HOW TO
CHOOSE
THE RIGHT COLLEGE
FOR YOU

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UNT
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howtochoose.unt.edu

This publication is provided as a courtesy by the University of North Texas, created by the Division of University Relations, Communications and Marketing.
Choosing the right college doesn’t have to be stressful.

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 find the perfect fit for you.

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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: $27,040
High School Diploma: $37,024
Bachelor’s Degree: $60,996
Advanced Degree: $72,852


Did You Know?

The value of a college degree goes beyond job training and potential earnings.

Studies show college graduates are happier and healthier than those who did not attend college.
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 atmosphere 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 133,000 people, and one of the nation’s fastest growing cities. Denton is also a part of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the nation’s best job market according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

**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 38,000 students the best environment in the region to pursue learning, research and creativity. The vibrant campus has 14 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 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 105 bachelor’s, 88 master’s and 37 doctoral degree programs. Some of UNT’s unique program choices include Aviation Logistics, Criminal Justice, Ecology for Environmental Science and Rehabilitation Studies.

**Support Services**
- What do I do if I get sick?
- What if I need extra help in one of my classes?

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. Need to pull an all-nighter to write a paper? UNT has 14 computer labs, including one open 24 hours.

**Campus Life**
- 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?

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.

UNT has 400 student organizations, including many intercultural organizations and 40 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.

**Campus Tours**
UNT’s Eagle Ambassador tour guides provide an honest student perspective and give you plenty of opportunities to ask questions. This half tram/half walking tour covers about 70 percent of campus, including academic areas, student life, student services, a cafeteria and the recreation center. Visit tours.unt.edu or call 940-565-4104 to schedule your campus visit.

**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. That’s why we’ve been named one of America’s 100 Best College Buys® for 22 years, and a Best College by Money magazine. UNT students receive financial aid and scholarships totaling $380 million annually.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice Factor</th>
<th>University of North Texas</th>
<th>College B</th>
<th>College C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Denton, a Top 10 Best College Town in the U.S.; about 40 miles north of Dallas and Fort Worth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size</td>
<td>38,000 students — most comprehensive university in the North Texas region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>105 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; named a Best Public College for Lowest Student Loan Debt in the nation by lendedu.com</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Life</td>
<td>16 NCAA Division I athletic teams; UNT’s Apogee Stadium; intramural sports; 400 student organizations; ranked among the top 50 safest large universities in the nation by CollegeChoice.net</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Services</td>
<td>Friendly, helpful staff; enrollment services grouped in one building (Eagle Student Services Center)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES**

Colleges come in different “types” such as community or technical college, public, private, church-affiliated and minority-serving. For definitions of these types of colleges, see the glossary of terms on pages 14-15.
How do I apply?
Here’s the application process for most universities:

• Learn the admission requirements for the schools you’d like to attend. Requirements may vary if you're comparing Texas universities with out-of-state schools.
• Submit your application for admission at www.applytexas.org. If preferred, you can apply with the Common App at commonapp.org.
• 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. Applications will still be accepted after this date, but will be subject to a late fee.

Visit admissions.unt.edu for more detailed information about the UNT admissions process.

UNT Admission Requirements by high school class ranking:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Rank</th>
<th>New SAT (March 2016 and after)</th>
<th>ACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top 10%</td>
<td>no minimum score*</td>
<td>no minimum score*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next 15%</td>
<td>1030</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Qtr.</td>
<td>1130</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Qtr.</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Although no minimum scores are required, you must still submit your scores.

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?
College-level exams that may allow you to “place out” of some college courses
What’s the difference?
33 exams on different topics so you can earn college credit and finish your degree faster
More information clep.collegeboard.com

AP Tests
What is it?
Advanced Placement (AP) courses/exams that allow you to earn college credit while you're in high school
What’s the difference?
Nearly 40 exams offered and AP college credit is accepted by most universities worldwide
More information apstudent.collegeboard.com
### Timelines for Success

#### 8th Grade
- Talk to your teachers about high school courses that will prepare you for college.
- Develop good study and organizational skills.
- Take a foreign language course.
- Discover new talents by trying out extracurricular clubs or activities.

#### 9th Grade
- Take courses such as Geometry and Algebra.
- Studies show that students who take these courses early are more likely to go on to college.
- Begin reading about possible careers in different fields.
- Explore topics that interest you!
- Meet with your school counselor and discuss your desire to attend college.
- Take AP courses.
- Take part in school clubs and organizations or a summer camp program.

#### 10th Grade
- Attend a college fair and begin gathering information on colleges you're considering.
- Take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT).
- Meet with your school counselor and discuss your desire to attend college.
- Begin taking campus tours of the universities that interest you.
- Take the ACT and/or SAT exam.

#### 11th Grade
- Retake the ACT and/or SAT exam if needed.
- Narrow your list of potential colleges and take a campus tour if you haven't already.
- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Apply for scholarships.

#### 12th Grade
- Make sure you are aware of the application deadlines for the schools on your short list.

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### AP Courses + Exploring Careers + Being a Leader + SAT/ACT = Success

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### What's a Transcript?

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.
**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.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. Many businesses, churches, foundations and community organizations offer scholarship funding as well. Your high school counselor and teachers can help you find these scholarships. There’s also some great information at gentx.org/financialaid.

UNT annually awards $380 million in financial aid, including more than $49 million in scholarships. Scholarship and other financial aid information can be found at financialaid.unt.edu.

**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 campus cafeteria. Check with the college student employment office for details.

UNT’s Career Center helps students find jobs and internships with nearly 20,000 opportunities posted online annually. In addition, more than 5,000 students are employed on campus each semester. The award-winning Student Money Management Center provides workshops and confidential, personalized counseling sessions to help students manage their finances.

**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!
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.

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’s 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.

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

Junior
A student who has completed 60 to 89 college credit hours.

Junior college
See community college.

Loans
Financial assistance that must be repaid.

Major
A student’s concentrated field of study.

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.

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.
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 230 high-quality degree programs to our NCAA Division I football team. Go Mean Green!

careeronestop.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 success.

comparecollege.tx.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

Did You Know?
Most college graduates earn about $1 million more in their lifetime than people without a bachelor’s degree.