

A photograph of a modern university building with a staircase. Several students are walking on the stairs. One student in the foreground is wearing a red baseball cap with a white 'S' logo and a patterned sweater. Another student is wearing a dark blue sweatshirt with 'WOODEN' written on it. The background shows a multi-story building with large windows and a balcony with a metal railing.

UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

UC delivers an
education that
opens doors and
changes lives.

ACHIEVE UC — A Guide for Preparing
for the University of California

FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

A college education offers many advantages to talented students, and a University of California education is of the highest quality. UC's faculty, scholarship and research capabilities, and facilities make it one of the finest universities in the world. Five of UC's nine undergraduate campuses are ranked among the nation's top ten public universities and UC consistently places within the top of every such list, including international rankings.

At UC, you'll be part of a diverse community of people from all over the world — even from your own neighborhood or school. Together, you'll contribute to all that makes the UC great.

Prepare for your future at the University of California.



If you study hard and plan well,
there's a place for you at the
University of California.
A UC education isn't only
do-able, it's affordable.
Any of our campuses would
be an outstanding choice
for your future education.

JANET NAPOLITANO
President of the University of California

Table of Contents

2 Part One: The Path to the University of California

The University of California and You
Why Prepare for a UC Education
How to Achieve UC

4 Part Two: Preparing to Apply

Aim High! Prepare to Become a Competitive Applicant
Entrance Requirements

- Subject (Course) Requirements
- Entrance Exams (SAT/ACT)
- The UC Personal Statement

SAT Subject Tests
Community College Transfer to UC
Academic Enrichment
Extracurricular Activities
College Knowledge
UC Campus Research Map and Checklist

10 Part Three: Paying and Saving for UC

UC Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan
Grants
Scholarships
Work-Study
Work
Loans
Savings Plans and Chart
Cost of UC Attendance Chart

14 Part Four: Frequently Asked Questions

UC Preparation
Financial Aid
Campus Climate

17 Part Five: References and Resources

Glossary of Terms
Online Resources

The path to the University of California



For Parents: When English is Your Second Language

As a parent or guardian, your own communication with counselors, teachers and school administration helps your student succeed. Here are some ideas for getting better access to information you need to help guide your student.

- If your student's school has an English Language Advisory Committee (ELAC), participate. This group of parents, teachers and school administrators helps ELD (English Language Development) students. Taking part in an ELAC is an opportunity to meet school staff and get useful information.
- Some schools have a website for parents. You can learn about school events and monitor your student's academic progress.
- Ask other parents about school language resources they have found. Locate school personnel (counselors, administrative assistants, teachers, librarians, etc.) who speak your language. Your school district may have a Family and Community department that can help you find services and programs for families and students with limited English-speaking skills.
- Explore online resources like this Open Education Database, created by a librarian, which links to 50 sites for ESL students that cover English grammar and usage, spelling and punctuation, vocabulary, pronunciation and much more. oedb.org/ilibrarian/50_essential_resources_for_esl_students

The University of California and you

If you live in California, the University of California already belongs to you. It's a public university that was founded to educate the state's citizens.

UC opened its doors in 1869 with just ten faculty members and 38 students. Today, the UC system of ten campuses includes more than 238,000 students and more than 190,000 faculty and staff members. More than 1.7 million UC alumni live and work throughout the world.

For almost 150 years, UC has expanded the dimensions of what we know about ourselves and our world. The university's campuses are routinely ranked among the best in the world, but its reach extends beyond campus borders.

UC students, faculty, staff and alumni exchange ideas, make advancements, and unlock the secrets and mysteries of the universe every day. They engage with their local governments, serve California schools, protect the environment and push the boundaries of space.

From among all backgrounds, ethnicities and incomes levels, UC attracts the best and brightest. Its undergraduates come from all over California, and they work hard to make it to college. In fact, over 40 percent of UC students come from low-income families.

UC's faculty members are the drivers behind innovations in biotechnology, computer science, art and architecture — and they bring that knowledge, that capacity for greatness, directly to the classroom.

Thousands of California jobs, billions of dollars in revenue, and countless everyday household items — from more plentiful fruits and vegetables to compact fluorescent light bulbs — can be traced to UC discoveries. Similarly, UC technology is the basis for many of the state's leading businesses founded by UC faculty or led by UC alumni.

In addition to first-rate classrooms and labs, UC is home to dozens of museums, concert halls, art galleries, botanical gardens, observatories and marine centers — academic resources that also serve as exciting gathering places for the community.

Why prepare for a UC education?

Here are a few of the ways in which a UC education can improve the quality of your life:

You will gain knowledge. UC students acquire skills and expertise in subjects that excite them. They learn how to think critically and express their thoughts.

You will expand your horizons. College life is full of opportunities to meet new friends, interact with experts in different fields, and gain hands-on learning and work experience.

