

Senior (September / Unit 13): Postsecondary Admissions Applications

Objective: *Collect application materials for three postsecondary institutions.*

To successfully complete this unit and receive your stipend, complete the following activities:

- Complete all activities in this unit.
- Complete and include your **Student Grade Check** form.
- Include your parent/guardian’s signature on the **Evaluation Sheet**.
- Complete the **Stipend Request** form.
- **Have site sponsor sign the Mid-Month Check-In (even if not fully finished) by _____.**
- **Be prepared to review it with UB staff on _____.**

Stipend Requirements

Stipend Amounts	Possible Portfolio Completions
Complete = \$40.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 100% complete: turned in on-time, parent/guardian and site sponsor signatures.
Partial = \$30.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 75% complete: includes parent/guardian and site sponsor signatures. • Unit 100% complete: includes parent/guardian signature; <u>does not</u> include site sponsor signature.
Partial = \$20.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 100% complete: <u>does not</u> include parent/guardian signature. • Unit 50% complete: includes parent/guardian and site sponsor signatures.
Incomplete = \$0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit less than 50% complete (even if unit includes parent/guardian and site sponsor signatures)

What to do if you are absent on portfolio visit days!

Planned Absences (e.g. sports games, field trips, etc.)	Unplanned Absences (e.g. sick, flat tire, abduction by aliens, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your binder to your site sponsor <u>before you leave</u>. UB staff will review your work, and you are eligible for a full \$40 stipend. • If you forget to leave your binder with your site sponsor before you leave but turn it in to your sponsor the <u>first day you return</u>, you are eligible for a \$20 maximum stipend (even if the unit is fully complete). If there are unforeseen problems with finishing your unit, <u>notify your site sponsor and/or UB staff immediately</u>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give your binder to your site sponsor <u>the day you return to school</u>. You are still eligible for a full \$40 stipend. • If you forget to give your binder to your site sponsor <u>the day you return</u>, you have <u>24 hours</u> to turn in your unit for a \$20 maximum stipend (even if the unit is fully complete). If there are unforeseen problems with finishing your unit, <u>notify your site sponsor and/or UB staff immediately</u>.

Upward Bound Contacts

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August / September 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with your counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate • Retake the ACT / SAT if needed (through late-fall)
October 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit colleges in-person or online • Apply to colleges • Make copies of all application materials for your records • Ask teachers/counselors to submit transcripts, letters of recommendations, and any other documents needed for your colleges
November 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill out the FAFSA on the Web” worksheet (www.fafsa.gov) so you are prepared to complete your FAFSA in January • Apply for scholarships • Keep your grades up!
December 2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your mail and email for acceptance notifications and financial aid offers • Keep applying for scholarships! • Gather income and tax information from your parents so you’re prepared to fill out the FAFSA
January 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet ALL financial aid deadlines • Continue to apply for scholarships! • Apply for the FAFSA online as soon as possible (www.fafsa.gov). Use the income estimator option if necessary. Ensure all information is correct for faster processing • Attend College Goal Sunday in your community for free help with the FAFSA (January or February)
February 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your grades up! • If you have already submitted your FAFSA (which you should have!), look for your SAR (Student Aid Report) to arrive by email. Make any corrections and resubmit ASAP • Meet college financial aid deadlines!
March 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promptly respond to colleges or scholarships when they request additional information • Compare financial aid award packages from colleges you applied to • Apply for a Summer Bridge program
April 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make your final college choice (if you already haven’t) and notify them of your acceptance. Congratulations! • Respond to financial aid award letters and let the college know which money you are accepting
May 2011: Graduate from HS. Congratulations! You did it!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange to have your final high school transcript sent to your chosen college and your Tribal Scholarship Office • Pay deposits (e.g. Enrollment, Housing and Meal Plan) or apply for waivers • Prepare for your Summer Bridge program • Consider finding a summer job
June 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report any changes to your financial situation to your college • Attend Summer Bridge program • Sign up to attend Freshmen Orientation (if you already haven’t)
July 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Freshmen Orientation (if you already haven’t) • Make final arrangements for housing, transportation, finances, etc.
August 2011
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move into your dorm, and begin classes – and your exciting, new life!

