

# NEW HORIZONS

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO APPLYING TO COLLEGES IN THE USA

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## **INTRODUCTION**

While it is possible to get a good college education in Kenya many students have increasingly sought opportunities abroad. Key in their decision have been the immense opportunities such an education can avail to them: global exposure, excellent learning and research facilities, a wide network of friends from across the world, and an opportunity to travel, explore and learn new cultures and languages. An all-rounded experience is a hallmark of an American education. Students are usually expected to take classes in a wide range of disciplines, rather than specialize right from the beginning, particularly in colleges following a liberal arts curriculum. This enables students to graduate having gathered knowledge not only in their area of concentration but also in other fields of study.

This guide is aimed at ensuring that our scholars maximize their chances of gaining admission to and scholarship assistance from the universities that best match their interests and needs. This Guide will guide you in:

- Identifying universities that fit career goals and personal preferences
- Preparing for university entrance exams, including the SAT and TOEFL
- Navigating the university application process
- Identifying and securing sources of financial aid and scholarships

We will describe step by step, each part of the application for college admission, and then give practical advice on completing all the requirements from a Kenyan perspective. Finally, we will highlight the colleges in the USA that currently give financial assistance to foreign students. By reading this guide we hope that you will obtain the information and resources necessary to complete the application confidently.

# HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE USA

## Definitions

- There are 262 **national universities** in the US. The universities offer a full range of undergraduate majors, as well as master's and doctoral degrees; many strongly emphasize research.
- A "**liberal arts**" institution can be defined as a "college or university curriculum" aimed at imparting general knowledge and developing general intellectual capacities, in contrast to a professional, vocational, or technical curriculum. Liberal arts colleges emphasize undergraduate education and award at least 50 percent of their degrees in the liberal arts.
- **Community colleges**, sometimes called junior colleges, technical colleges, or city colleges, are primarily two-year public institutions providing higher education and lower-level tertiary education, granting certificates, diplomas, and associate's degrees.

## Liberal Arts Curriculum

The liberal arts curriculum is a defining aspect of most colleges in the US. Students pursue a general course of study in their undergraduate years, aimed at developing students' rational thought and intellectual capabilities, rather than training them specifically in a singular field of study. Some national universities in the US, such as Harvard and Brown, will offer a liberal arts curriculum even though they are classified as universities.

A liberal arts curriculum means that, for instance, someone studying engineering will do most of their courses towards this, but also a number of courses that may not be directly connected to engineering, e.g. Economics or biology. Some universities do not follow this liberal arts curriculum, (e.g. Massachusetts Institute of Technology), but even then, there is usually a set of "core curriculum" or general requirements classes, which every student is required to take. Like the liberal arts curriculum, this system seeks to give students a balanced amount of knowledge across a range of disciplines.

**Note:** Degrees in law and medicine (dentistry included) are not offered at the undergraduate level in the USA and are completed after earning a bachelor's degree. Neither field specifies or prefers any undergraduate major, though medicine and dentistry have set prerequisite courses that must be taken before enrollment. The degree can be in almost any field, but the minimum prerequisite courses in chemistry, biological sciences, mathematics, social and behavioral sciences, and humanities must be completed. In a number of schools cases, architecture can also only be taken as a graduate degree, but some universities offer a five-year program leading to a degree in architecture, e.g. Cornell. A misconception is that you cannot do journalism as a first (undergraduate) degree. While this may be true of some colleges, e.g. Harvard, other schools offer programs leading to bachelor's degrees in journalism, such as New York University, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Northwestern University. Alternatively, you could do a bachelor's degree in a major of your choice and follow it up with a graduate degree in journalism.

**N.B.** The very best medicine, law and business programs are extremely competitive.

## A Liberal Arts College vs. a University

A liberal arts college has several features that distinguish it from a university or community college. In general, a liberal arts college is characterized by the following:

- **Undergraduate focus** - the number of graduate students at a liberal arts college is low or zero
- **Baccalaureate degrees** - most degrees awarded from a liberal arts college are four-year bachelor's degrees such as a B.A. (bachelor of arts) or B.S. (bachelor of science)

- **Small size** - Nearly all liberal arts colleges have fewer than 5,000 students, and most are in the 1,000 to 2,500 student range
- **Liberal arts curriculum** - liberal arts colleges focus on broad skills in thinking and writing, not narrow preprofessional skills. Courses such as religion, philosophy, literature and sociology are often required of all students.
- **Faculty focus on teaching** - At a large university, professors are often evaluated for their research and publishing first, and teaching second. At most liberal arts colleges, teaching has the top priority.
- **Focus on community** - Because of their small size, liberal arts colleges often highly value the interaction of faculty and students. The overall educational environment tends to be more intimate and personal than at larger universities.
- **Residential** - The majority of students at liberal arts colleges live at college and attend full time. You'll find far more commuter students and part-time students at public universities and community colleges.

## Is an American Education Good for You?

Here are some of the reasons to consider education in the US rather than locally:

### **World class learning institutions**

The United States has more institutions of higher learning than any other country in the world. More importantly than that, however, is the quality of these academic bodies. Most American colleges and universities offer top-notch education programs with highly qualified teaching staff. The research at many of these universities is cutting-edge and often published in journals worldwide. Many of the professors at these schools are leading authorities in their field. The list of world-class learning institutions in the USA is endless and includes, but is not limited to: Stanford University, Harvard, Yale, Cornell, California Institute of Technology, UC Berkeley, University of Pennsylvania, MIT, John Hopkins, Northwestern University, etc.

### **Endless study choices**

One of the best things about studying in the USA is the vast number of academic options offered to students. Since the USA is such a large country with vast resources, almost every field of study is available in the country. One can study everything from Russian history to nuclear physics. That is why so many foreigners choose to obtain their training in the USA. If you can perceive it, you can probably find some place in America to study it.

### **Worldwide recognition**

A degree or certificate from a college or university is useless if it is not recognized by employers, other institutions or field authorities. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance to ensure that the degree from the school you choose is recognized in the place you plan to use it in. Fortunately, colleges and universities in America are given professional accreditation by different governing bodies. These schools have to earn their accreditation by meeting certain criteria, helping ensure a quality education, as well as a degree or certificate that is recognized. Most schools in the USA are accredited, though we strongly suggest that you thoroughly find out what each school's accreditation is before deciding. There are thousands of US schools that offer credentials recognized in almost every corner of the world.

### **Supporting industries, training & research**

Because of the vast wealth of resources in America, the opportunities for practical training related to your field of study are vast. Most college and universities have established affiliations with employers and researchers in different fields of study, thereby creating an avenue for students to obtain hands-on and invaluable experience. Many universities even require that students obtain practical training in order to graduate. In many cases, these opportunities are not available anywhere else in the world.

## **People and culture**

America is a melting pot of people from all over the world. One will find most Americans to be very hospitable, friendly, kind, generous and accepting of foreigners. Of course, there are a few exceptions, as in any country, but these are not the norm. In general, the people are funny, gregarious, innovative, and eager to learn. These are traits that many international students adopt and take home with them.

## **Technology**

Regardless of what degree a student chooses to pursue in school, he or she will have to use computers and other technologies in order to succeed. Many universities incorporate the latest technology into their curriculum, encouraging students to obtain proficiency before they go out into the workplace. Specialized technology, such as the newest medical equipment in medical schools, allows each student to maximize their true potential and gain experience that is marketable in the real world.

