

Your College Checklist

Can you believe it? In a couple years, you'll need to have a pretty good idea about what college you want to attend. Our checklist can help you prepare.

Sophomore Year

- Get involved.**
Colleges love well-rounded students—especially those with leadership skills. Involvement in sports, academic and social clubs, theater, church groups, youth groups and community events looks great on your application. If you haven't already, start now. Just find something that interests you.
- Take college core classes.**
It's a good idea to consider scheduling any college prep classes that your high school offers. Colleges take these very seriously—it shows that you are beginning to plan for your college education right now. Talk to your high school guidance counselor to see what is available and how you can get in.
- Brush up on your writing skills.**
No matter what field you eventually choose for your career, good writing skills will be an important part of what you do. Plus, many colleges require an essay on their application.
- Study for the SAT or ACT.**
These are standardized exams that most colleges require for admission. Usually, colleges require one or the other. Most book stores and libraries carry study guides to help you prepare.
- Visit online and personalize.**
The Internet is a great tool to begin your college search. It shouldn't replace an actual campus visit, but can give you a pretty good first impression. Gannon's award-winning web site, at www.gannon.edu, allows you to personalize your online experience when you fill out a brief profile. You can also request more information.

Junior Year

- Attend local college fairs.**
College fairs are a smart investment of your time. They are a great way to gain exposure to a large number of colleges. Ask around. There will probably be one in your local area.
- Take the SAT or ACT.**
These assessments are designed to measure your knowledge as a way to predict your ability to do college-level work and are used as part of the college admissions process. Check with your school counselor about the next sign-up date.

- Attend open house events.**

Most colleges host open house events once or twice a year. This is a great opportunity to talk to faculty and staff, and to start to get acquainted with a particular school. Gannon hosts open house events twice per year, usually in April and November. Visit www.gannon.edu for this year's open house schedule.

- Go through piles of mail.**

By your junior year, you'll be receiving heaps of mail. We're talking about some serious piles. Our best advice is to read them. Okay, maybe not every word. But at least skim through each one just to get a sense of what type of college appeals to you: big or small, public or private, city or rural setting.

Senior Year

- Visit.**
The absolute best way to decide if a college is right for you is to see it for yourself. Colleges give personal tours all the time. You can see the campus, talk to faculty, talk to current students and get answers to your questions. This is a big one—don't blow it off!
- Apply.**
During your senior year, you should apply to the colleges that interest you. There is usually a non-refundable fee required with your application.
- Secure financial aid.**
When you apply to Gannon, we will automatically notify you of any university-based grants or scholarships that you qualify for. But you will also need to determine how the balance of your tuition will be funded. We highly recommend that you visit www.finaid.org. It is a great resource for learning everything you need to know about financing your education. You can also speak directly to one of Gannon's financial aid advisors who can help you through the process.
- Attend orientation.**
One of your final steps as you make the transition to college is new student orientation. Here you meet your future classmates, become familiar with the campus and learn about your first semester classes.

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