

June 2017

3rd – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

10th – ACT and ACT plus Writing

Graduating Seniors:

Thank teachers and others
who helped you

Thank scholarship providers

Have your final transcript sent
to your college

Summer 2017

Do Something Interesting

Job, internship, or community
service; summer program

Explore Colleges

Use websites, guidebooks,
virtual online tours and
on-campus tours and
interviews

Rising Seniors

Begin to work on Common
Application and other applica-
tions as they become available

Craft your essay

Narrow college list

Prepare for fall SATs and/or
ACTs

College tours & interviews

Underclassmen

Prepare for fall PSAT

August 2017

26th—SAT Reasoning & Subject Tests

Tips for Surviving Freshman Year of College

In just a couple of months or less, members of the senior class of 2017 will be departing for college. Here are a few tips to ease the transition.

- First impressions still count. The old saying, "You never get a second chance to make a first impression," still holds true. That doesn't mean you can't be yourself, but it does mean that if you're looking at college as an opportunity to reinvent yourself, don't wait until the end of freshman year.
- Be outgoing and meet as many people as you can. A lot of social connections are made during the first few weeks of school. Most students travel in herds and are open to meeting lots of people. Within a few weeks, students tend to find their initial friendship group, study buddies and cafeteria comrades. It is much easier to become part of a range of social groups at the beginning of the year than later on.
- Stretch yourself. Consider joining a variety of clubs and extracurricular activities. Participate in campus-wide activities and intramurals, and step outside your norm. Experiment a little. If you're an artist, try the Ultimate Frisbee team. If you've always been a jock, join the Save Darfur social action club.
- Explore. Check out areas of the college that you never saw on the campus tour, such as the local art museum, the fitness facility, the student health center, etc.
- Don't wait until a crisis occurs to meet your adviser. Set up an appointment early on. Ask about recommended courses in your anticipated major, student services, internships, jobs on campus, research and summer opportunities, as well as study-abroad programs.
- Be smart. OK, so this is the one parents worry about the most. Getting used to the freedom can be tough. Respect your own independence and make good decisions. Don't compare yourself to others, as in, "At least I read more than so-and-so." Compare yourself to what you want to be: "Is this what I expect of myself?"
- Be safe: Travel in groups, especially at night. Lock your bike -- always. Lock your room and make sure to secure your valuables. Attend parties with friends and agree that no one gets left behind. Watch out for each other.
- Strive for balance. Have fun, but don't go crazy.
- Take a deep breath. Things are unlikely to be perfect from the get-go, so give yourself some time to integrate and decide how you really want to spend your time. Try to figure out what will work for you and what will make you happy.
- Maintain regular contact with your parents. If you find yourself in a sticky situation, don't go it alone. Call your parents and ask for help or advice.

Career Paths for Meteorology Majors

- Weather Forecaster (non-media)
- Broadcast Media Weather Forecaster
- Forensic Meteorologist
- Climatologist
- Air Quality Meteorologist
- Developer of Meteorological instruments
- Research Meteorologist
- Educator

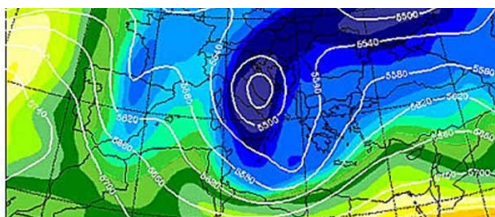
Meteorologists work in a large variety of settings. These include:

- Universities and schools
- Government
- National Weather Service
- National Aeronautics & Space Administration
- Research laboratories
- Renewable energy companies
- Department of Agriculture
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Private consulting firms
- Utility companies
- Private weather firms

Majoring in Meteorology

Have you ever wondered how tornadoes, blizzards and hurricanes are created? Do you have a strong interest in the ways that climate change affects our environment? Are you a curious person who enjoys applying science and math to analyzing and solving problems? If so, a career as a meteorologist may be a good match.