## **Flexibility**

Since the USA school system utilizes credit units and often accommodates working students, most schools offer academic programs that are flexible in nature. This means that, very often, one can choose when to attend classes, how many classes to enroll in each semester or quarter, what elective or optional classes to take, etc. An American education is very conforming to each student's needs.

## **Campus experience**

It has been said that the friends and experience obtained during campus life are worth as much as the education itself. Many make friends that last lifetimes. The lessons learned by co-existing and living with others from all over the world are priceless.

## **Global focus**

More and more often, American colleges and universities are focusing on the global aspects of each subject, better preparing students with a worldwide view of their field. No longer can students merely focus on certain geographic areas when obtaining their academic training. Most US learning institutions have recognized this and offer a more comprehensive and global curriculum to meet these new trends.

As advantageous as an America education maybe, it might not be the best thing for everyone. It will be important that each student applying to college there asks themselves if it will provide the kind of environment they are looking for. The point is not to discourage students from applying, but rather to point out that the things may not always be rosy? You will have to learn to be away from home and that will not come easy given the culture shock you'll experience once you get to US. Things are really fast in the US and so you have to always be on your toes for what is going on else you'll miss a deadline or even worse, an exam. You may also be forced to have almost nil social life as you try to balance work and study. It may take a while to make friends but you should get along quite easily as long as you open up to people. People may not understand what you utter because of your ascent but always take it easy and repeat until someone hears what you have to say. It may be annoying but never shy away. People may think you're dumb but speak sense and prove them wrong.

## Life as a Student in the US

Living in the States as a student can be very easy or very difficult depending on your person and how you view things:

1. Culture: you will live among people who are totally different from you in terms of values and beliefs. You will call your professors by their first names; you will be invited to make your own food when you visit your room-mates or friends; and Americans are more accepting of such hot-button topics as abortion or homosexuality.
2. Jobs: you may have to get a job once you get to the campus to cater for your needs such as clothing and personal effects. Make sure you look for jobs on the school website as soon as you arrive on campus.
3. Study: dwelling on the fact that this is what took you there in the first place, you have to really work hard to keep your grades up. Merit scholarships may be taken away if you don't maintain the grades the school expects from you. Classes may also apportion a part of their grades for attendance and participation.
4. Winter: during winter, you will need to buy really warm clothes as it is extremely cold. Make sure you also carry some music CDs and DVDs from home to counter the home-sickness that accompanies winter. Be sure to make friends who may also invite you to their homes during Christmas and Thanksgiving.
5. Electronic: due to the difference in the American voltage system, most devices from Kenya may not work there, especially laptops and phones. If you have to carry your phone/laptop from here, be sure to buy a converter once you get there to avoid damaging your device.
6. Laundry: you may have to pay for laundry services which normally cost a dollar per load. Be sure to ask if you do not know what that will mean. It will also be easier to carry clothes that you can wear more than once like jeans.
7. Finances: you may be required to file for taxes so be sure you always have money saved up. Some insurance schemes also require the student to pay a certain percentage of the premium. You may have a savings account where you save up for such expenses and a normal account. Be sure to always spend less than you earn.
8. For the girls: you will realize that managing your hair might become an issue when you get to the States. The salons are really expensive. They also don't have blow driers for our type of hair. You will therefore need to like buy braids from here and the get friends to do your hair as you do theirs in return. You can also buy a flat iron and use it to manage your hair if it has chemical.

## PARTS OF AN APPLICATION

In selecting students for admission, colleges in the USA evaluate not only your academic record as displayed by your grades in school and test scores but also your community involvement and character as displayed by your extracurricular involvement, recommendations and essay. Below is a summary of a typical application to a college in the USA. Do not worry about the details right now. This is just an indicator of the general requirements for admission. Each part will be described later in the booklet with practical advice and tips for completing it effectively. Completing the application takes time, but is not difficult.

### **1. General information:**

This form collects basic information about each applicant e.g. personal information (name, address, nationality, etc), family information, educational data, academic achievements, extra-curricular activities and work experience. .

### **2. Teacher Evaluations/Recommendations**

There are usually two teacher evaluations/recommendations which should be completed by two teachers who taught you in different academic subjects.

### **3. Midyear Report**

This should be completed by your school counselor - or the equivalent in your school, e.g., Careers Counselor, Class Teacher, Dean of Studies, Head teacher/Principal, etc – indicating your scores in the midyear exams.

### **4. Secondary School Report & School Counselor Recommendation**

This should be completed by your school counselor – or the equivalent in your school, e.g., Careers Counselor, Class Teacher, Dean of Studies, Head teacher/Principal, etc – detailing your performance over your entire secondary school career. It should be sent along with your academic transcript. The school counselor will also write you a recommendation.

N.B. If you have attended more than one secondary school, you have to submit secondary school reports from all the schools you have attended.

### **5. Final Report**

This should be completed after you have received your final results e.g. KCSE for most Kenyan applicants. A copy of your result slip should be sent as well.

N.B.. If you have already completed your KCSE and received your results by the time you are applying, you need not submit the midyear reports.

### **6. Financial Aid Application:**

This form is completed by all students who are interested in receiving financial assistance from the college to which they are applying. Students in Kenya will need to fill the Foreign Student Financial Aid Application (FSFAA ) and the College Scholarship Service (CSS Profile) form. These forms are provided by the college on request.

### **7. SAT Scores:**

Most top colleges require the applicant to submit results of the SAT Reasoning Exam (SAT I) as well as results from three SAT Subject Tests (SAT II). Most Kenyans usually choose from Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, French or German. The colleges use these standardized test scores to objectively gauge your ability in relation to other students from all around the world. Credentials such as KCSE and O/A Levels cannot be substituted for this. For most colleges these tests must be completed by January preceding the September of desired enrollment. You must make your own arrangements to take the test, registering about eight weeks

before the actual test date and instructing that the results be sent to each college you're applying to. Strategies for effective preparation and timing of the tests will be given later in the guide.

## **8. TOEFL Scores**

This test is a test of English proficiency required by some universities of international students, but can be waived if you get a certain mark on your SAT I critical reading section or writing section depending on the university. One should thus carefully study the website of the school they are applying to so as to determine the test requirements. If required, you should plan to take the TOEFL in October, November, or January of the year before you hope to enroll. Practical advice on registering and preparation for the test will be given later in the guide.

## **9. Personal Essay**

This personal statement helps colleges become acquainted with you in ways different from courses, grades, test scores, and other objective data. It demonstrates your ability to organize your thoughts and express yourself. The personal essay helps the colleges know you better as a person and as a student.

## MANAGING YOUR APPLICATION

### Choosing Where to Apply

There are more than 3000 colleges in the USA and choosing which colleges to apply to can be quite daunting. The biggest consideration while applying from Kenya will be finances because studying in the USA is very expensive. A good strategy is to apply to colleges that are willing to offer financial aid to foreign students to assist with part of the cost. We have provided a table listing some top schools that offer need-based financial aid to international students. A few schools that offer good merit-based aid to international students are also included. Several columns are included that describe the extent of the school's generosity in terms of financial aid – both in general, and to international students in particular.

