Get connected!

- Sign up to receive REMIND text messages from your counselors. Instructions below:
  - Nevada Union High School…
    - Class of 2020 Students/Parents @NU2020 to 81010
    - Class of 2021 Students/Parents @NU2021 to 81010
    - Class of 2022 Students/Parents @NU2022 to 81010
    - Class of 2023 Students/Parents @NU2023 to 81010
  - North Point Academy…
    - Class of 2019
    - Class of 2020
    - Class of 2021
    - Class of 2022
  - NU Tech High School
  - Ghidotti Early College High School
    - Class of 2020
    - Class of 2021
    - Class of 2022
    - Class of 2023
- Like our facebook page: NUHS Counseling (or @MinerCounseling)
- **UpNext** (part of the Reach Higher campaign) helps you plan for college with text messages about:
  - Finding and choosing schools
  - Prepping and sending your applications
  - Finding money for college
  - Student Loan repayment and more

Know Yourself

Students - Looking for something educational and fun to do in the summer? Here is a list of summer enrichment opportunities around the state, country and world. Here is a list of summer programs with generous financial aid opportunities. Learn more about yourself, explore career options and spend time on college campuses.

Parents - Looking for books on college options, admissions, navigating the higher education system, etc.? Check out this recommended reading list.

Before you start researching colleges, it's important that you know yourself - what you value, what you need to be successful, and what you want for your future.
NJUHSD Counseling Handbook

- Videos and articles to get you thinking about these questions
- CaliforniaColleges.edu - College and career exploration - all in one place!
- Self-Survey for the College-Bound
- Career Exploration
- What should I do with my life? Roadtrip Nation can help you answer this question.
- Thinking about taking a Gap Year? Need a break to recharge? Seeking more meaning in your life? A gap year experience may consist of work, study, volunteering, travel, meeting new people and gaining a greater sense of independence. The American Gap Year Association is a good place to start your research. You might also check out Rotary International Exchange and American Field Service (AFS) for opportunities for young adults. Remember to plan EARLY.

And make the most of your time in high school...
- Study guides and strategies
- Manage Your Time
- Take Control of Homework
- Tips for Staying Motivated
- Building a Support Network
- Outside the Classroom
- Volunteer - Create a filter for “teens”

This TIMELINE can be helpful as you make a plan for your high school years (grades 9-12).

Be sure you’re on track to graduate from high school by reviewing the GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS and A-G College Entrance Requirements.

Visiting college campuses...
Want to visit a college campus to see if it’s right for you? Check out multi-cultural fly-in programs and College Green Light to find out how. College campus visit tips can help you navigate when you’re there. You may also find information about fly-in programs on colleges’ websites. MOST DEADLINES ARE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, so don’t delay!

Consider asking these questions to make the most of your campus visit.

College Week Live connects you with live chats, webcasts and on-demand videos.

And be sure to visit CampusTours and YouUniversity to take virtual tours, watch videos and check out photos from other colleges and universities around the country. It’s the next best thing to being there!
Check out CSU and UC Preview Days! These day are designed just for you - the prospective student - to give you a sense of their programs, people and the place.

If you’re in the top 15% of your graduating class, you’re invited to register for a “UC for You” event (held in October) and learn more about the 9 undergraduate campuses.

Creating your college list...
Trying to figure out where to apply? Wondering about the average SAT/ACT scores and GPA of admitted students? Look up information about colleges on College Board’s Big Future is an excellent place to shop around. Khan Academy provides timelines (starting in grade 9) and walks families through every step of the college planning process.

California Colleges is another great one-stop college research resource. The Colleges That Change Lives website can help you find excellent liberal arts colleges that might be right for you. Vista College Search and College Scorecard also provide useful data to help in your search as well.

I’m First! If you are the first in your family to go to college, this website resource is a must to check out. Find colleges, read the blog and hear stories from other first gen students.

Choosing CSU’s...
Find out if you’re test scores and GPA qualify you for CSU by checking this eligibility index chart, looking at the admission requirements and calculating your A-G GPA. Impacted campuses may set a higher eligibility index. Use this eligibility index calculator to determine yours. Many CSU campuses and majors are impacted (more qualified students are applying than can be admitted). Check out the impaction list and be sure that either your first or alternative major choice is NOT an impacted major. Cal State Apply provides useful tools to help you explore campuses by geographic location, major, etc. Check out the CSU’s cost of attendance as it varies by campus.

Within the CSU system, 18 campuses have Honors Programs for incoming freshmen. These require a separate application and have their own deadlines. More information about the programs, benefits and requirements can be found here.