You will secure your future. Higher education is associated with better working conditions, more promotion opportunities and job stability.

You will widen your career opportunities. More and more jobs require education beyond high school, and UC's vast network and career planning support will help you move from college to career.

You will increase your earning capacity. A person with a college degree has the potential to earn more than a person without one.

How to Achieve UC

Getting accepted to UC is the successful completion of a path that begins in 9th grade, or even earlier. It's a big accomplishment, but the process is really just a series of smaller steps. If you focus on one step at a time, you can achieve your UC admission goal.

Use this guide as an information resource and planner.

For every aspect of the application process, detailed information is also available on University of California campus websites. Links and contact information are listed at the end of this guide.

Remember — we're here to help. If you have questions or need information not available in this guide, feel free to contact the university at AchieveUC@ucop.edu.

Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
African-American clergyman and civil rights activist
(1929-1968)

PART TWO

Preparing to apply



Aim high! Prepare to be a competitive applicant to the University of California (UC)

UC has established minimum entrance requirements (see below) to make sure students are prepared for college-level work. However, when there are more applicants meeting those minimum requirements than there are spaces available at a given campus, students whose work exceeds the minimum have a better chance of being admitted. Therefore, all prospective students are urged to become “competitive applicants.”

Take advanced courses, including community college and summer school offerings.

Aim for a higher GPA by studying more, especially for AP and honors classes, which offer bonus GPA points.

Improve your college entrance exam scores by taking the PSAT in 10th grade, and taking the SAT/ACT in 11th grade, so you have a second chance to take the SAT/ACT exams in 12th grade, if necessary.

Participate deeply in academic enrichment and extracurricular activities that are meaningful to you and reflect your interests. Consider tutoring, singing in the church choir, performing community service or other activities.

Devote time and careful work to writing your personal statement; make it clear, compelling and relevant to the rest of your application. Seek input on drafts from a few trusted readers before you complete the statement.

Apply to a wide range of UC campuses

— at least four — keeping an open mind about their suitability. You can use the same application for all nine campuses, and UC will waive application fees for up to four campuses for students who apply for a fee waiver within the online application. You’ll be notified immediately as to whether you qualify for this waiver.

Apply on time! Start completing your UC application in August, and be sure to submit it between November 1 -30.

Entrance requirements

Students often are surprised to learn how many peers who apply to the University of California (UC) from their own schools are accepted.

UC’s admissions reviewers look at a wide range of factors when considering your application. Every student brings unique experiences and special talents to the application process. Each has had different opportunities. These elements are weighed, along with grades and test scores, to create a complete picture of your readiness for college, and what you can contribute to the life of the UC campus you choose to attend.

At each UC campus and in each field of study, the number of students applying for spaces varies. Some programs are very competitive, with more applicants than there are positions available. That’s why UC strongly encourages you to surpass the minimum requirements, to ensure that you are competitive at the campus of your choice. Take as many Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and/or California community college classes as you can while you’re in high school.

Subject Requirements: A-G Courses

The path to UC admission begins with high school coursework. To be considered for UC admission, you need to complete 15 approved “a-g” courses, 11 of them by the end of your junior year (including courses taken in the summer between junior and senior year). Do all of your homework and attend every class. Strive to earn a B or better in each class.

Remember, these are *minimum* requirements. Here’s the specific 15-course pattern you will need:

- a. 2 years of history/social studies
- b. 4 years of English
- c. 3 years of math
- d. 2 years of lab science
- e. 2 years of a language other than English
- f. 1 year of visual and performing arts
- g. 1 year of college preparatory elective from a-f

If there is a book that you want to read, but it hasn’t been written yet, you must be the one to write it.

TONI MORRISON
Author (1931-)

College Entrance Exams

Entrance exams are part of the college preparation process.

ACT/SAT

Students should take the ACT (ACT Plus Writing for UC) or SAT by December of senior year. Practice exams are available online at sat.collegeboard.org and actstudent.org.

The PSAT (Preliminary SAT) measures the skills and knowledge students have accumulated in some areas over the course of their education. Students should take the test in the tenth grade or sooner, if possible, because they will receive personalized feedback on the academic skills needed for college. This process will help them develop these skills and prepare for taking the SAT.

TIP: Take advantage of the SAT test preparation offered by Khan Academy — it's free!

The ACT Test is a 3½-hour national college admissions exam that tests students' knowledge in English, math, reading and science. The ACT Plus Writing Test includes a 40-minute writing test. The SAT is a 3¾ hour test that measures critical thinking, mathematical reasoning and writing skills. Most colleges include the ACT or the SAT Reasoning Test as a college entrance requirement.

The UC Personal Statement

The personal statement required by the University of California is a chance to present a more complete description of yourself to the admissions and scholarship officers who read it.