One important thing to notice is that most colleges that are generous with financial aid are among the most selective with very competitive admissions. It is therefore a good idea to apply to about 7-8 schools to increase chances of admission. The colleges should be spread out in terms of selectivity. It is not a good idea to apply only to schools that are "most selective" with very high SAT score ranges, even if you have very impressive scores and credentials. Apply to some schools where your SAT score is above or within the indicated mid-50%<sup>1</sup>, that are not very selective and where you feel you would be easily admitted. Apply also to two or three "reach" schools, where admission may be difficult. The majority of schools to which you apply should lie between these two extremes i.e. when you look at your SAT scores and the college acceptance rate and other statistics you feel that you meet the qualifications and have a good chance of admission. In other words, find out what schools are realistic goals for you, but shoot for your dreams at the same time.

There are also other factors a student should consider when choosing where to apply. These factors include:

#### **Ideal Environment:**

College isn't just a place for intellectual development-it is a place for social and personal development as well. Your level of involvement is an integral part of the experience so you should carefully consider the social aspect of any schools you're considering.

#### **Commitment to Major Field:**

Don't choose a college because of its reputation for specific programs unless you're strongly committed to one major. If you're likely to change your mind a few times, choose a school where you can take time to explore all your options.

#### **Curriculum:**

Some people perform better and learn more in a college that has a core curriculum or a number of requirements for graduation while others prefer exploring new fields on their own. Will you benefit from a structured curriculum, or do you want to develop new interests in your own time?

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<sup>1</sup> Mid-50% represents the scores of the mid 50 percent of students admitted to the college (it excludes the top and the bottom quarters). For example in an entering class of 1000 students the mid 50 SAT percentile would be range of marks between what the 250<sup>th</sup> student scored and what the 750<sup>th</sup> student scored.

## **Academic Pressure:**

More often than not, students fail in college due to the academic pressure - a lack of intellectual ability is rarely the problem. Evaluate carefully what the colleges you are considering expect of their students and how much you want to be pushed. Here's one tip: select a college that has an SAT or ACT average similar to your own to ensure that you are on the same page as the rest of the student body.

## **What's Important to You:**

Do you care more about a college's prestige, its standpoint on religion or its tolerance for a student's personal values? Colleges that blend both values and prestige tend to be either extremely small, extremely selective or both. The best way to assess the school's values is to explore the demographics of the student body. Find out if students volunteer, if the school offers courses in ethics or if the teachers encourage cooperation over competition.

## **Location:**

Do you thrive on the excitement and adventure of the city? Or do you feel more secure in a rural area? Are you a sun-worshipper or do you hide indoors at the first sign of snow? Although your surroundings shouldn't be the deciding factor, they are a definitely important when determining where you'd be the most comfortable.

## **Institutional Size:**

Although some people are adaptive enough to fit in at either a large or small college, most people find that one size will fit their needs better than another. A large college can be exciting, but lonely; a small college can be friendly, yet stifling. If you learn best by listening and observing, a large college might be best for you. Conversely, a small college will offer more hands-on training, but less diversity in curriculum

## **Population of International Students:**

Most international students often find it easier to strike friendship with other international students because of the shared experience of being thousands of miles away from home. A college with a small population of international students may have policies that are unfriendly to them, including, perhaps, limited financial aid opportunities for international students.

## **How to Apply**

Over time most colleges have sought ways to make the college application process less strenuous for applicants. This has resulted in colleges coming up with the 'common application'. As the name suggests it is completed once and submitted to as many colleges as the student wishes, provided the said colleges are among those that accept the common application. There is, therefore, little difference in terms of effort put in between applying to 3 schools and say 6 schools. The common application is available at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). Students may also choose to use the universal college application in lieu of the common application. The concept is pretty much the same and most colleges that accept the common application also accept the universal application, and vice versa. The universal application can be accessed at [www.universalcollegeapp.org](http://www.universalcollegeapp.org). In addition to the general form, most universities will require you to fill an additional form, known as the school supplement to the common/ universal college application.

Most colleges accept online as well as paper applications. Some colleges, however, insist that all applications be done online and where this is not possible the applicant must seek approval from the admissions office

before submitting a paper application. It is, thus, imperative that applicants carefully review the policies of the colleges they intend to apply to.

### **Applying online**

If using the common application the student should open an online account at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). The applicant should then add the colleges he or she is interested in under the colleges tab. This will give you access to the school supplement to the common application for each college you add if at all the college has it. The student can then complete the common application and submit to each school separately. If there is an application fee and one finds it difficult to raise the amount they should use the fee waiver option when asked for the payment. Anyone who uses this option must send a paper application fee waiver request to the individual schools. This waiver request can be found by googling NACAC. Alternatively, you could write a letter requesting a fee waiver and explaining that the required fee would be burdensome to your family. Either way, you will be required to have the request stamped and signed by your head teacher or school counselor.

If applying to a college that does not use common application, any prospective applicant should visit that college's website to find out if they can still apply online.

P.S. Applying online is often cheaper, faster and more convenient for those who have access to the internet.

### **Applying on Paper**

If the college you are applying to accepts paper applications, one can download the forms at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org), or the college's website – if the college is not a member of the common application consortium - print and complete them. One should then send the completed forms to the college's address.

### **When to Apply**

Most colleges in the USA have the school year beginning in September and ending in June, so most admissions are for entry into the college in August or September. **Regular Application** deadlines for this admission date vary widely, but for most colleges they are in late December or early January of the year before planned enrolment. International students are often encouraged to submit their applications before published due dates because of possible delays in postage.

The first step is to request applications and information from the colleges by sending an e-mail to the admission office or simply visiting the college website and finding application information on the "Apply" page. Immediately the college receives your request you will be put on a mailing list and the forms and information will be forwarded to you as soon as they are available. Colleges provide their application forms and information booklets free to anyone who requests them. It is a good idea to request information from as many colleges as possible because their own information on course offerings, campus life, financial aid and other categories will be the best basis for deciding where you want to apply.

Once you have narrowed down the list of colleges to only the few to which you are applying it is a good idea to start immediately keeping any correspondence from those colleges separate and organized and to start making a note of deadlines. Completing college applications can be a stressful experience. Keeping the components of your application organized will make things much easier.

You should be aware of the differences between early decision and early action, before sending in your applications. The exact rules may vary somewhat by college. Check with your college to make sure you understand your rights and obligations.

**Early Decision** plans are binding. You agree to attend the college if it accepts you and offers an adequate financial aid package. Application materials for these colleges are usually submitted early November. However, the deadline varies from college to college. Although you can apply to only one college for early decision, you may apply to other colleges through the regular admissions process. Admission decisions are usually released before regular decisions – often in mid December. If you're accepted by your first-choice college early, you must withdraw all other applications. Usually, colleges insist on a nonrefundable deposit well before May 1.

**Early Action** plans are similar to early decision plans but are not binding. If you're accepted, you can choose to commit to the college immediately, or wait until the spring. Under these plans, you may also apply early action to other colleges. Usually, you have until the late spring to let the college know your decision.

**Restrictive Early Action/Single Choice Early Action** - Similar to early action but the student applies early to one institution only.

## **FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION IN THE US**

### **What is financial aid?**

Financial aid is various types of funds offered to help students pay for educational expenses. Educational expenses are defined as:

- Tuition,
- Room and board,
- Books and supplies,
- Transportation costs,
- Miscellaneous fees.

The types of funds are scholarships (also known as grants), loans and work-study. Scholarships and grants are outright gifts and do not have to be repaid. This is known as gift-aid. Loans are borrowed monies that must be repaid (usually after graduation); the amount you have to pay back is the total you have borrowed plus an interest charge. Work-study is a job arranged for you by the college during the academic year. Loans and work-study are referred to as self-help aid. Please note, however, that some colleges may not have work-study for international students.