When you hear the word meteorologist, you may first think of the weather reporter on your local television station. However, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor, only 6% of professional meteorologists work in broadcasting. The largest percentage of meteorologists – 40% - are employed by private corporations including airlines, utility companies, agricultural concerns, and even by Wall Street trading firms. The largest single employer of meteorologists in the U.S. is the Federal government, which employs meteorologists in the National Weather Service, the military, and in other Federal agencies. Still other meteorologists conduct climate research and teach at universities. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the demand for atmospheric scientists, including meteorologists, will grow by 9% over the next ten years, faster than most other career categories.



Over 100 U.S. colleges offer undergraduate degrees in meteorology and related fields such as atmospheric sciences. As a meteorology major, you'll study how the atmosphere – the blanket of air that surrounds the Earth – affects the world's climate, weather and environment. Your classes will teach you how to analyze, model and apply data to make predictions about future weather and climate trends. You will also take classes in calculus,

physics, statistics, and computer science to prepare for your future career as a meteorologist.

While jobs for meteorologists are growing faster than the average, the number of students interested in this career is also growing, so expect competition for entry level jobs. Undergrads who actively seek out opportunities such as internships and research projects with faculty will improve their chances of landing a job after graduation. Since the National Weather Service (NWS) is the largest employer of entry level meteorologists, make sure your program aligns with the specific coursework the NWS requires of applicants. If you have a specific meteorologist career path in mind, take additional specialized courses in preparation. For example, if your dream is to become a broadcast meteorologist, take classes in journalism and broadcasting.

Although a Bachelor's degree is the requirement for many entry level jobs, a Master's or Doctorate degree can be necessary for career advancement. Some universities offer accelerated degree programs that allow students to complete both their Bachelor's and Master's degrees in meteorology or atmospheric sciences in just five years.

What salary can you expect as a meteorologist? According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the median annual wage for atmospheric scientists, including meteorologists, is \$89,820, with the highest 10% earning more than \$132,180. However, salaries vary depending on the type of industry, with meteorologists employed by the Federal government earning the highest median salaries.

Want to know more? You can learn more about meteorology careers and get a list of colleges with undergraduate meteorology programs at the American Meteorology Society website, www.ametsoc.org

Financial Matters: Legal and Financial Issues Before College



If your child has turned or will turn 18 before college begins, she is legally an adult, and you, her parent, lose the legal authority to make decisions on her behalf. That means that you have no legal right to see her grades, manage her finances (although you remain responsible for paying her college tuition), make medical decisions or speak with her doctor. So, before she goes off to college, consider asking her to sign some documents that will allow you to continue to help your child.

FERPA release: with your child's permission, you can speak with the college about her performance. Colleges often have their own FERPA releases, so ask your college for a copy.

HIPAA Authorization: allows you to access your child's health records and speak to her doctors.

Advance Care Directive for Health Care: allows you to act on your adult child's behalf in the event that she is incapacitated and unable to make decisions for herself.

Durable Power of Attorney: allows you to act on your adult child's behalf regarding legal or financial matters.

You can get the last three forms mentioned from your family lawyer. Having these in place while your child is away

at college may provide the whole family with extra peace of mind.

This is also a good time to address money management issues.

Set up a bank account that will allow you to easily transfer money to her account. Find out which banks have ATMs close to campus—college kids usually don't write many checks. Be sure to check on fees for using an ATM that's not part of your bank's network. Those fees can add up!

Make plans to protect student property. College kids tend to have a lot of valuable electronics and computer equipment. Renter's insurance can protect your investment if these items were to disappear. Your homeowner's policy might also cover dorm room possessions—check with your agent.

Writing Great College Essays

Start early. The more time you have, the less stress you'll feel. Even if your college list isn't 100% finalized yet, it's not too early to start thinking about your application essays.

Your essays are important, but essays are only a piece of what admission officers will consider. Do the best job possible with your essays, but an essay by itself – no matter how creative or well written – won't overcome an application that is weak in other areas. *All* parts of your application deserve attention and thought.

Your best idea may not be your first one. Staring at a blank computer screen can be intimidating, so it's tempting to jump on the first idea you have and start writing. Try to resist. The most powerful essay ideas often rise to the surface *after* the more obvious topic you think of first. Give other ideas time to percolate.