Think about all the information included in your application: your grades, exam scores, academic and athletic achievements, work experience and family background. What else do you want the person evaluating your application to know about you?

Make the statement truly personal — write honestly about yourself. You'll be given helpful prompts to guide you in composing your statement.

Take your time with this part of the application. Proofread it carefully, make sure it flows smoothly, and ask others to look it over and make suggestions. It's just one aspect of your application, but it's an important one.

SAT Subject Tests

While UC does not require students to take SAT Subject Tests, some campuses recommend that freshman applicants interested in competitive majors take the tests to demonstrate subject proficiency. You will not be penalized for failing to take the SAT Subject Tests. On the other hand, submission of these test scores (just like submission of AP and/or IB scores) may benefit your application.

You can find out which UC campuses and majors recommend SAT Subject Tests here: <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/requirements/examination-requirement/SAT-subject-tests/>

Consider taking an SAT Subject Test at the end of the year in which you have taken the course. For example, you could take the Biology Subject Test at the end of the school year during which you complete your high school biology class.

Academic Enrichment

Preparing for UC admission includes building a strong set of academic activities outside of high school. In addition to improving test scores and class performance, these pursuits will show that you are motivated to take on extra work to become a competitive applicant.

And you can explore your special interests with classes and internships before declaring a college major.

These activities can include:

- Summer session courses at a college
- Writing and math workshops
- Concurrent enrollment at community college
- Summer internships
- Participating in UC academic preparation programs such as the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) and Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA)
- Accredited online coursework such as UC Scout

Extra-Curricular Activities

Colleges also look at non-academic activities that take place outside of school, including jobs (paid or unpaid), school-based activities (such as student government, service clubs, yearbook, etc.) or activities affiliated with a community organization or your church.

TIP: Admissions officers prefer to see sustained participation in a few activities rather than a wide array of short-lived ones.

College Knowledge

College knowledge is the information you gather about specific colleges and their “rightness” for you, and about financial aid, housing and other practical aspects of college.

Learn as much as you can about the UC campuses that interest you. UC has nine separate undergraduate campuses. All share UC’s high academic standards, with top-notch faculties and research facilities, yet each has its own distinctive characteristics. Researching the campuses that best suit your needs and academic strengths should begin early. Your high school counselor can help you decide, and you can also contact a UC college advisor to help you. Help is available!

Activities to deepen your college knowledge include:

- Researching UC campuses online. You’ll find them all in one place at universityofcalifornia.edu
- Visiting campuses in person
- Attending financial aid and college application workshops offered at your school, your church, or in your community

Community College Transfer to UC

For many students, community college can be a good way to get ready for a UC degree.

Many classes that students need for their undergraduate degrees are offered at California community colleges, including courses that can count toward their majors. For students who are ready to make the transition to UC, the doors are open.

UC gives California community college students first priority over other transfer applicants, and many campuses offer guaranteed admission for well-prepared transfer students. In fact, nearly a third of UC students start at community college before graduating from a UC campus.

If you’re starting out at a California community college and know which major you want to study but haven’t decided which UC campuses to apply to, consider following a UC Transfer Pathway, a single set of courses you can take to prepare for your major on any of our nine undergraduate campuses.

For links to UC transfer preparation information, see Online Resources at the end of this guide.

Feet, what do I need you for when I have wings to fly?

FRIDA KAHLO
Mexican painter (1907 – 1954)