Financial aid is made available primarily on the basis of merit (sports, academic, etc) or of financial need. Financial need is the difference between the estimated expenses of college and what the college determines your family can afford to pay. Schools will offer different amounts of need-based or merit-based aid depending on the availability of funds. A few colleges will offer 100% need-based financial aid – which is an undertaking by the college to meet all the “financial need” of an applicant.

Please note that most schools will have different aid policies for citizens and international students. For purposes of this guide we shall concentrate more on international students.

### **What is need-blind admissions?**

A college with a need blind admissions policy is one where the decision to admit a student to the university is entirely independent of the decision to fund that student. That is, you are judged totally on your academic and personal attributes, rather than on your ability to pay.

### **Need blind admissions + full need**

Similar to a need blind admissions but once a student is admitted the college guarantees to meet the full financial need demonstrated after reviewing the financial aid application. The college first makes their admissions decisions then provides enough financial aid to enable all the students they admit to attend their college.

There are currently only six American institutions - five universities and one liberal arts college - which are need-blind and full-need for all applicants, including international students. These are:

- Amherst College
- Dartmouth College
- Harvard University
- MIT
- Princeton University
- Yale University

### **Need-sensitive admissions**

Some schools will factor in whether or not a student is applying for need-based aid when making the decision to admit international students.

## **Need-sensitive + full need**

Some schools do not have a need blind admissions policy for international students but guarantee to meet the full need of all admitted students.

There are, in addition, merit-based scholarships for specific schools that are available to international students, and we recommend that you have a look at the website of the particular college you are interested in to ascertain what funding options may be available to you.

If you plan to study in the U.S. for several years, think beyond the first year; ask yourself, "How will I finance the years that follow?" Unfortunately, some students must leave college after only one year of study because they run out of money. Even though the I-20 form requires proof of funding for the first year only, you should think about all four years of your study. That is why it is better to apply to colleges that are willing to assist foreign students. When you write to the colleges for the first time to request the application and college information ensure that you also ask specifically for information on the school's financial aid programs for foreign students. Each school has its own financial aid resources available to it, and you won't know what those resources are unless you ask.

## **Applying for Financial Aid**

The financial aid application form you use will be determined by the college you are applying to. Most colleges will offer financial aid forms as part of their applications package. Some colleges require that you complete the College Scholarship Services (CSS) profile online, others the Foreign Student Financial Aid Application (FSFAA) and others have college specific forms. If using the CSS profile online, you can complete it once and submit it to all colleges to which you are applying that accept it. There is a charge for submitting the CSS Profile Online. You can pay using a credit\debit card or an online check. If for any reason you are unable to make this payment contact the relevant college. The college can then give you a payment code to use or direct you to complete the FSFAA.

## **WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR**

While an admission decision based purely on test scores and grade point averages is easier to explain, such scores seldom reflect an applicant's intellectual curiosity, creativity, originality and love of learning. Applicants can distinguish themselves for admission in a number of ways. Some show unusual academic promise through achievements in study or research that place them among the best potential scholars of their generation. Most are "well rounded" and have contributed in various ways – academic and non-academic – to the lives of their schools or communities. Others are "well lopsided" with demonstrated excellence in a particular endeavor—academic, extracurricular or otherwise. Still others bring perspectives formed by unusual personal circumstances or experiences. The energy, commitment, and dedication it takes to achieve the various kinds and degrees of excellence is revealed not by test scores, but by students' activities outside the classroom, the testimony of teachers and guidance counselors, and by alumni/ae and staff interview reports.

### **Academic**

Most colleges identify academic achievement and potential as the most important factor influencing admission. Truly brilliant students will usually be admitted if they appear to be of good character. However, school grades and test scores are not always reliable indicators of real brilliance and schools will look for signs of intellectual curiosity, creativity, originality and a love of learning. For instance, is there evidence of original work such as writing, poetry, mathematical or scientific research? Did the student participate in competitions, contests, symposia and [science] congresses? Are there unusual factors such as poor school resources or personal difficulty that may give a context to an applicant's intellectual ability and promise? Applicants may also demonstrate their potential to contribute academically by achieving high marks in a challenging program of study or by making most use of resources available to them in their school/community.

### **Extracurricular**

This will include an applicant's participation in life outside the classroom, including significant contributions to the life of their school or community in athletics, music, art/drama and student leadership. In addition to school extracurricular activities and athletics, students can describe significant community, employment, or family commitments. There are many who spend a great deal of time helping to run their household, preparing meals and caring for siblings or making money with a part-time job to help the household meet expenses.

Schools have no preference for one activity over another, but they look most favorably upon those students who have committed themselves to their chosen activities over a period of time and who have shown energy, discipline, and enthusiasm in working with others. They also recognize that some schools may not have a full range of extracurricular activities and they take this into account while evaluating applicants. Admissions Committees are concerned most of all to know how well students used the resources available to them. Extracurricular activities need not be exotic — most are not — and substance is far more important. A student who has made the most of opportunities offered by their secondary school is much more likely to do so during college and beyond. This applies to academic life as well as extracurricular activities.

### **Personal**

Personal qualities and character provide the foundation upon which each admission rests. Some personal qualities like maturity, character, leadership, self-confidence, warmth of personality, sense of humor, energy, and grace under pressure are essential for someone to thrive in an unfamiliar and competitive environment thousands of miles from home. Some applicants, on the other hand, may have an unusual attractiveness of personality that would enrich the college community, including unusual concern for others or desire to make a

difference. However, any candidate about whom there is evidence of serious weakness of character is rejected.

Most college graduates often report that the education they received from fellow classmates was a critically important component of their college experience. The education that takes place between roommates, in dining halls, classrooms, research groups and extracurricular activities depends on selecting students who will reach out to others. The admissions committees, therefore, take great care to attempt to identify students who will be outstanding "educators," and would contribute towards a great college community.

## **SAT AND TOEFL**

The SAT tests are standardized tests administered by the College Board that most American colleges use to gauge your academic potential objectively against other students from around the world. The TOEFL test is a test of English Proficiency required for non-native speakers of English by some colleges.

Most top colleges require the applicant to submit results of the SAT Reasoning exam as well as results from three SAT Subject Tests. There are options ranging from the Sciences, to languages such as French and German, to Literature, World History, US history, and Math. Most Kenyans usually choose from Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, French or German.

Some colleges have specifications about the subject tests that they require you to do in order to be considered for admission into the school or to particular programs. Again, it is always a good idea to carefully study the instructions for the colleges you're applying to. However, where the college you are applying to does not dictate the SAT II subjects tests you should take, pick those subjects you feel you can perform the best in, even if you think they do not correspond with your intended major.

Most schools will waive the TOEFL requirement if your score in the Writing and Critical Reading sections of the SAT Reasoning exam is good enough. If the college that you are applying to requires that you sit for TOEFL, you can register at any time to take the internet based version at Frise Holdings, the official representative of College Board in Kenya (the address for Frise is given under the "Obtaining Registration Forms" section below). The cost is about Ksh. 16,000.

### **Preparation**

It is highly advisable that you study for the SAT and TOEFL. While you may be an outstanding student, you will still need to familiarize yourself with the format of the test as well as with some content that may not feature in the Kenyan syllabus. You can find practice tests on the internet from such sites as [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) or just googling 'SAT practice tests'. There are also quite a number of books one can use to prepare for the SAT e.g. Princeton Review and Barron's. One can get the books at the Text Book Centre in Sarit Centre, Nairobi, and Book Point along Moi Avenue, Nairobi, among other places.

