

# Newsletter

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## June/July Calendar

- Sign up for Fall SAT & ACT tests
- June ACT scores now available
- AP scores available in July



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## Do Colleges Superscore ACT & SAT Equally?

More colleges superscore the SAT than the ACT. However, increasing numbers of colleges are beginning to superscore the ACT. What exactly is superscoring?

The SAT has 3 scoring components—critical reading, math and writing. As many students are aware, if they take the SAT more than once, colleges will take the highest score of each section from all test dates to arrive at the SAT score used for admissions. This is known as superscoring.

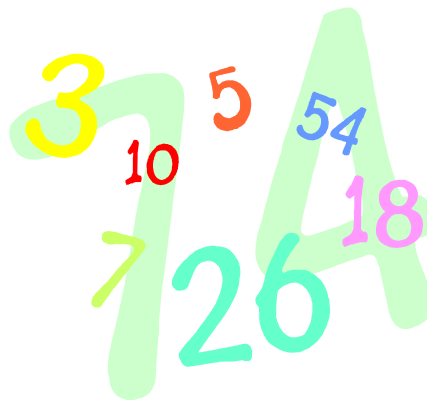
The ACT has 4 test components and a composite score for all 4 parts. Many colleges

use the composite score for admission purposes. However, more colleges are beginning to superscore the ACT to arrive at a new composite score, taking the best score of each section from different test dates to arrive at this new composite score.

This is a fluid situation. Thus, it is in the student's best interest in most instances to send all test scores to their colleges.

One of the major college exceptions to any type of superscoring is the University of California (UC). The UC

campuses use the highest total score on a particular test date.



## Common Application Delays Start Date

Traditionally, Common Application has launched its new application on July 1st. This year, students cannot begin the common application for Fall applications until August 1st. While

some are disappointed by the month delay, there are plenty of application items that a student can work on during the summer without having the application available (e.g., essays and re-

sume). The essays will remain the same, and there is a preview of the new application on the common application website at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).

# The Perfect Test Preparation

Frequently, families request advice concerning the best test preparation available. The answer to this question is almost always dependent upon the individual student.

There is evidence that test preparation does help improve scores, but much of the improvement depends upon the student's motivation, the quality of the tutor match, and/or the student's effort.

For the highly motivated and well disciplined student who tests well,

the least expensive method is test prep books which can be purchased at most bookstores. These offer flexibility in terms of time, but great commitment. These students may also benefit from online courses, which may offer the added benefit of more thorough preparation than that afforded by a book.

For students who require more structure, there are live lecture courses and private tutoring. Generally, courses

that have multiple students are less expensive than private tutoring. However, they might provide the potential for distraction, lack inconvenient scheduling, and contain less personalized instruction.

Private tutoring can make up for the faults of classroom test preparation.

However, the tutor match and qualifications are key, practice tests essential, and student effort is still required.



## *Accelerated Bachelor Degree Programs*

An accelerated bachelor program is gaining traction in higher education. Recently, I visited Southern Oregon University, where I learned that it offers 3-year accelerated programs in numerous majors. As students and their families look to decrease the cost of a college education, more are inquiring about such programs. Some of the other colleges offering such programs include:

- Bates College
- Boston College
- Franklin & Marshall
- Seattle University
- Carroll College
- Ball State
- Rhode Island College
- U of North Carolina-Greensboro
- Hartwick College
- Southern New Hampshire



## **University of Washington Announces Change in Admissions Policy**

The University of Washington, Seattle campus, will be moving from a rolling admissions policy to a pooling admissions process. A pooling admissions process means that admissions decisions will not be finalized or communicated to applicants until all applications have been received and assessed. The decision was made due to the increasing number of freshman applications which has put a strain on the admissions office. The hope is that a set deadline for applications and decisions will also reduce student anxiety concerning the status of applications. Beginning this Fall, applications can be filed beginning October 1, 2010 with a deadline of December 15, 2010. All prospective freshmen will receive an admissions decision between March 15 and March 31, 2011. For the following year, the admissions office hopes to move up the deadline to December 1st.

## Commission Investigates Colleges' Methods of Dealing with Gender Imbalance

With significantly fewer young men completing high school and enrolling in college, there is a severe gender balance in the undergraduate college population at many colleges. It is common to see over 55% of a college population represented by women. Thus, some private institutions have engaged in more relaxed admission policies for males to help balance the gender gap.

This practice has caught the

attention of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. Thus, it recently launched an investigation into the extent of male preferences at about 19 institutions of higher education. Some of the colleges targeted by the Commission include Georgetown, Gettysburg, Johns Hopkins, and University of Richmond. Some of these colleges have posed legal challenges to the Commission's inquiries.

There are, not surprisingly,

opposing ideologies on this form of "affirmative action." The reality, however, is that once a college becomes predominantly female, it has an even greater challenge in attracting young men.

While the Commission has only the power to make recommendations, and not rules, it will be interesting to see how the investigation affects admissions in the near future.



## Colleges That Change Lives Fairs

As rising seniors make their college lists this summer and rising juniors begin to consider colleges, they should not miss the fairs sponsored by the Colleges That Change Lives. This year, the San Francisco Bay Area Fairs will be held on Sunday afternoon, August 1, 2010 at 3pm, at the Santa Clara Convention Cen-

ter, followed by another fair the next day at the Marin Center at 7pm. Families in Southern California can attend the fair at the Hilton in Universal City on August 3, 2010 at 7 p.m.

Students often make college decisions based upon name brand or misinformation, or

may not be fully informed, denying themselves a chance at a good college fit. The 40 colleges included in this group are often lesser known colleges that have distinguished themselves by providing successful life changing experiences to students. This is a fair worth attending.

## CSU Announces Further Tuition Increases

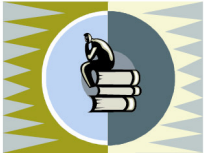
On the table was a 10% fee increase for the California State University (CSU) system. Instead, this month the trustees approved a 5% increase in tuition for this Fall with a warning that students could possibly face an additional 5% increase mid-academic year.

To attend a CSU campus as

an undergraduate, students will now pay over \$5,000 in tuition and other mandatory fees, exclusive of room, board, books, and other incidentals.

CSU has raised fees 8 times in the past 10 years.





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## *Common Application Increases Membership*

For those unfamiliar with the Common Application, it is a universal application with a single website where students can apply to numerous colleges using a single application. Many of the member colleges have eliminated their own individual applications in favor of the common application, and those who have not, do not prefer one over the other.

With the addition of 27 new members, there are now over 400 colleges on the common application. Most of the members are private colleges, but

there are now 47 public institutions using the common application.

Some notable new additions include University of Michigan, Columbia University, De Paul University, St. John's College, Westmont College, and University of Connecticut.

While there may be a single application for common application colleges, many of the colleges have an additional supplement to the common application. For the most part, these supplements are avail-

able for completion on the common application website.

The common application has certainly made the application process more efficient and less time consuming, but has also probably contributed to the increase in numbers of applications submitted by students.