University of California campuses



** graduate only*

Your preferred UC campuses: Research checklist

“SAFE” CHOICES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

“REALISTIC” CHOICES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

“REACH” CHOICES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

CAMPUS NAME

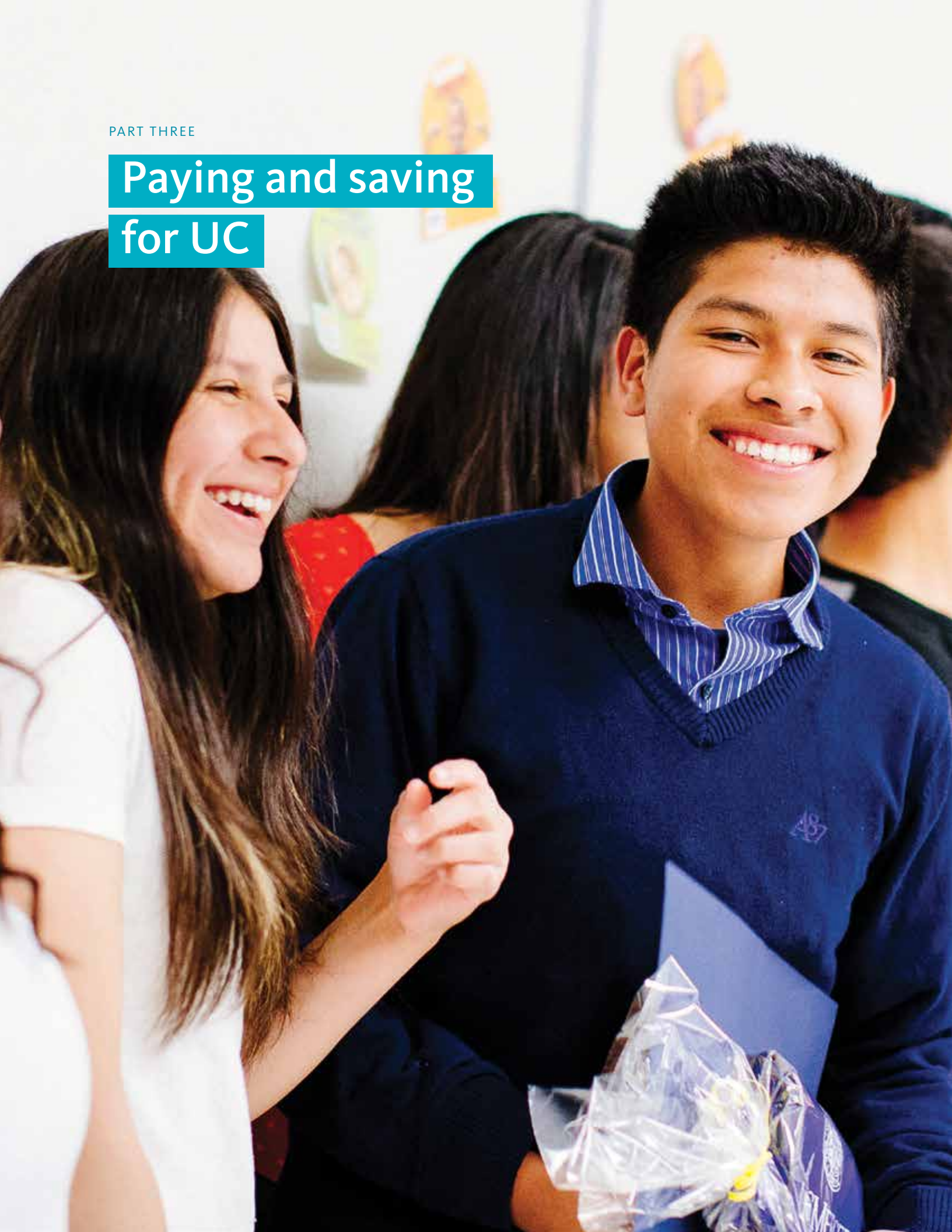
Admission requirements checklist:

- Transcripts
- Application fee or fee waiver
- Test scores
- Personal statement
- Other

NOTES

PART THREE

Paying and saving for UC



Getting a UC education is a big investment, but don't assume the cost is out of your family's reach. To those who qualify, help is available. Like every step of preparing for college, figuring out how to pay for it is a matter of research and footwork. In this section, you'll find different options for meeting UC tuition, fees and expenses.

UC Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan

You can afford UC! UC's Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan will ensure that you will not have to pay UC's systemwide tuition and fees out of your own pocket if you are a California resident whose total family income is less than \$80,000 per year and you qualify for financial aid — and that's just for starters.

Blue and Gold students with sufficient financial need can qualify for even more grant aid to help reduce the cost of attending UC.

Financial aid options

First, you must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to be eligible for financial aid of any kind. Completing the FAFSA is always free. Do not reply to any individual or organization that asks you to pay a fee to file a FAFSA.

Grants, scholarships, loans and work-study are all forms of financial assistance. Funding comes from federal, state and/or private sources. Nearly two-thirds of UC undergraduates receive some form of financial aid.

Grants

Grants are cash gifts you don't have to repay, based on financial need as determined by the FAFSA.

- **Cal Grant:** These grants can amount to thousands of dollars, at no cost to students. Three types of Cal Grants pay for tuition and fees.

- **Pell Grant:** The largest source of free federal money for students with financial need. Awards range from \$400 to over \$4,000 per year.
- **Other federal grants**

Scholarships

A scholarship is money you don't have to repay, usually awarded based on your skills, interests, areas of study or scholastic performance, such as:

- Athletic, musical or other special talents
- Community service
- Good grades
- High test scores

The UC system and its individual campuses offer scholarships based on merit. Scholarships are also available through community and religious organizations, foundations, businesses and labor unions. Discuss options with your school counselor.

Beware of scholarship scams! If a company makes scholarship promises, charges a fee, or asks for your credit card information to hold a scholarship, it is untrustworthy.