Test-prep courses typically familiarize you with the layout of the exam and test-taking strategies, and they show you how to use time wisely so that, when test day arrives, you can give your full concentration to the questions themselves. Colleges generally don't mind retakes, but they are mainly interested in your best scores and in seeing how well you can do. There is a misguided popular belief that the SAT and TOEFL are very easy examinations and thus should not be taken too seriously. They are easy enough for any decent student to be able to pass. However, you will need high scores to compete with the thousands of other international students who will be seeking the same college spots. Doing well in these tests puts you above the rest of the applicant pool and improves your chances of getting into the competitive colleges that usually offer better scholarship packages. One should prepare for these tests as intensively as they prepare for KCSE or O/A level examinations.

The SAT I contains Writing, Critical Reading and Math sections. It is easy to scoop an 800 in the Math section as long as you prepare well and are very fast and accurate in the exam. Most non-native speakers of English find the Critical Reading and Writing sections more challenging. The Critical Reading section, for instance, contains long passages with difficult vocabulary. It will therefore be necessary for a candidate to learn as much vocabulary as they can in order to tackle this section. The SAT preparation books give strategies on how to learn new vocabulary and how to acquire other important test-taking skills.

## **Score Reports**

SAT scores are usually available online – on [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) – within 3 weeks of the test date. Paper versions of the same are delivered to the students through Frise Holdings, after about 6 weeks.

### **SAT Percentiles**

Your SAT score report will indicate your percentile in every section. This is a measure of how well you performed in relation to other students who have sat for the SAT for entry in college in the same year as you (not those who sat for the test on the same day as you only). If for instance your percentile is 99, it indicates your score was better than 99% of the test takers. The higher your percentile the better.

### **Mid 50 SAT Percentiles**

Most colleges will usually publish the mid 50 SAT percentiles for the average incoming class. This represents the scores of the mid 50 percent of students admitted to the college (it excludes the top and the bottom quarters). For example in an entering class of 1000 students the mid 50 SAT percentile would be range of marks between what the 250<sup>th</sup> student scored and what the 750<sup>th</sup> student scored.

## **Obtaining the Registration Forms**

### **IN NAIROBI**

Frise Holdings Ltd.  
Professional Centre  
2nd Floor, Office LH12  
Ngong Rd.  
Nairobi

Tel: 0719-648129; 0731-377265

Email: [friseinfo@frise.co.ke](mailto:friseinfo@frise.co.ke)

### **IN MOMBASA**

The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa  
Mbuyuni Road  
Kizingo Mombasa  
KENYA

Mailing address:  
P.O. Box 90066  
Mombasa  
KENYA

Tel: (+254) 041 2225298, 2230930, 2226837, 2229859

Fax: (+254) 041 2227982

## **IN ELDORET**

Genesis overseas links have been appointed by Frise Holdings to receive registrations from candidates in the Eldoret area. They have agreed to charge an upcountry registration fee of only Ksh200/= per registration over and above the cost of the SAT registration to cover administration and shipment costs.

Their contact details are:

Genesis Overseas Links  
2nd Floor, Tabain Plaza, Ronald Ngala St, Eldoret  
PO BOX 4969, Eldoret 30100  
Tel: 0532031241 Cell: 0726633463 EMail: [genesislinks@yahoo.com](mailto:genesislinks@yahoo.com)

## **IN KIJABE**

Rift Valley Academy

Postal Address:  
P.O. Box 80  
Kijabe 00220  
KENYA

### **Telephone**

(020) 3246-243  
From outside of Kenya, try 254-20-3246- 243  
FAX 254-20-3246-111

## **Registration Requirements**

If you are taking the tests in Kenya you will have to pay for them in cash – either Kenya Shillings or USD. The costs are:

SAT 1 -	Ksh. 6,400
SAT 2 -	Ksh. 6,100 (2 subjects)
	Ksh. 6,500 (3 subjects)
TOEFL-	Ksh. 16,000

### **Note:**

- You can't do both SAT 1 & 2 on the same day so you don't have to register for both at the same time.
- At Frise holdings any questions regarding the registration will be answered.
- The directions for Frise Holdings give their actual new location. Some websites may not have this updated information.
- Its advisable to register as early as you can to avoid last minute rush and the long queues as people rush to beat the deadline on the last day.
- There are test centres in major towns such as Nairobi, Eldoret and Mombasa. In the registration forms fill in your most convenient centre. A list of the test centres is provided at the registration centre.

## TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS

This is one of those parts of the application which many Kenyan applicants routinely fail to take seriously. Given that recommendations do not play any role in the Kenyan College Admission process, many Kenyan teachers may not be aware of what constitutes a good college recommendation. Any applicant must, therefore, make every effort to ensure they brief those writing their recommendations on what it should entail.

Most competitive schools require at least two recommendations from teachers and school counselors. The most selective schools usually require three. It's much better to get recommendations from teachers with whom you've established a friendship. You should approach a teacher who knows you intimately and would therefore be in a better position to appraise your particular interests and achievements; don't necessarily think the most popular teacher at school will write you the best letter of recommendation. Give your teachers plenty of time to compose recommendations for you. The best time to request them would be during the school holidays when they are not under the pressure of the school schedule. Do not approach them too close to the deadlines. In selecting teachers to write your recommendations, do select ones who know you from different contexts and therefore ones who can write about you from different perspectives. Of course there will be shared experiences between the different teachers, but you should ensure your recommendations span the entire breadth of your secondary school experience by carefully selecting the teachers writing them.

By reading the recommendation, the admission officer should have an idea of a student's academic achievement, intellectual promise, quality of writing, creativity, original thought, productive class discussion, respect accorded by faculty, disciplined work habits, maturity, motivation, leadership, integrity, reaction to setbacks, concern for others, self-confidence, initiative and independence. The above must be supported with specific anecdotes/examples. For instance, Ben's recommendation may read: "Ben is a very creative and proactive young man; once he learned the complexities of creating a bio-energy generator, he led a team of classmates in designing a simpler yet more power-saving version to use on his science congress project."

To help applicants get the best recommendations from their teachers, we have included a Teacher Recommendation Data Sheet in the Appendix. By honestly filling the Data Sheet and submitting it to your teacher, you will give them the information they need to write an effective recommendation.

Colleges are also interested to know how you spend your time away from school. Some applicants may have been involved in substantial extra-curricular activities with their church, youth group, etc, either during the school term or during the school holidays, while others may have been in employment. Getting recommendations from mentors, patrons, or employers who worked with you in such activities may give additional invaluable insight about you.

The recommendations should be typed or printed on school letterheads and signed by the teacher. The teacher may photocopy it for each school, so long as they certify each of the copies. Finally, since your teachers invest a lot of time and energy in writing the letters and hope that you will be successful, they would like to know the outcome of your application. Be courteous - please inform them of your admissions decisions.

## **EXTRACURRICULAR LIST**

You need to put a lot of time and effort into listing extracurricular activities and community involvement. Each college application includes a section where you are asked to list your high school extracurricular activities and awards. The college will look at your activities and see how they will fit with the campus and also observe whether you stick with things and see them through. They will also be interested to see if you have been involved in any new initiatives or held leadership positions. The college would also like to see if you have received academic as well as extracurricular awards while in high school. Please note that the activities portion is more important than the awards section and receives more scrutiny. When the admissions committee sees that a student is able to maintain outstanding grades and become proficient in some other area e.g. sports, music, writing, drama, etc. it speaks volumes about the student's ability to manage time and maintain priorities as well as potential to contribute to the larger community.