Personal Affirmation

At the beginning of each portfolio unit, you will include your personal affirmation. Much like Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, each of us has dreams, affirmations, and hopes for our lives. By writing down your goals and dreams, you make commitments to yourself, use positive self-talk, and figure out how to overcome obstacles that stand between you and your college education!

Write your affirmation by describing who you are – or strive to be! For example, you could say, "*I am an intelligent, committed, and creative daughter/son/student/young woman.*" **Choose 3 adjectives to describe you who are and strive to be.**

"I am a/an _____, _____, and _____."

(adjective) (adjective) (adjective) (your role)

Don't forget your affirmation – and your commitment to yourself. You will write it each month!

Step 1: Instructions

To finish this unit, **you will collect all materials for three postsecondary applications for admission.** You shouldn't let this requirement stop you from submitting more than three applications if you are interested in more than three schools.

Please complete the following steps:

1. Read the helpful hints and instructions for completing postsecondary admissions applications and college application essays (Step 2 below).
2. Collect **applications, transcripts, letters of recommendation, resume, fee waiver forms, test scores and any material required** for the postsecondary admissions process for three schools of your choosing. You should consider two-year community colleges, four-year universities, and technical as well as vocational schools. Most colleges/universities now utilize online applications – but you should be able to print pages and/or fill out websites, emails, or other information you gather.
 - Ask a counselor at your school or call the Upward Bound office if you need assistance getting these materials together.
 - Use the resume form enclosed with your packet to first fill out. This way you will have the information you need to create your own resume. Microsoft Word has many resume templates you can use: under "New document", scroll down through the "Templates", and click on "Resumes and CVs".
3. Please print all online applications prior to submission, and place a copy of all application materials for each of your postsecondary applications in your 3-ring portfolio binder.
4. Complete the "Important Dates to Remember" table.
5. Read the information about Summer Bridge programs, and find out if any of the colleges you applied to have bridge programs. If they do, you should apply! Application deadlines tend to be after January 2011.
6. Fill in the College/University Contact list in order to keep track of any information received from the colleges you are interested in attending.

Step 2: Helpful Hints and Instructions for Completing Postsecondary Admissions Applications

Use the school's website

Colleges now provide a wealth of information at their websites – from chatting online with an admissions counselor to taking a virtual tour of campus and reading current students' testimonials. Plan to spend time at each school's website, and look at the many options you have to get to know the university without even stepping foot on campus! Many also give you the option to request more information to be sent to your home, submit your email to subscribe to their mailing lists (highly recommended!), schedule an on-campus visit, etc.

Apply early

Competition is severe, and sometimes the early applications get preference in some form. Your submission of an early application means that you have made a commitment to attend if accepted. Apply early, and don't wait until the week before the deadline! Most universities use a January deadline but also have an "early consideration" deadline that is in the fall. Beat that deadline by at least two weeks. Make sure you know the deadline(s) for each school to which you are applying. Most applications also have a fee, so make sure to look for fee waivers if you need one.

Online applications

Most schools now require an online application, so be prepared for this, and know that you very well won't be able to fill out a paper copy by hand. Online applications can be quite easy, though, and often have the option to begin working on your application, save your information, and come back later to complete. You may also be able to print an application to fill out in advance, making your online submission faster when you go to fill out your online application.

Make sure your teacher, parent, friend, etc., proofread your application prior to sending. You never want an admissions office to see typos or incomplete sentences!

Make a lasting impression

When you submit an application, you are creating an impression of yourself. Admission offices do not know you, so you must get their attention. Some colleges are diversifying the admission process to allow for more creativity on applications, giving them a better sense of who an applicant is and whether or not he/she would make a good student at their college. For instance, Tufts University in Boston now allows students to create a 1-minute YouTube video, presenting themselves to the admissions department to include with their online application! Take advantage of any kind of option that allows you to distinguish your application from others, whether it is by an admissions essay or even a video!