Estimated Average Costs for California Residents

Academic Year 2015-16

This chart estimates the cost of attending UC for one year as a California resident undergraduate. For a significant proportion of UC students, these expenses are offset by grants and scholarships. Keep in mind that your total cost will vary depending on your personal expenses and the campus you attend.

	living on campus	living off-campus
Tuition and fees*	\$13,400	\$13,400
Books and supplies	\$1,500	\$1,500
Health insurance allowance/fee	\$2,100	\$2,100
Room and board	\$14,200	\$9,400
Personal/transportation	\$2,400	\$3,100
Total	\$33,600	\$29,500

* California resident undergraduates at all UC campuses pay the same \$12,240 in systemwide tuition and fees. The fees figure above includes the average cost of additional campus-based fees. Your total costs will vary depending on your personal expenses and the campus you attend. All fees are subject to change without notice.

Work-Study

Funded by the federal government, the Work-Study program provides financial assistance to students through their employment. Key points about the Work-Study program:

- Indicate your interest in work-study on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Colleges help students in finding job placement.
- Non-need-based job opportunities are also available through colleges.
- Jobs often have flexible hours that will fit a student's schedule.

Work

Most students seeking financial aid are expected to work part-time during the school year and full-time in the summers, unless they attend summer school. Most part-time jobs on or near campus pay roughly the same amount as a Work-Study award.

Loans

Student and parent loans provide money that must be repaid with interest, usually beginning after graduation. Many students and their families take out federal or private loans to finance college. Loans are available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents at all income levels.

Federal loans have a low interest rate and are paid back over a minimum of 10 years. Apply for loans by completing the FAFSA. Types of federal loans include:

- **Federal Stafford Loan:** This is the most common student loan, of which there are two types: *Subsidized* (government pays the loan interest during the time student is in college) and *unsubsidized* (student pays interest that accrues while he/she is in college).

- **Federal Perkins Loan:** This is a low-interest loan for students with significant financial need.
- **Federal PLUS Loan for Parents:** Money loaned to parents to help students pay for college.

College Savings Plans

College savings plans allow you to save money for college expenses with special tax breaks. Both federal tax credits and savings plans are available to help families manage the cost of college, particularly if they don't qualify for aid.

Parents can choose from numerous tax-advantaged 529 college savings plans around the country, with a variety of terms and fees charged. An investor may establish a 529 account on behalf of a child, grandchild, niece, nephew or friend. When the child is ready for college, the money can be withdrawn to pay for college.

DREAM Loans for AB 540 Undergraduate Students

Currently, undocumented students who graduate from a California high school and meet the California Dream Act requirements are eligible for state and university aid, but ineligible for federal aid (including federal loans). The DREAM loan program, funded by the state and UC, aims to close that gap and provide eligible students with the opportunity to obtain low-interest student loans to help pay for their education.

If you're an undocumented AB 540 undergraduate with financial need and are enrolled at least half-time at UC, here's what you need to know:

- A loan is borrowed money (you may hear terms like "borrowing" or "taking out loans") that you have to pay back with interest.
- Each UC campus will determine the amount a student can borrow based on available funding and number of eligible students. The maximum amount of a loan is capped at \$4,000 each year, per student – but again, this is dependent on program funding.
- You can borrow every year you're an eligible student at UC or until you receive a maximum of \$20,000 in DREAM.

Important Information about Dream Loans: admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/paying-for-uc/whats-available/ca-dream-act/index.html



ScholarShare can help families prepare to meet the costs of college.

Benefits include:

- Tax advantages
- Flexible features
- Choice of investment portfolios
- Low plan fees
- Managed by a leading financial services provider
- Easy access to your account
- Funds can be used at eligible institutions

Deferred-Payment Plans

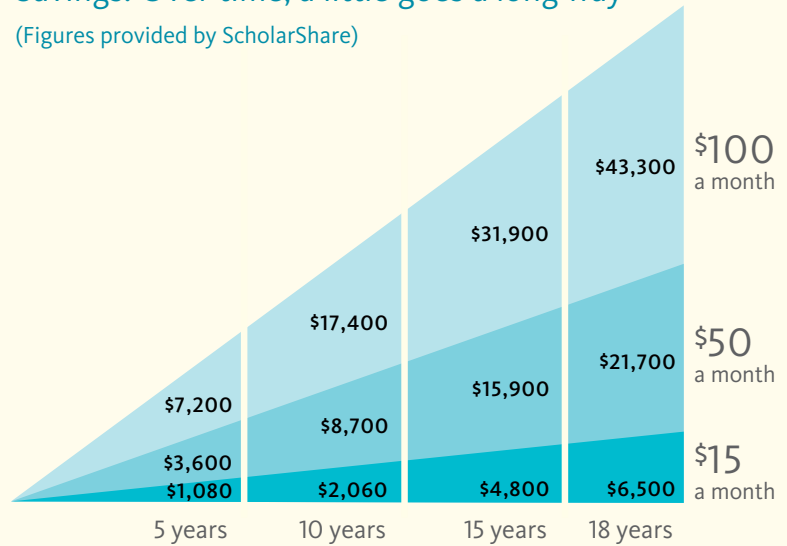
Many campuses offer deferred-payment plans so you can spread fees, tuition and housing costs out over months to help make payment easier. Some campuses accept credit cards, too. You just have to submit a brief application and, possibly, a small fee to sign up. The plans don't charge interest, but you may be assessed a late fee if your payments are overdue.