Make the description of your activities as explicit and specific as possible e.g. if you were involved in drama or music festivals it is not just enough to say "participated in drama" but provide more specific information on your specific role. For example, you may have written the play and named the best script writer at provincial level. Include activities that you were involved in outside of the school as well as school-based activities in your application. Things you do in the church or in the local community and neighborhood are also considered extracurricular activities.

The colleges are very interested in admitting students with diverse talents and hobbies. Do not just list activities but also express your passion in them and indicate that you would like to pursue them in college.

## **THE PERSONAL ESSAY**

The essay is very important. Out of all the grades and scores represented in your application it is the only thing that gives you a face and ultimately the only way that you can let your personality shine through to the college admissions committee. The essay is the face of the application. It should give the admissions committee an idea of what you will bring to the incoming class, the sorts of interests and activities you are involved in, and what concrete goals you have. The essay should complete the profile they gain from your grades, scores, recommendations and talents and therefore you should use the opportunity to tell them something new about yourself, something not covered elsewhere in your application.

The best way to approach your personal essay is to imagine that you have five minutes with someone from the admissions committee. How would you go about making the best case for yourself while holding the listener's interest? What would you include and omit in your story? Figuring out the answer to these questions is critical to successfully writing an effective essay.

In thinking about your essay remember to:

Be Interesting. Be Concise. Be Personal.

### **The Personal Touch**

Write about things that are truly meaningful to you. Include anecdotes, details and imagery that are specific to your life. A personal epiphany, tragedy, life change is not essential to producing a good essay. The essay does not have to have confidential details, be very emotional or even inspiring. You do not have to be very preoccupied with finding the perfect topic. You can share stories of determination to achieve a particular goal, showing that you understand the need for hard work and perseverance, stories of effort and achievement, stories on interests and particular activities, stories of people who have influenced your life, etc. In fact, almost anything that has had a significant influence on you can be woven into an application essay. Note, however, that you could have a very important experience to describe but if you do not explain its impact and influence on you or its importance to you it will still not be personal. Simply giving an interesting story or event is not enough.

You should also avoid making claims without the experience or the ability to back them up. Make sure you understand your topic well as well as the implications of the conclusions you make. If you feel strongly about a particular career and want to highlight it, do so. However, admissions officers know that high school students rarely have specific or unusual plans. A good idea is to write small i.e. keep the topic close to your life and write only about what you know about.

### **Why a Top-Tier Education?**

In describing your interest in a particular college/group of colleges, watch out that you do not describe your point in such a clichéd, prepackaged way as to make your reader cringe. For example, you should not start your essay, "I have always wanted to" or "I have always known that \_\_\_\_\_ was my calling." Instead, you should relate specific personal anecdotes to explain your motivation to apply to a given school. You should additionally avoid mistakes like discussing the school's rank or prestige, or simply offering generic praise as your reasons for applying to a given college. Instead, if applicable, mention specific reasons why a particular college – or group of colleges – appeals to you.

## **PERSONAL/ALUMNI INTERVIEWS**

Personal interviews with college alumni give applicants the best opportunity to bring their applications to life. The interview mainly seeks to appreciate the energy, enthusiasm, passion, and commitment you bring to your interests and aspirations. The interview also gives the college a more in-depth insight into your personal qualities – your warmth, integrity, maturity, and motivation – which are important aspects of the admissions decision. For many colleges the personal interview is optional and is usually determined by the availability of interviewers.

The personal interview may not be the determining factor in the admissions process for some colleges but a lack of coherence between the interview report and the rest of your application could call the integrity of your application into question. The most important preparation for the interviews is therefore to ensure that your college application genuinely reflects your personal qualities and profile. You must be able to project the same individual described in your written applications in the interview.

Most personal interviews are not expected to answer any specific questions and interview questions will vary substantially and depend on an interviewer's preference and style. The most effective preparation strategy is therefore similar to the preparation for essay-writing. You should give much thought to yourself, your experiences, and your goals, and thereby formulate an interesting and persuasive presentation of your own personal qualities, whatever topic the interviewer steers the discussion into. You must ask yourself why you are interested in a top-tier education and what attributes, experiences, insights or goals qualify or prepare you for the challenge of such an education.

The interviewer is also an important source of information about the college you are applying to. Use the interviews to learn more about the college and its programs. Interviewers will appreciate insightful questions about the college. Do not ask questions that betray a lack of appreciation of readily-available information or out of a feeling of being expected to. Since your interviewer may be the only college-affiliate you'll meet before your admission and/or expected matriculation, the knowledge you gain from the interview may be critical in helping you choose to matriculate in the given college. Approach the interview, therefore, with the same judiciousness of an interviewer.

Finally, do not be scared or intimidated. Most interviewers choose to talk about issues and topics you are interested in or are passionate about and will find ways to make you comfortable. The more relaxed you are, the better you will be able to illustrate your personal qualities. You may also be comforted to remember that only few students in Kenya get interview invites. An invite will therefore signify you already stand a strong chance of admission.

If you forget everything else about this article, remember this:

Know your story well; Relax; Enjoy yourself.

## NETWORKS OFFERING FREE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS MENTORSHIP

### Zawadi Africa

The **Zawadi Africa Education Fund** is a program designed to provide scholarships to academically gifted girls from disadvantaged backgrounds from Africa to pursue higher education in the US. The Zawadi Africa Education Fund is based on the highly successful Kennedy/Mboya Student airlifts of the 1960's, through a partnership with individuals and institutions with an interest in creating leadership opportunities for girls in Africa. It is based at Hazina Towers (16<sup>th</sup> floor). The program aims at helping the applicants forward their application forms to the universities in the US and also advises on how to appropriately apply for financial aid. The students are also engaged in various change and leadership conferences to prepare them for life abroad. After admissions, the students are networked with other Zawadi girls in their schools for easy adaptation to the school environment.

Zawadi Africa is open to all girls who have completed secondary education provided they scored a minimum of B+ in the KCSE and can demonstrate financial need. To join Zawadi, pick the application forms at their office in Nairobi and complete them. Applicants are required to write their autobiography as part of the application process. After submitting the application one is invited for a personal interview. A selection committee reviews the applications and communicates its decision to the applicant.

Contact Information:

Rose Adhiambo  
Program Administrator  
P.O.BOX 59949-00200  
Nairobi

Hazina Towers  
16th Floor  
ICRI Office  
Monrovia Street  
Nairobi, Kenya  
Cell: 0722580596  
Landline: 0202305655  
Website: [www.zawadiafrica.org](http://www.zawadiafrica.org)

### Kenya Scholar Athlete Project (KenSAP)

The **Kenya Scholar-Athlete Project** helps bright students from an underserved region of Kenya gain admission to elite colleges in the United States. The Project selects its students—about a dozen each year—primarily on the basis of their performance on the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination. The Project's target region is the western Rift Valley Province. During selection, considerable weight is attached to the students' family background, with strong preference given to those who have demonstrably overcome adversity. A large majority of the Project's students come from peasant farming families; many are first-generation high school, nearly all are first-generation university. On the day the exam results are announced, Kenya's national newspapers list the names of the 100 top scorers in the country as a

whole (300,000 test takers) and in each of the eight provinces. Students from the Project's target region whose names appear in these newspaper lists are sent invitations to apply for admission to the program and to attend a tryout. The application form is quite detailed and requires several essays; the tryout consists of a brief interview and a 1500-meter run.

