

# UNIONDALE HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE INFORMATION NEWSLETTER

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## THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR COLLEGE BOUND STUDENTS IN THE FALL 2020

If you're waiting until the last minute to make a decision about college, you're in good company— so are many of your peers. No one is sure what the college experience this fall will look like. But experts say it's still the way to go in most cases.

Pay attention to your prospective school's deadline for making a decision and adhere to it. Currently enrolled students have a longer window to send in a deposit — usually up to the first week of classes. If you change your mind, you will likely forfeit any deposit you make now.

This is a financial decision, too. Experts say you should not expect your school to lower tuition for any online courses you take since you'll still earn the same degree credits. But there are opportunities to cut costs in the fall — and lower the amount of debt you take on overall.

The real variables are the school you choose, the amount of financial aid available and your living expenses.

As you make a decision, think about how well your courses might translate to online learning and if you're someone who learns well that way. Would a cheaper school, or one closer to home, make sense? Does your financial aid picture change if you attend remotely? Do you have a way to pay for food and shelter if you're not on campus? Would taking a break harm your chances of finishing school?

Here are possible choices for fall 2020:

### 1. Attend college remotely

Your college may choose online-only instruction, or you might decide to attend classes remotely even if the campus opens. Remote learning could be a good opportunity to continue your coursework at a fraction of the cost since you won't pay for room and board. But an online-only model may not work for you if your degree requires in-person interaction, like lab or fieldwork.

Here's what to consider if you switch to distance learning:

- \* What resources or technology you'll need to transition to successful online learning — and if you'll need help paying for them.
- \* What degree coursework you can

more easily complete remotely, such as core classes.

- \* If your financial aid award included work-study, which could limit your remote options.
- \* Your confidence in the quality of online coursework at your school.

### 2. Live on campus

Schools may reopen, but with modifications you're not used to or new requirements, like COVID-19 testing, distancing in classrooms and reduced occupancy in dorms, experts say. Even if your college says it's opening for in-person instruction, that can shift in a heartbeat.

Here's what to consider if you head back to campus:

- \* Potential challenges of social distancing in a crowded campus environment.
- \* Whether you're prepared for a switch to remote or hybrid learning if there's a shutdown in your area.
- \* Whether your school will supply a prorated refund on room and board if it closes early.

### 3. Take a gap year

Taking a gap year essentially means putting off enrollment. Often, many colleges will offer official deferment to incoming and current students to postpone attendance for a year without losing their spot. But students who choose to do it usually take a gap year to travel, intern or volunteer. Many of those options won't be available this time around.

Here's what to consider if you decide to take a semester or year off:

- \* Your school's deferred-enrollment policy and deadlines.
- \* How you'll spend the year if you don't take classes.
- \* Whether you already have student loans. If so, repayment will begin six months after leaving school. Contact your lender or servicer to find out your options to defer or lower payments.

### 4. Attend a community college, then transfer

An inexpensive option would be to attend a community college that's functioning online or in person. This is a good option if

you're uncertain about your school opening its doors in the fall and you're in your first two years of school.

You can usually knock out a few requisite courses for less money, then transfer in the spring or fall 2021 semesters.

Here's what to consider if you attend a community college:

- \* If credits will transfer to the school you plan to attend or if the credits you already earned are accepted by the community college.
- \* Your enrollment status. If you're not attending college at least half-time, it may be difficult to get a loan, since federal loans and most private lenders require at least half-time attendance. If you are not enrolled at least half-time and already have student loans, expect repayment to begin.

What can you be doing now? Make a decision as soon as you can. Keep a close eye on communications from your school. If what's holding you back from making a decision is the financial strain, especially if your family's income has changed, there are options available to get more financial aid. Contact your college aid office about how to file an appeal. You should also update the Free Application for Federal Student Aid to reflect your family's current finances. And ask if any deferred payment options are available. While you're in school, emergency aid help may be available to help you meet financial challenges. Ask what options exist at your school.

Here's a link to a List of Colleges' Plans for Reopening in the Fall whether it will be in person or a hybrid model:

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Here-s-a-List-of-Colleges-/248626>

## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2020!

*When this is over,  
May we never again  
Take for granted  
A handshake with a stranger  
Full shelves at the store  
Conversations with neighbors  
A crowded theatre  
Friday night out  
The taste of communion  
A routine checkup  
The school rush each morning  
Coffee with a friend  
The stadium roaring  
Each deep breath  
A boring Tuesday  
Life itself.  
When this ends,  
May we find  
That we have become  
More like the people  
We wanted to be  
We were called to be  
We hoped to be  
And may we stay  
That way— better  
For each other  
Because of the worst.*

*By Laura Kelly Fanucci*



## WHAT JUNIORS CAN BE DOING DURING THE SUMMER OF 2020...

### Virtual College Tours

If you've had your spring college tour plans derailed, and you're a little bit worried about this summer too, it's probably time to take some virtual college tours. There is no question that the college search for current high school juniors is going to be a little bit different. Doing a campus virtual tour can be a great way to begin, in lieu of visiting in person. Here are a couple of websites that are very user friendly:

- \* <https://campustours.com/>
- \* <https://www.ecampustours.com/>
- \* <https://www.youniversitytv.com/>
- \* <https://www.youvisit.com/>

### Naviance

Naviance is an excellent tool for Juniors to work on this summer. You will need it as a senior to help with your college planning and requesting your teachers for letters of recommendations. The link and instructions on how to utilize Naviance is on the Uniondale High School website:

[https://uhs.uniondaleschools.org/groups/64289/library\\_test\\_group/guidance](https://uhs.uniondaleschools.org/groups/64289/library_test_group/guidance)

### Online SAT & ACT Test Prep

Please see the Uniondale High School website for several suggestions regarding SAT & ACT prepping. Method Test Prep is one of the tools that will assist in preparation for these exams. Please utilize the website and you should be practicing 15 to 20 minutes 2—3 times a week. The link is as follows:

[https://uhs.uniondaleschools.org/groups/64289/library\\_test\\_group/guidance](https://uhs.uniondaleschools.org/groups/64289/library_test_group/guidance)

Additionally, here is the code to utilize Method Test Prep: **TKN.12970072**

### College Essay Writing

Most selective colleges require you to submit an essay or personal statement as part of your application. Here are some tips for a stellar college application essay:

**1. Write about something that's important to you.** It could be an experience, a person, a book—anything that has had an impact on your life.

**2. Don't just recount—reflect!** Anyone can write about how they won the big game or the summer they spent in Rome. When recalling these events, you need to give more than the play-by-play or itinerary. Describe what you learned from the experience and how it changed you.

**3. Being funny is tough.** A student who can make an admissions officer laugh never gets lost in the shuffle. But beware. What you think is funny and what an adult working in a college thinks is funny are probably different. We caution against one-liners, limericks and anything off-color.

**4. Start early and write several drafts.**

Set it aside for a few days and read it again. Put yourself in the shoes of an admissions officer: Is the essay interesting? Do the ideas flow logically? Does it reveal something about the applicant? Is

it written in the applicant's own voice?

**5. No repeats.**

What you write in your application essay or personal statement should not contradict any other part of your application—nor should it repeat it. This isn't the place to list your awards or discuss your grades or test scores.

**6. Answer the question being asked.**

Don't reuse an answer to a similar question from another application.

**7. Have at least one other person edit your essay.**

A teacher or college counselor is your best resource. And before you send it off, check, check again, and then triple check to make sure your essay is free of spelling or grammar errors.

### SAT & ACT Test Dates

Please visit the following websites for all current information regarding the test dates and registration:

### SAT

<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

### ACT

<https://www.act.org/>