admissions offices. Make note of what you learn below.

College Name	Visit Opportunities and Policies
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

*Weaving a college visit into a family trip can be a good idea, but keep in mind that many colleges have fewer students in the summer.*