

HOW TO CHOOSE

THE RIGHT COLLEGE
FOR YOU



outreach.unt.edu





NOTES

A series of horizontal dotted lines for taking notes.

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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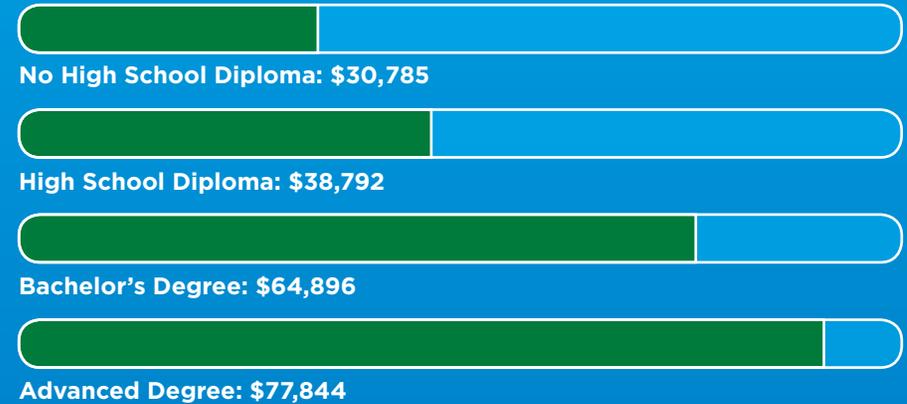
WHY GO TO COLLEGE?

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



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Study; issued 2019



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. Here are some of the things you'll want to think about as you tour colleges:

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 142,000 people, that is one of the nation's fastest-growing cities and part of one of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. 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 1000-acre campus offers its nearly 41,000 students the best environment in the region to pursue learning, research and creativity. The vibrant Denton 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.

Cost

- How much does it cost to attend?
- What financial aid and scholarship options do I have to help me afford it?

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 25 years, and a Best College by *Money* magazine. UNT students receive financial aid and scholarships totaling \$405 million annually.

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.

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.

UNT offers 109 bachelor's, 94 master's and 36 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 450 student organizations, including many intercultural organizations and 42 fraternities and sororities. Leadership and training opportunities are abundant. UNT competes in Conference USA and 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. The guided in-person tour covers about 70% of campus including academic areas, student life, support services, a dining hall and the Pohl Recreation Center. Visit tours.unt.edu to schedule your visit or to experience our interactive virtual campus tour.

COLLEGE COMPARISON CHART

Choice Factor	University of North Texas	College B	College C
Location	Denton, one of the nation's best college towns; about 40 miles north of Dallas and Fort Worth		
Size	Nearly 41,000 students — most comprehensive university in the North Texas region		
Majors	109 bachelor's degree programs, many nationally recognized; special counselors for undecided majors; graduate study available		
Cost	State-assisted with low mandatory fees; named a Best Public College for Lowest Student Loan Debt in the nation by <i>lendedu.com</i>		
Campus Life	16 NCAA Division I athletic teams; Apogee Stadium; intramural sports; 450 student organizations; ranked one of the safest college campuses in the nation four years in a row by <i>Alarms.org</i>		
Support Services	Friendly, helpful staff; enrollment services grouped in one building (Eagle Student Services Center)		

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Did You Know?

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 16-17.

APPLYING TO COLLEGE

Most students apply between July 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:

- 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 goapplytexas.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) if you have them. They may not be required.
- 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.

Submit your UNT admission application 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

You are admissible to the university if you meet one of the following criteria:

1. Have a 3.0 GPA (unweighted)
2. Are in the Top 10% of your class
3. Are in the top quartile of your class combined with your SAT or ACT scores

Students not meeting these requirements will be reviewed on an individual basis. For more information please visit: admissions.unt.edu

College entrance exams and placement tests

Some universities require college entrance exams, and for some, placement tests, as part of the college application. The SAT and ACT are the most common entrance exams. However, at UNT and at many schools, these tests are optional. UNT uses unweighted GPA and class rank in assessing admissibility — 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, 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

TIMELINE 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.

DID YOU KNOW?

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.

10TH grade

- Take AP courses.
- Take part in school clubs and organizations or a summer camp program.

- Pursue leadership roles now that will help you later with scholarship applications!
- Start thinking about what's important to you in a college or university (see pages 6-7).

11TH grade

- Attend a college fair and begin gathering information on colleges you're considering.
- Take the Preliminary SAT (PSAT).
- Take the ACT and/or SAT exam.

- Begin taking campus tours of the universities that interest you.
- Take AP exams.

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

- Submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Apply for scholarships.



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

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.

INVEST IN YOUR SUCCESS

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!

75% of UNT students receive scholarships or financial aid.

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. Texas residents can also submit the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) at collegeforalltexas.com.

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.

UNT annually awards \$405 million in financial aid, including more than \$50 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.

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.

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.

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.

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