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found [them].

MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN
Children's advocate and activist (1939-)

Savings: Over time, a little goes a long way

(Figures provided by ScholarShare)

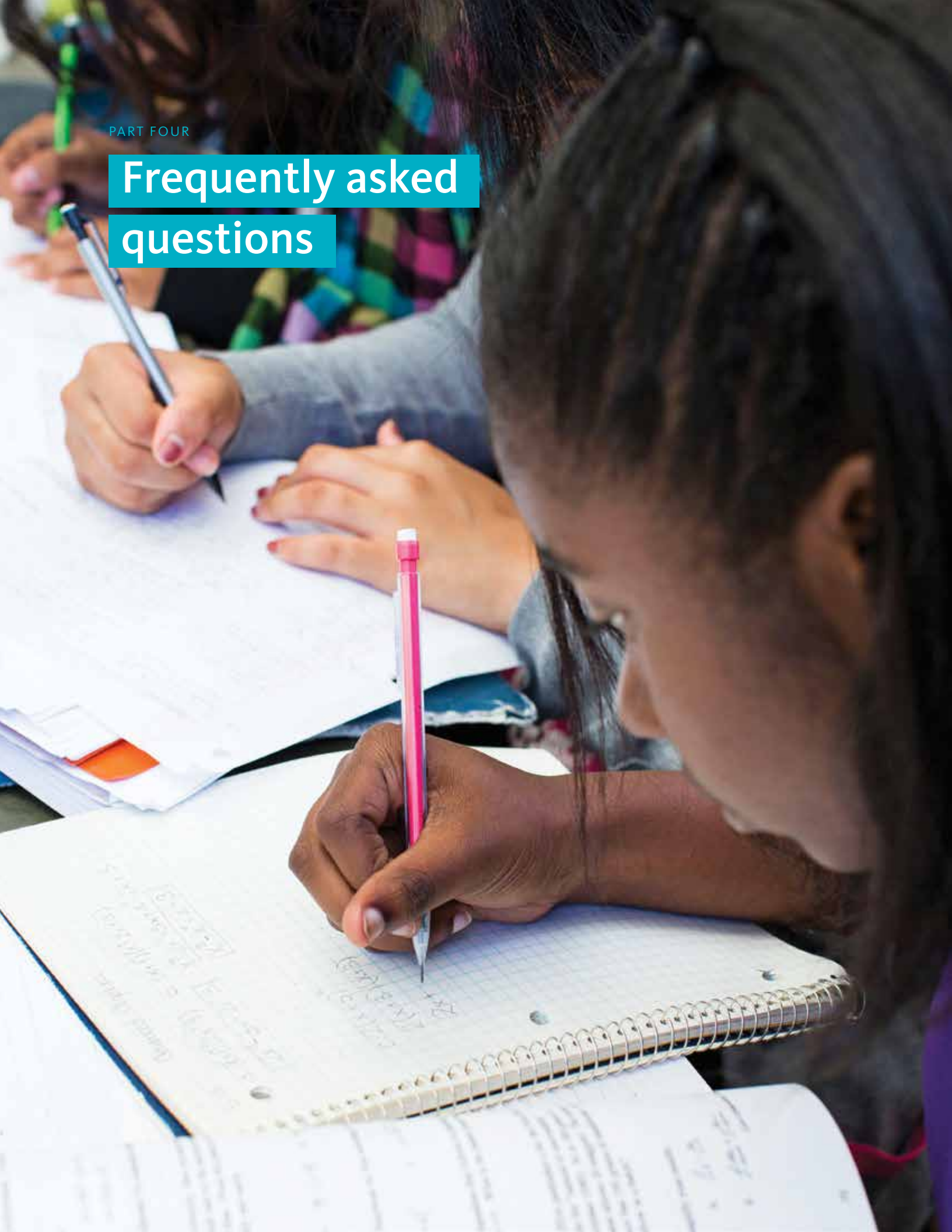


This chart is a hypothetical example and should not be considered an indication of performance of a 529 plan. These estimates assume that contributions of \$15, \$50 and \$100 per month are made at the beginning of the month with a 7% annual return.

Assumes that the money is invested in a tax-free investment vehicle, such as a 529 plan.

PART FOUR

Frequently asked questions



UC Preparation FAQs

Q What is the difference between the ACT and the SAT? Which one should my student take?

