

# ARTISTS, PREPARE!

## FALL GUIDE TO COLLEGE PLANNING

### NOCCA's Guiding Principles of College Counseling

Artists and intellectuals are vitally important in the world.  
 College is a primary path toward achieving your artistic, educational, and professional goals.  
 A career in the arts is a viable option and a worthy pursuit.  
 Your college and career readiness is a collaborative and caring endeavor that involves the entire NOCCA community.  
 You have a right to personalized and equitable support, resources, and advocacy.  
 Your talent, potential, and future are not defined by an admissions decision.  
 The "best" school is the school that's best *for you*.

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### ROLES

College planning is a collaborative effort

Ideally, college planning is a student-driven family process supported by the school.

- Student: intrinsic motivation
- Family: positive, active support
- School: guidance and facilitation

### SELF CARE

Your wellness is your top priority

Applying to colleges can feel stressful. It helps to check in with yourself and go back to basics:  
 Anxious? Take three deep breaths  
 Hungry? Have a healthy snack  
 Tired? Rest your eyes for 10 minutes  
 Agitated? Take a walk or jog in place

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The FAFSA application opens October 1

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is available October 1. **This is a REQUIRED form.** [www.studentaid.gov](http://www.studentaid.gov)

Note: Many schools also require the CSS Profile [www.cssprofile.collegeboard.org](http://www.cssprofile.collegeboard.org)



### IS IT A MATCH?

A match is more than "can I get in?" Also ask, "Is the school right *for me*?"

	Arts	Academics	GPA/ACT	Cost	Culture
Reach					
Level					
Likely					

### VIRTUAL COLLEGE VISITS

NOCCA has a full schedule of college visits lined up for you. Representatives from colleges across the country will give informational sessions about their programs, application requirements, financial aid, and school culture. You can find the list of college visits on SCOIR, on NOCCA's website (check the College Counseling page), and in the weekly email announcements. Don't miss out! [www.nocca.com](http://www.nocca.com)

## REQUEST LETTERS OF REC

- Email your teachers to ask if they're willing to write a letter of rec. Give them plenty of notice (2 months is great!)  
OR  
Request the letter of rec through SCOIR: Under "My Colleges" click "Application Documents" then send your request
- Once they agree, add their names to your Common App
- Provide them with
  - (1) A list of schools where you're applying
  - (2) Your resume (you can create this on SCOIR)
  - (3) A brief description of your goals
  - (4) Anything else they request from you

## THIS IS A GREAT TIME TO BE AN ARTIST

Covid-19 may have brought challenges and changes, but artists are built for change. Artists create, respond, imagine, vision, revise, and carry on. By our very nature, artists stay open to change.

Let's apply artistic vision to college and career planning, too. Now is an excellent time to be optimistic about our role as artists in the world.

## COLLEGE ESSAY

The 2020-21 Common Application essay prompts are below. These are shortened versions, so check the website for the full prompts. Share a draft with a teacher or your college counselor.

1. Share the story of your background, identity, interest, or talent.
2. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. What did you learn?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea.
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging it makes you lose all track of time.
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice.

## ACT

Many - *but not all* - schools are test-optional this year (meaning you are not required to submit ACT or SAT scores). **It's still important to prepare for and take the ACT in the fall.**

Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA): In order to be considered for **any LOSFA Financial Aid Programs**, including **TOPS**, then you must enter the code when you complete your ACT or SAT registration

LOSFA's ACT Code is 1595  
LOSFA's SAT Code is 9019

[www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts](http://www.commonapp.org/apply/essay-prompts)

## FALL CHECKLIST

- √ **Finalize your college list** and download college applications and financial aid forms. Make sure you have a balanced list of likely, level and reach schools.
- √ **Create a master list or calendar that includes:** ACT test date and fees; College application due dates; Required financial aid application forms and their deadlines; Other materials you'll need (recommendations, transcripts, etc.)
- √ **Create a Common Application** account on Commonapp.org. Review the parts of the application.
- √ **Complete the FAFSA and CSS Profile:** To apply for financial aid, complete these forms AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.
- √ **Prepare** applications as soon as possible. Nov. 1 is typically the early action/priority deadline.
- √ **Ask two teachers** for letters of recommendations, and list the teachers on your Common Application.
- √ **Prepare audition and portfolio materials:** Consult faculty for guidance preparing your arts-related materials.
- √ **Write first drafts of essays** and ask teachers and your counselor for feedback.
- √ **Apply to College:** Submit your applications to the schools that you want to attend.
- √ **List all schools where you're applying on SCOIR to ensure your transcript is sent to the proper schools.** Post your schools **at least two weeks** before the application deadline. **This is required.**

(adapted from) @MyBigFuture @collegeboard