Most schools look for balanced students

Here again image is everything. A balanced student is one who has community service, a work history, clubs and organization memberships, athletic interests and outside activities. Remember that participation in programs like Upward Bound is a great inclusion on college applications! Don't list everything you have done and make the list boring and repetitive, but include a balance of items that show your initiative and command of your own future and talents. Ask for help if you are unsure.

Ask only those teachers and counselors that know you well to write recommendation letters

If possible, make sure you see the letters beforehand. Ask each writer if he/she would mind giving you a copy for your files. Most will be glad to do so. One weak letter can make the difference between acceptance and rejection.

Follow up on your application

Most universities give you the option to follow up on your application once you submit it online. Continue to log in to your account to see where your application is in the review process. If you have any questions about the process, make sure to call/email the admissions office ASAP.

Never waive your rights to see any material that goes into your file

This goes without saying. You should make sure to have access to any materials in your application file.

Step 3: Helpful Hints and Instructions for Writing the College Application Essay

The essay is an important part of a college application. Here are a few insights on writing an essay from the people who read hundreds of them every year – college admission officers.

Use your voice

The essay is the living, breathing part of your application to a college. In the essay, you can speak in your own voice and personalize your application. Here's your opportunity to show something about you that doesn't really come across elsewhere in your application.

Try to step back and be reflective. Think about who you are as an individual: How do you view the world? What do you care about deeply? What experiences and people have been important in shaping you as a person? What are your aspirations in life? It is in such reflections that you can find your own, unique voice. That's the voice that will help you write an interesting essay.

Why do colleges require essays?

A college application includes a lot of information about you, such as grades, recommendations, lists of your extracurricular activities, and test scores. All of that information is very important and helps admissions officers form a picture of your accomplishments and abilities. However, while it tells about how other people see you, there isn't much about how you see yourself. It is that inside view – how you see yourself – colleges hope to find in your essay.

The essay also performs other functions, such as:

- The essay can be a way of showing that you have researched and thought carefully about the college to which you are applying. It shows, in your own words, why you and the college would be a good "match."
- An essay demonstrates your writing ability, which is a key component to success in college.
- In your essay, you can show that you are willing to put yourself into what you do. That kind of commitment is an important part of effective learning in college. It also shows the admissions committee that you are someone who is willing and able to be a contributing member of a community of learners.
- For selective colleges especially (where essays are usually required), the essay helps admission committees draw distinctions and make choices among applicants. An essay will rarely take an applicant out of consideration at a college, but it certainly can elevate an applicant in an admission committee's eyes.

Colleges are interested in finding out how you view yourself, and the essay helps them discover that.

The nuts and bolts of writing college application essays

Here are a few key points that admissions officers look for in an essay

- Make sure to answer the essay question and to follow all the instructions.
- Start off with a strong opening paragraph that captures the reader's interest. Admission committees often only have time to skim essays, so make sure you gain their attention from the beginning.
- Use a style that you find comfortable and that is appropriate for the subject matter.
- Use correct grammar, punctuation and spelling. Remember that mistakes, especially sloppy mistakes, make it look like you don't take the essay (and, by extension, the application) very seriously.
- Make a point and stick to it; develop your argument or narrative.

- Check all of your facts. Do you mention a date, a place, or an event in your essay? Make sure it's correct.
- Give your reader complete information so he or she won't be confused.
- In general, it is best to be succinct. If there is a recommended length for the essay, pay attention to it.
- If your essay is attached separately from your application, make sure it is neatly typed. Stay away from either extremely small or large fonts, as well as unprofessional-looking fonts. Several good fonts in their respective fonts for essays and any other schoolwork include (but are not limited to):
 - a. Times New Roman
 - b. Arial
 - c. Book Antiqua
 - d. Bookman Old Style
 - e. Palatino Linotype
 - f. Tahoma
 - g. Cambria

How to handle a topic

Often, you will be asked to write about an experience you've had, an achievement in your life, or someone who has been significant to you. Go beyond the "what" and dig into the how and why. For example:

- This is a personal essay, not a travelogue. So, if you're writing about a trip to another country, tell about how your experiences affected you, and why they were interesting or meaningful to you. In other words, the people reading the essay are interested in what makes you tick and how you got the way you are, not in how the trains run in Paris.
- Are you writing a tribute to your grandparents and their influence on your childhood? Be personal and specific, not just sentimental. Explain how the particular things your grandparents did or said were important to you.
- Did you overcome an athletic injury and recover to perform well? A description of the type of cast you wore and your rehab routine won't make a compelling essay. However, a reflection on what it felt like to watch your teammates, instead of play alongside them, just might be the ticket.

Good sources for essay topics

Does the application ask you to choose your own topic? Here are some places you might look for an essay topic:

- Do you have hobbies and non-school pursuits that really excite you and that engage your heart and mind? Writing about your out-of-classroom interests could help bring out a part of you that's not covered, or not covered completely and to your fullest advantage, elsewhere in your application.
- Is there a social cause that you support or with which you identify? Remember that an essay is not an academic paper, but a cause that you feel passionately about, and that has been in your thoughts and activities, might be the basis for a strong essay.
- Perhaps there is an event (local, national, or international) that has touched you in a personal way.
- Is there an academic subject that really sparks your interest? Why does that subject engage you? Has it led to experiences or study outside of school?

Try your best to present information about yourself that goes beyond the courses you took or your ACT score.

Possible pitfalls when writing an essay

- Humor can be risky, so be careful how you use it.
- "Honor code" rules are in effect when you write an essay, so do your own work, and don't make things up. As a practical matter, other items in the application, such as letters of recommendation, make it quite possible that the admission committee would find out if you weren't honest.

Some final tips

- Leave yourself time to revise. For a majority of students, this is not an easy assignment. Start early, and leave plenty of time. Give yourself weeks, not days – and certainly not hours! – to rewrite your essay.

- If your essay is longer than three pages (unless the instructions call for something longer), then it had better be interesting! Think hard about what you really want to focus on, and take out whatever gets away from your central point.
- The admissions committee will take your essay seriously. You should, too. You have a lot to gain by putting in the time and effort to write a good essay.

Important Dates to Remember			
	School #1 _____	School #2 _____	School #3 _____
Admissions due date(s) (priority, etc.)			
Institutional scholarship application due date for each school			
FAFSA deadline			
Housing application deadline (priority)			
Summer bridge program deadline (priority)			
Previews/orientation dates			

Refer back to this table often during the remainder of this year so you don't miss any important deadlines!

Step 5: Summer Bridge Programs

Summer bridge programs are designed to provide assistance to students entering college in the fall. The focus of summer bridge programs varies depending on the specific goals of each program. The main point of these types of programs is to retain the students they serve within higher education.

Summer bridge program activities range enormously. Some focus almost exclusively on academic support, such as writing, mathematics, and reading. Many contain study skills, such as time management, individual learning style, study strategies, and expectations for college work. Since students in summer bridge programs are often first-generation college students, a section on the goals of a liberal arts education or general education and discussions about college life is included. Career counseling is also found within the majority of programs, assisting students in expanding their vocational aspirations. Many programs contain a parent involvement component, since parental influence is strongly related to student success. Helping students to develop relationships on-campus is another goal. This is accomplished by introducing students to campus offices and potential mentors. Some summer bridge programs also add college credit as a component of the program, where participants both live on-campus and receive college credit for a class they take during the summer.

The populations served by summer bridge programs vary greatly. Some programs are specifically designed for minority, low-income, disabled, or first-generation students. Programs are also developed for students within particular majors, such as engineering. These summer bridge programs tend to have a very different curriculum focused on introducing lab work, understanding what it means to work in a science or math area, familiarizing students with group and problem-based learning and developing mentoring relationships.

A few of the summer bridge programs available at postsecondary institutions in Arizona are listed below. If the school you are planning to attend does not appear on this list, it does not mean that it does not have a summer bridge program. No matter what postsecondary school you are considering, you should contact the admissions office, and ask if they offer summer programs for entering freshman.

