HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT COLLEGE FOR YOU
Choosing where to go to college is a big decision, but it doesn’t have to be a stressful one! The information in this booklet will help you figure out what to keep in mind as you begin your college search, how to navigate the application process and how to pay for school once you decide.

By following the Timeline for Success on pages 10-11, you’ll find the right college for you and be prepared before you step foot on campus.

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Why Go to College?
A college education is the key to the kind of life you want. College graduates earn more money and have access to a wider range of job opportunities. Even if you’re not sure about what you want to study, you’ll be able to pursue your interests through various clubs and activities and find a career direction. You also could discover a talent waiting to grow.

U.S. Mean Annual Earnings by Education Level

No High School Diploma: $25,636
High School Diploma: $35,256
Bachelor’s Degree: $59,124
Advanced Degree: $69,732

Choosing a College

Universities are as different as people. Each one has its own personality, size and shape. Taking a tour is the best way to get a feel for each campus. You may discover that you prefer a smaller campus or learn that you love the activity of a larger university. The only way to find out is to try it on for size.

Some of the things you’ll want to think about as you tour colleges are:

**Location**

How far from home will I be? What entertainment, internship and job opportunities are available in town? There are pros and cons to consider when it comes to the city where you’ll attend college. Things like climate, cost of living and crime rate are just a few things you should think about.

UNT is located in Denton, a progressive city of about 131,000 people, and one of the nation’s fastest growing cities. Denton is part of one of the nation’s largest metropolitan areas, Dallas-Fort Worth.

**Size**

How big is the campus? How many students attend? How many residence halls are available? The size of the colleges you’re looking at makes a big difference in whether it will fit your needs.

UNT’s 900-acre campus offers its nearly 38,000 students the best environment in the region to pursue learning, research and creativity. The vibrant campus has 15 residence halls, Mean Green Village with its Athletic Center and surrounding athletic fields, and the 300-acre Discovery Park research facility. Student and faculty art galleries and premier award-winning musical performance spaces provide cultural experiences for the campus and the North Texas region.

**Majors**

What degree programs are offered? Are there plenty of options if I want to change my major? Every university’s degree program choices are a little different. It’s important to find out if the colleges you’re interested in offer your major and can help you meet your goals. If you’re undecided about a major, make sure the college offers a broad range of options for students trying to figure it out.

UNT offers 100 bachelor’s, 83 master’s and 37 doctoral degree programs. Some of UNT’s unique program choices include Aviation Logistics, Computer Gaming, Criminal Justice, Ecology for Environmental Science and Rehabilitation Studies.

**Cost**

How much does it cost to attend? What financial aid and scholarship options do I have to help me afford it? Let’s face it — college isn’t free. But financial aid, scholarships, campus employment and other funding options are available to help you get your degree — without racking up serious debt.

UNT provides the quality of a private university at an affordable cost. We also offer an innovative solution to rising tuition costs with the Eagle Express Tuition Plan, which locks in your tuition for four years, helping you better plan for college expenses. UNT students receive financial aid and scholarships totaling $350 million annually.

**Campus Life**

The main idea is to get a degree, but you can’t study all the time! Clubs and organizations are an important way to make friends, relieve stress and have fun. What clubs are offered that interest you? What kind of athletics program does the college have? What about concerts, plays and other entertainment on campus?

UNT has 400 student organizations, including many intercultural organizations and 39 fraternities and sororities. Leadership and training opportunities are abundant. UNT competes in Conference USA. With seating for 31,000 fans, UNT’s Apogee Stadium has eco-friendly features unlike any collegiate football venue in the nation.

**Support Services**

Look for availability of services and resources that will help you thrive, such as health centers, computer labs, libraries, academic and personal counseling and tutoring.

UNT’s Health and Wellness Center doctors can help you when you’re feeling sick and also provide services such as X-rays, lab tests and prescription refills. The center also has the first full-service optical office located on any college campus in the state. Need to pull an all-nighter to write a paper? UNT has 13 computer labs, including one open 24 hours.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Factor</th>
<th>University of North Texas</th>
<th>College A</th>
<th>College B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Denton; about 40 miles north of Dallas–Fort Worth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>Nearly 38,000 students — most comprehensive in the North Texas region</td>
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<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>100 bachelor’s degree programs, many nationally recognized; special counselors for undecided majors; graduate study available</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>State-assisted with low mandatory fees; Eagle Express Tuition Plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>NCAA Division I athletics; UNT’s Apogee Stadium; intramural sports; 400 student organizations</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td>Friendly, helpful staff; enrollment services grouped in one building (Eagle Student Services Center)</td>
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</table>
Applying to College
Most students apply between August and December of their senior year. It’s best to apply as early as possible so that more scholarships are available and you have more options for orientation dates and housing preferences.

How Do I Apply?
Here’s the application process for most universities:

- Submit your application for admission (www.applytexas.org for Texas residents, commonapp.org for nonresidents)
- Submit official transcripts
- Supply your class rank
- Send entrance exam scores (SAT or ACT)
- Pay the application fee
- Some schools may also require an essay, interview or references

Make sure you fill out your application completely and have someone check your work — it’s really important! And plan ahead so you don’t miss priority dates. If you have questions, ask your high school counselor or call the college admissions office.