The ACT is an achievement test, measuring what students have learned in school. The SAT Reasoning Test is more like an aptitude exam, testing reasoning and verbal abilities.

The ACT has up to 5 components: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science and an optional Writing Test. If you take the ACT, UC requires that you take the ACT Plus Writing.

The SAT Reasoning Test has three components: Reading, Mathematics and Writing. (There are also SAT Subject Tests, usually not required for admission to colleges, but taken voluntarily to show aptitude

in a given subject. See glossary).

Many students opt to take both exams to find out which suits them best. Counselors can provide more information about the exams.

Q How do I know if my student qualifies for a fee waiver for the SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Test, ACT or college applications?

If your family qualifies for free or reduced-cost lunch, you will qualify for a fee waiver. The high school counselor will have information on fee waivers for the ACT and SAT.

Q I've heard the terms "eligibility" and "competitive eligibility." What is the difference?

Eligibility means that a student has met UC's minimum entrance requirements (coursework, GPA, entrance exams).

To be competitively eligible, the student should go beyond the basic requirements. To gain admission to more selective UC campuses, students should focus on being competitively eligible.

Q Where can I find my student's "a-g" courses?

The school counselor will have the list of "a-g" courses, or you can link to your school's list through ucop.edu/doorways.

Q What if a student receives a poor grade in an "a-g" course?

Talk to the high school counselor immediately.

The student will have different options:

- Retaking the course (this is the option that should be taken whenever possible)
- Taking a comparable course at a community college
- Taking an approved online course

The student's counselor will help to make the best decision. The key is to address this quickly!

Q What do college admissions reviewers look for when examining a student's extra-curricular activities?

Colleges prefer to see sustained participation over time in a few activities, rather than minimal participation in numerous clubs. A strong applicant will demonstrate service in leadership roles.

Q For a student unable to participate in after-school academic enrichment activities, do any such activities take place at other times?

Some activities take place on the weekends or in the summer. Also, look for opportunities that may be short-term (a couple of weeks) since adjusting your family's schedule for shorter periods may be easier.

Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read.

CESAR CHAVEZ

Mexican-American labor organizer (1927-1993)

Financial Aid FAQs

Q Does my family need to file its income taxes before completing the FAFSA?

No. File the FAFSA as soon as you can once it's available, beginning in January. Once you receive the SAR (Student Aid Report), necessary corrections can be made.

Q Are good grades required for financial aid?

No. Merit scholarships are awarded based on a student's academic performance. However, most financial aid, including grants and loans, is awarded based on a family's finances, i.e., need-based. Federal student aid will help a student with even an average academic record complete a college education.

Q Do only students from extremely low-income families qualify for financial aid?

While most grant aid is reserved for families with the most financial need, assistance is available to help all families cover costs, including low-interest parent and student loans. All families should complete the FAFSA and apply for financial aid.

Many factors besides income are taken into account, from family size to the age of the older parent. Eligibility for financial aid is determined by a mathematical formula, not by parent income alone. Completing the FAFSA is an important part of the financial aid-seeking process, as it is often used to determine eligibility for other types of financial assistance that colleges may award.

Q Is my student eligible for financial aid if he or she goes to community college?

Yes. Apply for a Cal Grant and all federal student aid by completing the FAFSA in the senior year of high school. If a student is awarded a Cal Grant but decides to attend a California community college first, the award will be held up to three years until he or she transfers to a four-year college.

Q How difficult will it be for my student to pay back loans once he or she is out of college?

Student loans are designed to make repayment manageable. A student who graduates from UC with a \$16,640 loan debt will have a monthly loan payment of approximately \$185. In addition, educational loan repayment doesn't begin until six months after a student graduates from college, leaves school or enrolls less than half-time.

Q If we save money for college, does that mean my student will get less financial aid?

The amount in a parent's savings account is used in the federal formula to determine a family's net contribution. However, a large portion of those savings are protected from consideration; only a small percentage of the remaining amount is assessed in the calculation of a student's financial aid eligibility.

Campus Climate FAQs

Q What will my student's community be like at a UC campus?

Each UC campus offers a unique blend of learning experiences and lifestyles. In this academic setting, students should expect to be challenged both intellectually and emotionally. They should expect more intense intellectual and emotional give-and-take than they might have previously experienced.

On every campus, students will study alongside people of all races, ethnicities, backgrounds and mindsets. Students will also find strong support services, clubs and services that meet their social, spiritual and extracurricular interests, outstanding professional networks, state-of-the-art facilities, and faculty and staff committed to building equitable learning environments for all students.

He who knows all the answers has not been asked all the questions.

CONFUCIUS
Chinese philosopher (551 BC-479 BC)

PART FIVE

References and resources



Glossary of Terms

Academic Enrichment These opportunities reinforce and improve basic academic skills, prepare students for more challenging coursework and provide academic experiences beyond those available through the normal school curriculum.