Stay true to yourself. The biggest mistake students make with essays is trying to write about a topic that they (or their parents) *think* colleges want to

hear about, rather than writing about something that the *student* is truly interested in or excited by. The result is usually an essay that sounds hollow and flat. Instead, look for your essay ideas in the experiences, people and events that matter most to *you*. Not only will your essays be easier to write, but they'll sound like you. And that is *exactly* what colleges are hoping to hear in your essays: **YOU**.

Be honest. College admissions officers are masters at spotting any form of plagiarism or essays written by someone other than the student. Your work should always be your own. At the same time, don't embellish or stretch the truth when telling your story. Once you do, it stops being *your* story.

Use a conversational tone...but don't get overly friendly. Your college essay shouldn't sound like an academic paper or a job application. It is OK to use a more conversational tone for application essays. On the other hand, your essay shouldn't be so infor-

mal that it sounds like you're posting on a friend's Facebook page.

Focus. Find your main topic, and stick to it. Keep asking yourself what information is truly essential to telling your story. Everything else can almost always go.

Be ready to edit and rewrite. Don't expect to write a masterpiece on your first try. A good college essay usually requires several edits and revisions to become a *great* college essay.

Ask for feedback, but be selective. When it comes to admission essays, the old adage holds true: too many cooks spoil the brew. While getting feedback from a few trusted advisors is essential, the more people who chime in with suggestions and ideas for your essay, the less likely that your own voice will shine through.

Proofread, proofread, proofread. Nothing kills an otherwise strong application faster than an essay riddled with spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors!

Applying Early Decision



Tutoring - College Counseling
Test Prep - Study Center

6700 Fallbrook Ave
Suite 101
West Hills, CA 91307

818.888.8665

SynergyAcademics.com

Jennifer@SynergyAcademics.com

Traditionally, college application deadlines were often in January. More recently, however, there has been a push for earlier applications, with admission programs that include Early Action, Early Action II, Early Decision I, Early Decision II and even a few Single Choice Early Action programs enticing applicants with the promise of earlier decisions and possibly better chances for admission. This more hurried approach has contributed to an increase in stress levels for many seniors.

Early Decision

Early Decision (ED) is a binding application program that has a November 1st or 15th deadline. Students are generally notified before Christmas whether they have been accepted, rejected or deferred to regular decision. Since it is binding, students who apply ED and are accepted must withdraw any other college applications. Students can apply ED to only one college, and the student's parents and Guidance Counselor must sign an agreement with the college confirming that the applicant has done so.

Early Decision can (the operative word here is "can") offer the applicant a significantly higher acceptance rate, depending upon the college. The 2017 edition of the Princeton Review's *The Best 381 Colleges* states that Elon University received 504 Early Decision applications and accepted 86%. Its regular decision acceptance rate is listed as 57%. If you love Elon and know deep-down that if you are

accepted that's where you'd love to go, then applying Early Decision and knowing within six weeks is a very good thing. Davidson College had a 22% acceptance rate for regular decision but that jumped to 48% for ED. Not all colleges, however, are so generous in their ED offers. In the 2015-2016 cycle, Rice University received 1,389 ED applications and accepted 20%. Their regular decision acceptance rate was 16%, so applying ED provided a boost of only 4%.

When students apply ED, they are a captive audience. The college doesn't have to wonder where else they're applying or if they'll enroll if accepted. A college's yield is the number of students that say "yes" to the college's offer of admission. Colleges are often evaluated on their yield percentage and ED applicants increase the yield. Many colleges fill as much as half their incoming class with ED candidates. The regular decision pool then becomes more competitive because the college will frequently look to balance the class, i.e., they may need more theatre majors, more students from Kansas or more soccer players. If a student has applied ED, she is saying it's her first choice. *The biggest downside of ED* is that students are unable to compare financial aid offers, which are typically made in March.

A word of caution: don't get caught in the trap of "I'm applying Early Decision somewhere, I just don't know where." Apply ED only if you can convincingly declare your love and commitment to becoming a student at that college.