The college application, transcripts and entrance exam scores are due to the UNT Office of Admissions by March 1 for the fall semester. Late applications will still be accepted, but will be subject to a late fee.

Admissions Policy:
Admission requirements vary if you’re comparing Texas universities with out-of-state schools. Visit admissions.unt.edu/freshman/admission-requirements for detailed information.

### UNT Admission Requirements by high school class ranking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>Old SAT (prior to March 2016)**</th>
<th>New SAT (March 2016 and after)**</th>
<th>ACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOP 10%</strong></td>
<td>no minimum score*</td>
<td>no minimum score*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NEXT 15%</strong></td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2ND QTR.</td>
<td>1050</td>
<td>1130</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3RD QTR.</td>
<td>1180</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Although no minimum scores are required, you must still submit your scores.
** Combined Critical Reading/Verbal + Math on the SAT administered prior to March 2016. After March 2016, the score will consist of the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing section + Math section.

College entrance exams and placement tests
College entrance exams, and for some, placement tests are a part of your college application. The SAT and ACT are the most common entrance exams, and at least one is generally a required part of your application for admission. You may not need to take both — check each school’s admissions requirements.

The CLEP and Advanced Placement (AP) tests enable you to get a jumpstart on your college course load, allowing you to finish school quicker and save money.

- **SAT**
  - What is it? The most widely accepted college entrance exam
  - What’s the difference? Evidence-based reading and writing, and math
  - More information: collegeboard.com

- **ACT**
  - What is it? Alternative college entrance exam
  - What’s the difference? English, math, reading and science reasoning
  - More information: actstudent.org

- **CLEP tests**
  - What is it? Tests your knowledge in certain subjects
  - What’s the difference? 33 exams on different topics, may allow you to “place out” of some college courses
  - More information: clep.collegeboard.org

- **AP tests**
  - What is it? You can complete some college coursework while still in high school
  - What’s the difference? More than 30 courses/exams, may give you course credit in that subject when you enroll in college
  - More information: apstudent.collegeboard.org
**Timeline for Success**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>8TH grade</th>
<th>9TH grade</th>
<th>10TH grade</th>
<th>11TH grade</th>
<th>12TH grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Talk to your teachers about high school courses that will prepare you for college.</td>
<td>Take courses such as Geometry and Algebra. Studies show that students who take these courses early are more likely to go on to college.</td>
<td>Take Advanced Placement (AP) courses.</td>
<td>Attend a college fair and begin gathering information on colleges you’re considering.</td>
<td>Retake the ACT and/or SAT exam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop good study and organizational skills.</td>
<td>Take courses such as Geometry and Algebra. Studies show that students who take these courses early are more likely to go on to college.</td>
<td>Take part in school clubs and organizations or a summer camp program.</td>
<td>Take the PSAT.</td>
<td>Narrow your list of potential colleges and take a campus tour if you haven’t already.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Take the ACT and/or SAT exam.</td>
<td>Make sure you are aware of the application deadlines for the schools on your short list.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What’s a Transcript?</td>
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As part of the application process, you will need to request an official transcript, or record of your grades, from your high school to be sent to the college(s) of your choice. If you have graduated, your transcript will list your class rank and grade point average (GPA). You may have to pay a small fee for each official transcript; unofficial transcripts or photocopies are not acceptable because of the possibility of grade tampering.
Paying for College

Where Do I Start?

Your education is one of the most important investments you’ll ever make. Knowing what costs to expect and what funding options are available is key to figuring out which college is best for you. College costs should not be a barrier to opportunity. You have options!

UNT offers you an innovative solution to rising college costs with the Eagle Express Tuition Plan. With Eagle Express, you can lock in your total academic costs for four years, earn your bachelor’s degree sooner and save up to $3,000 when you graduate on time. Learn more at unt.edu/eagleexpress.

Financial Aid

Many students receive financial aid to help pay for college. As early as October of your senior year, you and a parent should fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA determines your eligibility to receive aid.

To apply for federal aid (including grants and loans) you need to complete the FAFSA at fafsa.ed.gov. Some universities may require you to complete additional financial aid forms.

Loans

Many types of loans are available to students and their parents to help pay for college, including federal, state and private loan programs. Borrowing for your education is a serious commitment. Talk to your parents about your options and how you plan on repaying your college loans.

Scholarships

In addition to financial aid, you can apply for scholarships to help cover costs. Merit-based, need-based and athletic-based scholarships are usually available. Check with the college financial aid office for scholarship information. In addition to scholarships awarded by the college you attend, many businesses, churches, foundations and community organizations offer scholarship funding. Your high school counselor and teachers can help you find these scholarships. There’s also some great information at gentx.org/financialaid.