Contact Information:

Website: [www.kensap.org](http://www.kensap.org)

### **Equity Pre-University Mentorship Program**

As part of its CSR Equity Bank picks the top male and female students in the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Examination (KCSE) in every district where it has a branch. These students who are so picked are offered paid internships in various sectors of the bank and assisted in applying for admission to the best institutions of higher learning in the world.

## **CONCLUSION**

Ensure that you pay attention to detail in filling your applications because simple typographical errors can sometimes have a detrimental effect on your chances. Keep on top of deadlines and manage your applications with utmost care. It helps to have a separate folder for each college to which you are applying and a checklist to keep track of the requirements.

The aim of this guide is not to discourage you with very many requirements and make you feel that you do not qualify, but to show you what you need to highlight out of your own experience in order to maximize your chances for admission. We hope this guide has assisted you in clarifying the requirements and the process of application to colleges in the USA and increased your confidence in producing an outstanding application. College admissions is not an exact science. Presenting yourself well on paper will make a very big difference in setting you apart from the crowd and in improving your chances for admission.

It's never too early to get started on your applications. The first step is to begin to narrow down the list of colleges you are considering and then to request information and applications. Register for the SAT and TOEFL tests as soon as possible. The amount of research, applications and paperwork in this process can be overwhelming, especially when you have no guidance to ensure you're on the right path, and no assurances that it will be fruitful. However, the benefits in the long run can far outweigh the costs, so as you think of applying, concentrate not on the inconvenience in the short run but on what you may be loosing if you do not even try.

## APPENDIX A: Teacher Recommendation Data Sheet

**Teacher's Name:**

**Student's Name:**

**E-mail address:**

**Phone:**

**Students:** While it's relatively easy to receive a mediocre recommendation, you will need a glowing review to stand out from the crowd. Be honest in your answers as this will best help your teacher to produce a more thoughtful and effective recommendation.

**Teacher:** Thank you for agreeing to write this recommendation. Please use the student's worksheet as you form your letter of recommendation keeping in mind that your input will be greatly valued by the admission officers reviewing the student for admission and possibly, scholarship. A good recommendation is positive proof to colleges that in addition to a strong academic record, a student has many other outstanding qualities. Recommendations also provide the opportunity for a third party to evaluate a student's academic ability, extracurricular accomplishments as well as his/her personality. The colleges are particularly interested in the student's intellectual promise, motivation, relative maturity, integrity, independence, originality, initiative and leadership potential, capacity for growth, special talents and enthusiasm.

### STUDENT WORKSHEET

1. My potential course of study (major) will be:

2. List the previous courses you have taken within this department and the average grades you earned:

(course)	(grade)	(course)	(grade)
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Why have you asked this particular teacher to write your recommendation letter? (What do you hope this letter will show about you that your transcript and test scores don't?)

4. Describe your performance and contributions to this teacher's class and support it with particular incidences of your contribution. (A significant presentation, discussion, etc.)

5. Based on what your teacher knows about you, what would you like the admissions officer to know about your academic ability? (Highlight strengths, passion, areas for improvement in the subject, etc.)

6. Describe an activity, a project, a paper or presentation from the teacher's class/other interactions which you enjoyed or are most proud of.
7. Describe below the extracurricular activities or other noteworthy activities supervised by the teacher, i.e. student government, drama. . Activities should be listed as school and community, volunteer and paid, athletic and academic. Capture some of the memorable/defining moments while in these activities.
8. Remind the teacher of any interactions you have had with them outside the classroom through clubs, volunteer work, school trips, sports etc. Describe any memorable conversations or funny experiences you have had with this teacher.
9. What positive adjectives could this teacher use to describe you and give an example? (E.g., *Creative* – Once we learned the complexities of creating a bio-energy generator, I led a team of classmates in designing a simpler version to use on our science congress project.)
10. Were your grades in the teacher's class affected by any personal or outside obstacles? If you have not done particularly well in the class, are there any reasons to explain why? (Your teacher should be able to use this information to highlight what you did since then to improve)
11. Related to the subject being taught, have you done any out of class projects or activities that enhanced your classroom experience? (E.g., an internship or public speaking, science congress, poetry, yearbook activities which were helped through English class.)
12. What else would you like the teacher to know that will help them in writing the best possible recommendation for you?

## APPENDIX B: US National Universities Offering Good Financial Aid to International Students

UNIVERSITY	# Students	% Needy Assisted	% Need Met	Ave. Aid Package	% Intn'l Students	% Intn'l Assisted	# Intn'l Assisted	SAT Mid 50%			
								Critical Reading	Math	Writing	
Harvard University	6655	100%	100	39,193	10	77%	514	690 - 780	690 - 790	690 - 780	
Stanford University	6564	95%	100	38,500	8	49%	258	660 - 760	680 - 780	670 - 760	
Vanderbilt University	6764	100%	100	37,553	5	9%	29	660 - 750	690 - 770	660 - 750	
Yale University	5258	100%	100	37,223	9	64%	305	700 - 800	700 - 780	700 - 790	
Dartmouth College	4090	100%	100	35,966	6	95%	232	660 - 770	680 - 780	670 - 780	
Princeton University	5029	100%	100	35,744	10	76%	381	690 - 790	700 - 790	700 - 780	
Columbia University	5766	100%	100	35,092	11	32%	203	680 - 770	690 - 780	680 - 770	
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	4218	100%	100	34,968	8	89%	301	650 - 760	720 - 800	660 - 760	
Tulane University	7160	100%	93	34,691	2	82%	117	630 - 700	620 - 700	630 - 710	
University of Southern California	16445	100%	100	34,545	11	14%	262	620 - 710	650 - 740	640 - 730	
University of Chicago	5063	100%	100	34,372	10	13%	66	690 - 780	680 - 780	670 - 760	
Georgetown University	7092	100%	100	34,307	5	15%	53	650 - 750	650 - 750		
Duke University	6416	No report	100	33,562	7	Eligible	Eligible	660 - 750	680 - 780	660 - 760	
Brown University	6013	100%	100	33,521	10	29%	174	650 - 760	670 - 780	660 - 770	
University of Pennsylvania	9768	100%	100	33,221	11	26%	276	660 - 750	690 - 780	670 - 760	
Cornell University	13882	100%	100	32,152	10	16%	220	630 - 730	660 - 770		
University of Notre Dame	8367	98%	100	32,113	3	Eligible	Eligible	650 - 750	680 - 760	640 - 730	
Boston University	16295	57%	91	31,650	11	7%	128	570 - 660	600 - 690	590 - 680	
California Institute of Technology	951	100%	100	31,611	11	30%	31	690 - 770	770 - 800	680 - 770	
Lehigh University	4792	56%	100	31,611	5	24%	58	590 - 630	630 - 710		
Johns Hopkins University	4970	91%	94	31,130	11	5%	27	630 - 730	670 - 770	650 - 730	
Washington University in St. Louis	6436	100%	100	31,093	8	Eligible	Eligible	680 - 750	710 - 780		
Tufts University	5146	No report	100	30,363	7	Eligible	Eligible	680 - 750	680 - 750	680 - 760	
Rice University	3279	100%	100	24,981	12	16%	61	640 - 750	680 - 780	650 - 740	
American University	6430	30%	93	27,709	5	0%		590 - 700	580 - 670	580 - 690	
Clark University	2243	63%	94	27,945	11	58%	144	550 - 650	530 - 640	550 - 650	
Wake Forest University	4560	93%	100	29,245	2	4%	4	580 - 690	600 - 700		
Northwestern University	8485	100%	100	29,411	6	7%	37	670 - 750	690 - 780	670 - 750	
Boston College	9171	100%	100	29,586	4	0%		610 - 700	640 - 730	630 - 720	
Emory University	5223	No report	100	29,627	11	7%	42	640 - 730	660 - 750	650 - 740	
University of Rochester	5291	No report	95	30,123	8	Eligible	Eligible	590 - 690	640 - 720	590 - 690	
Carnegie Mellon University	5951	100%	82	26,567	12	Not indicated	Not indicated	620 - 720	670 - 780	620 - 720	
Brandeis University (MA)	3299	99%	84	29,044	12	28%	110	620 - 730	640 - 730	620 - 720	
Case Western Reserve University (OH)	4145	100%	86	34,927	9	Not indicated	Not indicated	590 - 700	650 - 740	590 - 690	
Rensselaer Polytechnic Inst. (NY)	5539	100%	75	30,635	4	Non-need based		102	610 - 700	660 - 750	580 - 680
University of Miami (FL)	9855	100%	84	29,170	12	Non-need based		236	570 - 680	600 - 700	570 - 670
Yeshiva University	2848	No report	76	24,994	7	Non-need based		550 - 690	550 - 680		
George Washington University (DC)	10225	No report	93	37,252	6	Non-need based		176	600 - 690	600 - 690	600 - 690
Pepperdine University	3427	100%	86	32,760	6	Non-need based		51	560 - 660	560 - 680	560 - 660
Syracuse University (NY)	13243	100%	80	25,140	5	Not indicated	Not indicated	510 - 620	540 - 650	520 - 630	
Fordham University	7873	100%	74	23,597	3	Non-need based	Non-need based	570 - 670	570 - 670	570 - 670	