Choosing UC’s...
If you’re interested in applying to the UC’s, use the admission requirements to guide you in your class selections. You must meet the A-G requirements and have a GPA of 3.0 or higher (in 10th and 11th grade A-G courses). If you’re in the top 9% of your graduating class, you may qualify for Eligibility in the Local Context (ELC). Learn more about how UC applications are reviewed and what the selection process looks like for each individual campus.
Community College...

Sierra College (or another community college) is an excellent option for many students.
- Save money by living at home
- Earn a certificate, an Associate’s Degree or prepare to transfer to a 4-year college.
- Sierra College Honor Society/Honors Courses

Check out the degree and certificate programs that Sierra has to offer.
- You could be working in as little as 6 months
- Flexible scheduling and generous financial aid available

Here are the enrollment steps to be eligible to register for classes – admission application, online orientation, assessment and new student counseling.
- Registration is completed through students’ mySierra account.
- Not all students will be required to take the college assessment test. High school transcripts can be used in many instances for placement.
  - Prospective students can use the online placement tool to determine eligibility and then just need to send in a copy of their high school transcript to the assessment office once they apply for admission.
  - Prospective students utilize the Sierra Placement Tool to determine placement eligibility.

Looking for a Transfer Admission Guarantee to University of California or to Cal States (ADT)? Refer to these resources to help you make a plan for transferring from the community college. ASSIST is another excellent resource to help students prepare and create a pathway towards transfer.

Curious about WHEN you might be able to transfer from community college to a 4-year university? Find out more about CSU and UC lower division transfers and upper division transfers.

Choosing Private Colleges...

Students with a 2.7 GPA or higher (definitely a 3.0 or higher) should seriously consider applying to private colleges. Although the price tag is higher, they often give out excellent financial aid awards. If you’re willing to look outside of California, your options will increase significantly.
- Check out this list of TEST OPTIONAL colleges and compare it to this list of COLLEGES THAT MEET 100% OF FINANCIAL NEED. (If choosing test optional, be sure the colleges scholarship consideration is test optional as well. If not, you may need to submit scores to be considered for merit scholarships.) Here’s another test optional resource.
- Ladies should consider adding AT LEAST ONE WOMEN’S COLLEGE to their list.

Other excellent online resources to help you find colleges that are right for you:
● **Unigo** - Written FOR students and BY students. You won't find spin from admission offices here. Unigo urges college students to share their take on their own schools through comments, photos, and videos.

● **College Xpress, Cappex** and **Chegg** - College matchmakers. Create a profile and discover colleges you didn’t even know existed that may be the perfect fit for you!

● **College Simply** can help you figure out your odds of admission.

**International Options…**
Interested in living and learning abroad? With ever-expanding options for students to study at universities across the globe, check out the [Guide to International University Admission](#) for more information. This comprehensive guide provides country profiles for Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and the UK. You'll find everything from how to apply and get a visa to degree programs offered and financing your education.

**WUE…**
Considering public universities outside of California? The [Western Undergraduate Exchange](#) connects California students with opportunities to study at these institutions for reduced rates. Be sure to find out if your [particular major](#) is part of WUE.

**ROTC…**
Interested in [Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)](#) or [Navy or Marines Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC)](#) programs?

**Art School…**
Thinking of attending an ART SCHOOL or taking an ART MAJOR? Plan to attend the [San Francisco Performing and Visual Arts College Fair](#) and [National Portfolio Day](#) at CA College of the Arts where you will have your portfolio reviewed by art and design college representatives and get valuable feedback. Explore options on these websites: [National Association of Schools of Art & Design](#) and [The Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design](#).

**Finding a Good Financial Fit…**
Find out how generous your college choices are with financial aid by going to [College Data](#):  
1. Look up by college name or do a search  
2. Under “Financial Friendliness,” look at “Need Met” for the percentage. The closer to 100%, the better!  
3. Add colleges you like to your Career Cruising college list!

Some colleges and universities around the country offer **“no loan” packages** - replacing loans with additional grants, work study, and, in many cases, smaller student loans. While most are not truly eliminating all loans, graduates finish with significantly lower debt. [Colleges with a “no
loans policy are available primarily to low income students. Note that the public universities on the list require you to be a resident of that state and may apply to tuition only.

Great resources to compare schools’ generosity are Cappex, Common Campus, College Raptor and College Navigator.

The Chronicle of Higher Education offers a helpful tool to sort through 3,000 schools by 2017-2018 their sticker prices - enabling you to find bargains. This is especially useful if you’re not going to qualify for much financial aid and will need to cover costs yourself.