Grants

The best news about grants is that they don’t have to be repaid! Your eligibility to receive grants is based on your FAFSA application. There are many types of grants available. Here are a few common ones:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Texas Public Education Grant

Student Employment

Getting a job on or off campus is another way to afford your education. An added bonus for on-campus jobs is that you can walk to work! Most colleges offer student employment for administrative, research and technical tasks. You could work in an office on campus, assist a professor or work in a residence hall or a campus cafeteria. Check with the college student employment office for details.

About 80 percent of UNT students work while in school. UNT’s Career Center helps 11,200 students find on-campus and off-campus employment each year. The Student Money Management Center provides workshops and confidential, personalized counseling sessions to help students manage their finances.
Helpful Websites

**aie.org**
The Adventures in Education site offers resources on a range of higher education topics such as studying for entrance exams, filling out your college application and how to budget for college costs.

**apply.unt.edu**
Discover all that UNT has to offer, from our 220 high-quality degree programs to our NCAA Division I Mean Green football team.

**careeroneshop.org**
Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, this website provides tools to help you explore careers and match your strengths with occupations.

**collegeboard.org**
This website offers resources to help you prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success.

**comparecollegec.com**
Compare College TX is a mobile-friendly, interactive website targeted to parents, students and high school advisors to help answer questions that matter most to prospective students.

**financialaid.unt.edu**
Learn the financial aid basics for UNT and how to apply for it and various scholarships.

**gentx.org**
Generation TX brings students, parents, teachers and community leaders together to support this generation of Texas students by offering guidance on the steps to take on the path to college and career success.

**howtochoose.unt.edu**
Find all of the helpful information in this booklet online! You can also download a digital copy so you have access to it anywhere, anytime.

**tgslc.org**
TG offers resources to help students and families plan and prepare for college, learn the basics of money management and repay their federal student loans.

**tours.unt.edu**
Touring the UNT campus is a great way for you to learn a lot about us in a short amount of time and you’ll get information directly from our experts — current UNT students!

**NOTES**

Most college graduates earn about $1 million more in their lifetime than people without a bachelor’s degree.
Glossary of Terms

You'll see many of these terms as you choose a college. The definitions may vary slightly.

Accreditation: An endorsement given to universities or academic degree programs by an organization that reviews qualifications.

Associate degree: A two-year degree from a community or junior college.

Audit: To attend a class without receiving credit for the class.

Bachelor's degree: A four-year degree from a college, university or professional school; usually requires at least 120 credit hours.

Church-affiliated university: Some private colleges have a religious affiliation. Students at these colleges often must attend chapel or religious classes of some kind.

Community college: Two-year college also known as junior college. You can either transfer your courses to a four-year university or receive an associate degree in a certain field.

Course numbers: Numbers assigned to specific classes.

Credit hour: Credit given for attending one lecture hour of class each week for 15 weeks or equivalent. Most college classes are three credit hours, meaning their total meeting time for a week is three hours.

Degree: A certificate of completion of a course of study.

Degree plan: A specific list of required courses and electives to be completed for a degree.

Doctoral degree: The most advanced degree that can be earned.

Fees: Course-related costs to attend college.

Four-year university: Four-year colleges award bachelor's degrees. Many offer graduate-level courses leading to master's and doctoral degrees.

Freshman: A student who has completed fewer than 30 hours of college credit.

Full time: 12 or more credit hours per semester for undergraduate students.

GPA: Grade point average; the average of your class grades, generally based on a 4.0 scale.

Grants: Financial assistance that does not require repayment.

Half time: Six credit hours per semester for undergraduate students.

Internship: A job in a student’s field of study; may be required in some academic programs and may include salary and college credit.

Loans: Financial assistance that must be repaid.

Major: A student’s concentrated field of study.

Master's degree: A graduate degree that usually requires two or more years of study beyond the bachelor’s degree.

Minor: A student’s secondary field of study.

Minority-serving institution: Colleges or universities whose primary mission is to serve African American, Hispanic, American Indian or Asian American/Pacific Islander students.

Nonresident: Any student who lives out of state or does not meet specific state residency requirements.

Online courses: Classes held online instead of in a traditional classroom.

Prerequisite: A course that must be taken prior to enrollment in another course.

Private university: A non-state-assisted college or university that relies on private funding, tuition and fees.

Public university: A college or university that receives funding from the state, lowering costs students pay.

Registration: Enrollment in classes.

Resident: A student who meets state residency requirements.

Rolling admission: A policy in which a college's admissions office sends out acceptance letters to students as they are accepted.

Scholarships: Financial assistance based on merit; do not require repayment.

Semester hour: See Credit hour.

Senior: A student who has completed 90 or more hours of college credit but has not received a bachelor’s degree.

Sophomore: A student who has completed 30 to 59 college credit hours.

Summer session: A summer term of about six weeks.

Three-quarter time: Nine credit hours for undergraduate students.

Tuition: Costs for courses, not including certain fees.

Undergraduate: A student at a college or university who has not yet earned a bachelor’s degree.

Web-based classes: See Online courses.

Web registration: Online registration for classes.

Work-study program: A federal financial aid program that allows students to work on campus.