## APPENDIX C: US Liberal Arts Colleges Offering Good Financial Aid to International Students

UNIVERSITY	# Students	% Needy Assisted	% Need Met	Avrg Aid Package	% Intn'l Students	% Int'l Assisted	# Intn'l Assisted	SAT Mid 50%		
								Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Williams College	2,067	100%	100	37,175	6	107%	133	660 - 770	650-760	
Swarthmore College	1,525	100%	100	36,008	7	52%	56	670-760	670-770	670-760
Amherst College	1744	100%	100	37070	10	Eligible	Eligible	660-760	660-760	670-760
Middlebury College	2482	100%	100	35197	10	Eligible	Eligible	640-730	650-730	650-730
Wellesley	2324	100%	100	36064	15	32%	110	640-740	640-730	650-740
Bowdoin College	1777	100%	100	35544	4	32%	23	66-750	660-750	660-750
Pomona	1550	104%	100	36232	4	47%	29	710-780	690-770	690-770
Carleton	2009	100%	100	31789	9	No report	No report	660-760	660-740	670-750
Davidson	1743	100%	100	24899	3	92%	48	630-730	630-710	640-720
Haverford	1190	100%	100	34976	2	55%	13	660-740	640-740	660-750
Claremont McKenna College	1217	100%	100	35534	6	Eligible	Eligible	630-730	660-750	No report
Vassar	2452	100%	100	39,069	6	88%	130	660-750	640-720	660-750
Wesleyan	2787	100%	100	34342	6	83%	139	640-750	650-750	640-740
Grinnel	1688	100%	100	34463	13	68%	149	600-730	620-730	No report
Harvey Mudd	757	100%	100	31455	3	31%	7	680-770	640-790	660-750
Washington and Lee	1759	89%	99	35837	6	64%	68	660-740	660-730	650-730
Smith College	2614	100%	100	33,269	12	39%	121	610-710	580-690	610-710
Colgate University	2825	100%	100	39,758	6	55%	94	630-730	640-730	No report
Hamilton College	1882	100%	100	36,931	6	66%	74	660-740	650-730	65-740
Colby	1838	No report	100	34,919	7	65%	83	630-720	640-720	630-710
Oberlin	2888	100%	100	30403	7	86%	174	640-740	620-710	640-730
Colorado	2000	100%	100	29359	3	93%	56	620-710	620-710	620-710
Bates	1738	88%	100	35342	5	93%	81	620-700	640-710	640-710
Bryn Mawr	1307	100%	100	36562	17	39%	87	600-700	580-680	610-700
Mount Holyoke College	2288	100%	100	35797	23	78%	410	610-730	600-720	620-710
Scripps College	907	100%	100	33879	5	13%	6	640-730	620-700	640-730
Macalester College	1996	100%	100	32533	13	81%	211	660-740	630-710	640-730
Barnard College	2417	100%	100	35689	6	9%	13	630-730	620-710	660-740
Bucknell College	3543	94%	95	26900	3	22%	23	600-680	630-720	600-790
University of Richmond	2925	100%	100	37759	6	61%	107	580-670	590-680	580-690
Kenyon College	1633	100%	98	30190	5	Eligible	Eligible	630-720	600-680	620-730
Occidental	1972	99%	100	34171	1	66%	13	600-700	600-680	610-700
Lafayette	2406	99%	98	35727	7	Eligible	Eligible	570-670	600-710	580-680
University of the South	1469	100%	95	31160	2	95%	28	570-690	580-670	560-670
Trinity College	2341	100%	100	36504	6	72%	101	590-690	610-690	610-710
Whitman	1515	100%	94	28133	2	Eligible	Eligible	630-730	610-700	610-710
Bard	1939	100%	90	31959	15	74%	214	680-740	650-680	No report
Connecticut	1906	100%	100	31023	5	Eligible	Eligible	610-700	610-690	620-710
DePauw	2396	100%	90	29729	9	78%	168	530-650	550-670	530-640
Franklin and Marshall	2179	100%	100	32885	7	96%	147	600-690	630-690	No report
Union College NY	2194	99%	99	35815	4	71%	62	590-670	620-700	580-670
Dickinson College	2376	99%	97	34568	6	91%	130	600-690	590-680	590-690
Skidmore	2674	100%	100	34515	3	Eligible	Eligible	570-680	580-670	580-680
Gettysburg College	2692	99%	100	31946	2	80%	43	610-690	610-690	No report
Pitzer College	1043	100%	100	37361	3	No report	No report	610-690	590-680	No report
Reed College	1452	100%	100	33161	6	68%	59	660-760	620-710	650-740
St Olaf College	3099	100%	100	28081	4	Eligible	Eligible	590-710	590-690	No report
Denison college	2267	100%	94	32758	7	Eligible	Eligible	600-700	600-680	No report
Wabash	883	94%	98	28136	9	73%	58	500-600	530-660	470-600
St Lawrence University	2295	100%	92	36,029	5	109%	125	570-640	570-650	560-640
Wheaton College (Norton MA)	1632	100%	96	31605	8	25%	32	570-680	560-670	No report
Agnes Scott	842	100%	91	30011	11	54%	50	520-650	490-620	520-640
Lawrence University (Appleton WI)	1495	100%	95	27500	7	103%	108	590-730	600-710	590-68
Beloit College	1407	100%	95	28126	9	62%	78	580-710	560-670	No report
Earlham College	1127	100%	91	26700	19	61%	131	560-690	530-640	550-660
Illinois Wesleyan	2066	100%	92	25359	4	92%	76	570-680	600-720	No report