The Choice blog by the New York Times - All about getting into college and paying for it. (This blog is discontinued remains available for searching and viewing.)

AP Credit Policies of Colleges...
If you’ve taken AP courses and exams, colleges may give you college credit or advanced standing (i.e. skipping a level of Spanish). To find out more information about your colleges and their AP policy (including required scores), check out the AP Credit Policy website.

College Majors...
After you explore career interests and options, you’re are able to match those results to related majors and ultimately to the colleges/programs that offer the education needed to pursue your chosen field.

When exploring careers, O*NET offers an Interest Profiler and Career Cruising has a variety of tools. This article offers 4-step advice on choosing a major. College Majors 101 provides lots of information about dozens of majors, as well as what to expect academically if one pursues these majors. Salary Surfer gives an estimate of wages 2 and 5 years after completing a degree/certificate program.

Interested in health careers? Check out Explore Health Careers to learn about the wide variety of options within this rapidly growing field.

Applying to college...
Most private college applications will be completed on Common Application. Be sure to find out their FEE WAIVER options and let your counselor know if she needs to request one on your behalf. Reference this Common App Guide to answer any questions you might have about this application and help ensure that you present your best self. Also, here are Common App Videos including tutorials and tips from admission counselors and help with Common App Essay Prompts. Some private colleges will be using the Coalition Application this year.

About 450 colleges offer an early admission option. Students submit applications early and receive a decision earlier. Here are some considerations and resources:
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- **The Facts About Applying Early**
- Early Decision (binding contract) is a way to demonstrate substantial interest in a college.
- **ED vs. Regular Decision Acceptance Rates** - Keep in mind that the ED applicant pool is often stronger.
- Especially for students with high financial need, ED may give them access to more funding.
- If students haven’t prepared their best application or need their first semester senior year to strengthen their application, they should not apply early.
- Those who do not have a clear first choice should not apply ED.
- Be sure to let your counselor know right away if you’re planning to apply early.

**University of California** is where you’ll find the University of California application. All students with a 3.0 GPA or higher should consider applying to UC. The **UC deadline to apply is November 30!** Check out these **Tips and Tools for Freshmen Applicants** for guidance on what to do before, during and after the application process. Read more about how to answer the **Personal Insight Questions**. This is a comprehensive guide to filling out the application: **Inside the UC App**. If admitted to UC, students are required to complete the **Entry Level Writing Requirement** unless exempt.

**Cal State Apply** is the place to apply to all California State University campuses. Check out these **Help Videos** to assist you with every step of the application. Want to get started before the application opens? Visit the **California Colleges** website and then transfer your information. The **Cal State application window is October 1 - November 30!** Be sure to **keep track of deadlines** to complete admission testing and submit transcripts.

After submitting your CSU applications, you must complete the EOP application (if eligible). You will need TWO recommenders (teacher, coach, mentor, community member) for EOP. Check out these **Common Questions About EOP**.

Some CSU campuses offer **Honors Programs**. Find out if you're eligible and how to apply.

Community College - Many **CCC’s accept EAP results** in place of placement exams.

**College Essay...**

Need some help with your college essay(s)? Check out **College Essay Guy**! Ethan Sawyer (College Essay Guy) and Edswell teamed up to create this online essay writing course. Plus there are tons of free resources available on his website. **Wow Writing Workshop** has great resources to get you thinking about your story. Khan Academy has **lots of videos** to help you write a variety of successful essays.
Letters of Recommendation...
Letters of recommendation are required for EOP and private college applications: Be sure to complete a Counselor Letter of Recommendation Request and a Brag Sheet for two (2) teachers. You must share these documents with your recommenders. Tips for completing these documents.

College Admission Testing...
All students should have taken the ACT or SAT exam once or twice in the junior and/or senior year. Khan Academy provides free SAT prep and full-length practice tests. This SAT Prep Guide offers an overview of the test and details about the recent changes. Here’s a PSAT Toolkit to help you build a testing plan.

Deadlines vary by school. Check the college website for the last test date they will accept. Here are the Cal State University test deadlines as well as a list of colleges that will allow students to self-report SAT/ACT scores instead of sending official score reports (which could save money!).

Trying to decide which exam is better for you? Use the Khan Academy/PSAT to get an idea of how the SAT works and use ACT sample questions and a full-length ACT practice test to discover which format might be a better match. ACT Academy has free practice tests as well. This chart and this resource could also be helpful. And check out this link to learn more about the new College Board assessments (PSAT and SAT).