Arizona State University Summer Bridge Program

Website: <http://studentsuccess.asu.edu/bridge>
Email: summerbridge@asu.edu
Phone: (480) 965-9072
Address: ASU – University Academic Success Programs
Summer Bridge Program
400 E. Orange Street
Tempe, AZ, 85281

Central Arizona College Summer Bridge

Website: <http://www.centralaz.edu/x3012.xml>
Email: Muriel Thomas (muriel.thomas@centralaz.edu)
Phone: (520) 494-5010
Email: Santos Apodaca (Santos.Apodaca@centralaz.edu)
Phone: (520) 494-5448
Address: Central Arizona College
Student Support Programs/TRIO – Summer Bridge
8470 N. Overfield Road
Coolidge, AZ 85128

Northern Arizona University STAR Program

Website: <http://home.nau.edu/msc/star.asp>
Email: STARProgram@nau.edu
Jamie Patton (Jamie.patton@nau.edu)
Phone: (928) 523-5656
Address: Northern Arizona University - The STAR Program
PO Box 5677
Flagstaff, AZ 86011

University of Arizona New Start Summer Program

Website: <http://transitions.arizona.edu/NEWSTART>
Email: newstart@email.arizona.edu
Phone: (520) 621-5773
Address: The University of Arizona
Student Transitions - New Start Summer Program
Robert L. Nugent Bldg, 1212 E. University Blvd.
PO Box 210041
Tucson, AZ 85721-004

Step 6: Portfolio Unit Check list

Please keep track of what you have collected for your admissions process by checking off items on this list.

Application Packet Checklist			
	School #1	School #2	School #3
	_____	_____	_____
Date of admission application (print online version or include website/log in information, etc)			
Official high school transcript			
ACT/SAT test scores submitted			
Admission essay			
Resume			
Enrollment deposit waiver form			
Housing application			
Housing Deposit waiver form			
Meal Plan application			
Summer Bridge program application			
Orientation application			
Letters of Recommendation			

(Your Name) _____

(Street Address) _____

(City, State, Zip Code) _____

(Phone Number / Email Address) _____

Education

High School Name, City, State _____

Dates of attendance _____

Activities

(List volunteer experience, sports, clubs, etc as well as dates of involvement)

-
-

Achievements

(List academic and other achievements)

-
-

Skills

(List computer, language or other personal skills here)

-
-

Work Experience

(Company Name, Dates of Employment)

- (Job Title, description, responsibilities)

- _____

References

SENIOR PORTFOLIO MID-MONTH CHECK-IN SHEET September / Unit 13 • Postsecondary Admissions Applications

Student Name: _____

Directions: To obtain full credit complete this check-in sheet of your unit work.

- It is advisable that you take time to think of what portfolio work you need to complete between now and the day your portfolio is due, and get to work on it!
- Please circle the appropriate response and answer in complete sentences where asked.
- **Site Sponsor must sign Check – In Sheet by due date on the 1st page of your portfolio unit.** This is typically 1 week before your portfolio visit.

1. What parts of the unit have you completed?

- a) all of it
- b) half or more
- c) very little of it
- d) none of it

2. What parts of the unit do you still need to complete?

3. What part of this unit, if any, are you having difficulties with? Why?

4. What type of help do you need, if any, in order to complete unit by the due date?

FOR SITE SPONSOR TO COMPLETE:

Unit at least ½ complete: Y N

Site Sponsor Signature _____ Date _____

STUDENT GRADE CHECK

Instructions: Fill out this form. Obtain an estimate of your current grade from each of your teachers. He/she must sign and date next to each grade in the appropriate column. Include this form in your Portfolio Unit for review by Upward Bound staff at your next Portfolio visit.

Student's Name: _____

Name of Class	Grade	Teacher's Name (Printed)	Teacher's Signature	Date	Comments
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					

STUDENT: Please give an explanation for any grade that is a C or lower in the space provided below. Feel free to use an additional page if necessary.

