



A TRIO Upward Bound Guide to College Financial Aid

UPWARD BOUND

- **\$25 for the first school,**
\$16 for each additional
- **Fee waivers** are automatically provided to eligible students when you apply



The **CSS Profile** (College Scholarship Service Profile) is an **online application** from the **College Board** used by about **400 colleges and scholarship programs** to award **non-federal financial aid**, like school-based grants and scholarships.



- Required by many private and selective colleges.
- Helps schools understand your complete financial picture.
- Can open the door to additional financial aid beyond what the FAFSA offers.



- Most students apply **senior year**, starting **October 1st**.
- Not all colleges require the CSS Profile—**check with each college**.
- **Divorced or separated parents** may need to submit **separate applications**.



- Student and parent income, tax returns, and W-2s
- Family size and number in college
- Bank statements and other financial records
- Non-custodial parent info (if applicable)



- Apply online only at **cssprofile.org**
- Sign in with your **College Board** account
- Learn more on the “Complete the Application” page



Submit your application.
Confirm deadlines with
your institutions and
submit by the correct
date.

Need help with the CSS Profile? | Our TRIO UB staff is here to support you, don't hesitate to reach out!



The following colleges, universities, and scholarship programs use CSS Profile and/or IDOC as part of their financial aid process for some or all of their financial aid applicants in the populations listed below



Student Union West, Room 89

YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

10 STEPS TO PREPARE FOR COLLEGE

9TH/10TH GRADE YEAR

1 CHALLENGING COURSES

Enroll in AP, AICE, IB, honors, or dual enrollment classes to prepare academically for college.

2 MEET WITH YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Stay connected for advice, resources, and support throughout your college journey.

3 GET INVOLVED

Colleges look for well-rounded students. Volunteer, join clubs, or take on leadership roles.

4 REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Build relationships with teachers and mentors who can write strong letters.

5 RESEARCH 'BEST FIT' SCHOOLS

Look at location, size, majors, cost, support services, and student life to find schools that match your needs

6 VISIT COLLEGES

Tour campuses to see what feels right for you. Ask questions and explore different environments.

11TH/12TH GRADE YEAR

7 STAY ORGANIZED

Create folders or a digital spreadsheet to track application materials, deadlines, and progress.

8 PREPARE FOR TESTING ACT, CLT, PSAT, SAT, NMSQT

Study for free with Khan Academy or ACT.org; Ask for fee waivers to test at no cost!

9 COMPLETE THE FAFSA & CSS PROFILE + APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

Start FAFSA on Oct. 1 at studentaid.gov. Some colleges also require the CSS Profile: cssprofile.org

Apply for scholarships!

- College Financial Aid & Admissions website/office
- Local businesses or non-profit organizations
- Your high school guidance counselor / staff
- Foundations or "Direct Support Organizations"
- <https://www.fastweb.com>

10 APPLY FOR EARLY ADMISSIONS

Apply early, hear back early! "Early Action" (non-binding) and "Early Decision" (binding) can boost your chances and give you more time to plan. Most deadlines are in November of your senior year—check with each college/university for details!



WHY COLLEGE?

- College grads earn 84% more than high school grads over a lifetime
- Build lifelong relationships, mentors, and career opportunities
- Gain independence, personal growth, and a path to your goals