- When considering when and how many times to test, consider Score Choice and Superscoring of the SAT and ACT.
- To get an idea of average scores, here is a list of SAT and ACT score ranges for 360 colleges and universities.
- Subject Tests: If you are applying to private colleges and/or certain programs at UC’s and CSU’s, the SAT Subject Tests may be required or recommended. Check out this list and also this list to see if you need to consider these exams and this article for more advice.
- Check out this list of TEST OPTIONAL colleges. If choosing test optional, be sure the colleges scholarship consideration is test optional as well. If not, you may need to submit scores to be considered for merit scholarships.

Student Athletes...
Student athletes need to register with the NCAA Clearinghouse and indicate their high school. Eligibility requirements have changed, so be sure to remain current.

Demonstrating Interest...
“Demonstrated interest” in a college involves showing a college that you’re interested in them. This goes beyond simply submitting an application. About 50% of colleges consider demonstrated interest when admitting students. They are more likely to admit students who show that they want to attend! Here are some ways to show demonstrated interest:
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- Submit any available supplemental essays
- Visit campus
- Schedule an interview. Watch this video and review these tips.
- College fair (be sure to pick up the representative’s business card!)
- Send a thank you note after meeting with a representative. Include 1-2 features of the college that interest you.
- Request college information
- Apply Early Decision (only if a school is your clear first choice!)

Military

Considering one of the military/service academies after high school? Learn about the five Service Academies and their admission procedures and timelines from these links: Air Force Academy, Naval Academy, West Point Military Academy, Coast Guard Academy, and Merchant Marine Academy. Interested candidates must secure a congressional nomination, pass a physical exam, and demonstrate strong leadership skills and potential.

Four of the five branches offer summer opportunities to experience the academy first-hand. These applications are open (or will open soon) to students in their junior year of high school for the summer between junior and senior year.

- Air Force Summer Seminar
- West Point Summer Leaders Experience
- Naval Academy Summer Seminar
- Coast Guard Academy AIM Summer Program

ROTC programs are offered at over 1000 colleges and universities across the U.S.

CLEP for military (Dantes funded) offers an opportunity to earn college credit for what you’ve learned in the military.

Financial Aid...

NU Financial Aid Presentation
Guide to Paying for College
Dollars for College Toolkit

All students will complete either the FAFSA or the Dream Act Application to be considered for financial aid from the college/university and state and federal government. We will all complete these applications together in January. Check out The FAFSA Process to best prepare as well as ways to maximize your aid. Undocumented? Find out if you qualify for financial aid.
CSS Profile: This is required of many private colleges in order to qualify for financial aid. Here's a list of colleges and universities that require the Profile as well as those that use IDOCs for document submission.

Community College applicants should check out I Can Afford College. And here's the link to the BOG fee waiver. You might also consider taking Sierra College courses while still in high school. Concurrent Enrollment is available to students with a 3.0 GPA or higher who would like to earn college credit. This could save money as well! If you are eligible, you may qualify for free tuition.

Federal Student Aid
Check out the FAFSA4caster to get an idea of how much federal aid you might qualify for. Before starting your FAFSA, read through The FAFSA Process to best prepare and create an FSA ID. If you are a junior or younger, please check out these changes to the FAFSA. Wondering if your considered dependent on your parents or an independent student? Take a look at this chart to find out. Parents divorced? Remarried? Shared custody? Not sure which parent information you need? Find out how to report parent information.

Grants
Grants are the best kind of money for college - because you don't have to pay them back! Find out more about federal grants that you may qualify for. The Cal Grant is available to students based on family income and student academic eligibility. Students must complete the FAFSA or CA Dream Act Application and NU will submit your GPA verification automatically. If your family makes less than $150,000, you may qualify for the California Middle Class Scholarship. The Cal Grant and Middle Class Scholarship are available to undocumented students as well. Foster child or ever been in foster care? You may be eligible for the CHAFEE grant. The University of California Blue and Gold Plan ensures free tuition for families who earn less than $80,000/year. You might also check out “The Ultimate List of the Nation's Most Generous Colleges” by Lynn O'Shaughnessy.

Merit Aid
Also known as “scholarships”, merit aid is based on your accomplishments and achievements (i.e. grades, special talent). Like grants, merit aid does not need to be paid back. You should always check the financial aid/scholarship website page of the colleges you’re applying to.

Loans
Subsidized? Unsubsidized? What does it all mean? Find out what loan options are available to students and use this handy calculator to determine a loan amount that you could comfortably pay back. Find the most current interest rate information before you borrow. Parents are able to take out Parent PLUS Loans to help pay for college. Note that these loans cannot be transferred to a student and parents pass a credit check.