ACT A 3½-hour national college admissions exam that tests students' knowledge in English, math, reading and science. The ACT Plus Writing Test includes a 40-minute writing test. Most colleges require that students take the ACT or the SAT Reasoning Test as a college entrance requirement.

A-G Coursework A series of courses required for admission to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU). Each high school has an approved list of Doorways “a-g” coursework, which can be found through ucop.edu/doorways or at the high school guidance office.

AP (Advanced Placement) College-level courses in a variety of subject areas that students can take while in high school. Students can boost their high school GPA by doing well in AP courses because they will earn more grade points than in non-AP courses. When AP courses are completed, students have the option of taking the corresponding AP Exam to earn college credit.

Extra-Curricular Activities Activities that happen outside school, including jobs (paid or unpaid), school-based activities (such as student government, service clubs, yearbook, etc.) or activities affiliated with a community or religious organization.

EFC (Expected Family Contribution) The portion of your family's financial resources that should be available to pay for college, based on a federal formula using the information on your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid

GPA (Grade Point Average) GPA can range from 0.0 to 4.0 (5.0 for AP or honors courses) and is calculated by dividing the total number of grade points earned by the total number of credit hours attempted. Grade points are assigned as follows: A (4), B (3), C (2), D (1), F (0). Most year-long high school courses are 3 credit hours. Colleges will look at a student's GPA in college prep courses as part of the application process.

High School Graduation Requirements Courses (and sometimes community service hours) required for high school graduation. Note that requirements for high school graduation are not always the same as “a-g” course requirements. Therefore, a student may meet high school graduation requirements without becoming UC-eligible.

Honors Courses Honors courses offer in-depth subject matter at a faster pace than standard courses, with an emphasis on critical and independent thinking. They can earn students extra course credits.

Personal Statement A student essay, written in response to one or more “prompts” or essay questions given in the college application. The personal statement is an important part of some college applications. Colleges use such essays to learn more about the student. Students should give themselves ample time to write, revise and proofread their personal statements.

PSAT (Preliminary SAT) This test measures some skills that students have developed over the course of their education. Students usually take the test in the eleventh grade, but benefit from taking it in the tenth grade or sooner because they will receive personalized feedback on the academic skills needed for college. By taking the test early, students have more time to develop these skills and to begin the college-planning process. The PSAT is a good way to prepare for the SAT.

SAT The SAT is a 3¾ -hour test that measures critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills. Most colleges require that students take this or the ACT as a college entrance requirement.

SAT Subject Tests Even if not required for UC admission, SAT Subject Tests can show a student's strength in specific content areas. If students elect to take the subject tests, they should do so as soon as possible after completing the corresponding course.

Preparing for Freshman Admission

admission.universityofcalifornia.edu

A-G Guide: ucop.edu/agguide

College Entrance Exams: *For dates, sign-ups and practice exams:*

collegeboard.org

act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/the-act.html

SAT Subject Tests for UC:

admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/freshman/requirements/examination-requirement/index.html

Online A-G Courses:

www.ucscout.org

Community College Transfer Preparation

California Community Colleges:

cccco.edu

UC Transfer Admission:

admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/transfer/preparing-admission/index.html

UC Transfer Admission Planner:

uctap.universityofcalifornia.edu

UC Transfer Pathways:

admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/transfer/preparation-paths/index.html

UC Transfer Course Planning:

assist.org

General College Planning Information

knowhow2go.org

Paying and Saving for UC

Financial Aid at UC:

ucop.edu/student-affairs/campus-contacts/financial-aid-offices/index.html

ScholarShare College Savings Plan:

scholarshare.com

Important Information about Dream

Loans: admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/paying-for-uc/whats-available/ca-dream-act/index.html

Financial AID and FAFSA Support

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):

FAFSA.ed.gov

Cal Grants:

calgrant.org
916.464-8271

California Student Aid Commission

csac.ca.gov

Help with Completing the FAFSA:

californiacashforcollege.org
916.464-8271

Scholarship Searches

scholarships.com

fastweb.com

Online Resource Guide

start.universityofcalifornia.edu

UC K-12 Programs

K12programs.universityofcalifornia.edu

Diversity at UC

diversity.universityofcalifornia.edu

UC Social Media

UC on Twitter

UC: @UofCalifornia

UC Application: @UC_Apply

UC Diversity and Engagement:

@UCEngaged

UC Newsroom: @UC_Newsroom

UC on Facebook

Science Today
University of California
UC for CA

UC on Google+

UC on Instagram

UC on Pinterest

UC Research Tumblr

Need more information? Contact us at AchieveUC@ucop.edu



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¹ *Pregnancy includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth.*

² *Service in the uniformed services includes membership, application for membership, performance of service, application for service, or obligation for service in the uniformed services.*