Work Study
Work Study allows students to work part-time for pay while studying. These jobs may be on or off campus. The amount of work study that you can earn is determined by your need (after completing the FAFSA) and by the amount of your school’s funding.

Comparing Financial Aid Awards…
Once you receive your award letters, the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet Template and Compare Your Awards Tool allow you to compare offers and see how much you and your parents will be expected to pay - now and in the form of loans.

Scholarships…
Apply for NJUHSD scholarships by completing this packet. More information can be found HERE.

Use these online search engines to find scholarships that you may qualify for: Scholly, Going Merry, Scholarship Informer and College Express. JLV College Counseling offers a database of scholarship lists by categories.

Sierra College Scholarship Competition: Deadline is March 5, 2018. Students must apply to Sierra College before completing scholarship application.

The Cal State system offers several CSU Systemwide Scholarships. In addition, each CSU campus has institutional scholarships which require a separate application. Compared to university admission requirements, these usually require higher test scores and GPA. Here are links to some of the campuses scholarship pages: CSU Sacramento, CSU Chico, CSU Los Angeles, SFSU, CSU East Bay, and SDSU. Do a search for a CSU campus name + scholarships to find out more about the CSU’s on your college list.

Discover UC Scholarships that are awarded based on academic merit, financial need or both.

Start earning scholarships as early as 9th grade! Raise Me automatically connects you with micro-scholarships based on your achievements in high school.

This link connects you to other scholarship websites: Other scholarships

Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship

Why Diplomacy and Peacebuilding Matter - National High School Essay Contest - Open to grades 9-12!

Scholarships for Military Families - For more information about ROTC scholarships.

Hispanic Scholarship Fund
Gates Millennium Scholars Program (low income, high GPA)

QuestBridge

These two PDF's (Scholarships and MALDEF) are lists of scholarships. Go through the list to find out which ones you’re qualified for AND make note of the deadline. Then apply online!

Scholarships for Dreamers

Scholarships and Financial Aid for Online College Students

Making a College Choice

- Compare financial aid packages. Call the college financial aid office IMMEDIATELY if you have not received this yet.
- Choose your college carefully. Do not plan to transfer from a Cal State to a UC. Once you are at a 4-year college, it is difficult to transfer (especially within the California Public School system).

You’re going to college! Now what?

- Going to a California college? Check your school choice on Webgrants to ensure that you receive the Cal Grant.
- Notify the college that you will be attending BEFORE May 1 (National Reply Date). Accept online.
- Pay a tuition deposit. This is non-refundable.
- Arrange housing and make housing deposit. This is separate from the tuition/enrollment deposit.
- Make corrections to your FAFSA using 2016 tax return. If you have FAFSA questions, call 800.433.3243.
- Gentlemen - BE SURE THAT YOU SAID "YES" TO THE FAFSA QUESTION ABOUT REGISTERING FOR THE SELECTIVE SERVICE. You will need to do this in order to get financial aid.
- Report any D’s or F’s to colleges (EOP and/or admissions office).
- Send transcripts, test scores, and tax documents if/when the colleges ask for them.
- Admitted to EOP? Follow up with the EOP office at your Cal State campus.
- Check to see that your college has your EPT/ELM scores. Call 925.808.2142 or the testing office at the school if they do not.
- Take the UC Writing Exam (a Saturday in May). Take the community college Math and English Placement Exams.
- Does your college/university have a freshmen orientation? Is it over the summer? Do you need to register for it?
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- Does your college/university offer a summer bridge program? If so, take advantage of this to sharpen your skills!
- Are you required to complete a CSU Early Start Program over the summer? Get registered!
- Get PROOF of your vaccines or get your vaccines! This information will be in your TO DO list if it's needed.
- Check your online college accounts daily. This is how you will manage admissions and financial aid information and how the colleges will communicate with you.
- Sierra College students - Register for your classes at your exact appointment time. Don't delay! Put all your classes in your shopping cart in advance so that you're ready to hit "submit". Choose an extra class or two in case you want to try them out on the first day and drop those you don't want.
- After you pay your deposit, contact the Career Center at your college to ask about work study jobs. Do they have a database that you can access? The good jobs go first, so try to do some of the searching and applying NOW.
- Get a summer job to help cover your expenses.
- Do your homework! This book should be required summer reading: The Thinking Student's Guide to College. It's about $11 on Amazon and well-worth it!
- Watch these videos to get excited about your college adventure!