

Senior Year Timeline

Choose the path that's right for you and your future, including a 4-year college degree, a 2-year college degree, trade school, apprenticeship, military, or certificate program. Start preparing.

Visit delawaregoestocollege.org/senior-timeline for direct links and worksheets.

September – October: Get Information

Talk to your counselor or advisor: Talk about different opportunities. Many paths lead to similar careers. You could earn a certificate, complete an apprenticeship or earn an associate or bachelor's degree. Investigate what each one may cost and what salary you can earn with different credentials.

Ask your counselor about fee waivers for college applications and SAT/ACT tests: Your parent/guardian can authorize your school to use your USDA Free and Reduced-Price Meals status for SAT/ACT and college application fee waivers. Not sure if you qualify? Check with your school.

Organize program requirements: List all application deadlines, including testing and financial aid requirements, for each program that interests you. Use a checklist to stay organized: delawaregoestocollege.org/cam-students-2

Request letters of recommendation: Reach out to your contacts and send them a list of your accomplishments to include in the letter.

Prepare for College Application Month: October 15 – November 16, 2018

Write your application essay: Draft your essays and request feedback from parents, teachers, or other trusted adults.

Apply to Delaware colleges for free: All Delaware colleges are waiving application fees from mid-October to the end of November. Attend special events at your school to learn more about college and fill out applications during your school's College Application Week.



Work on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): Finish the FAFSA between October 1 and March 1 to maximize the financial aid you may receive. Go to fafsa.ed.gov. Add the schools that you are applying to on your FAFSA. This is a FREE application.

Check the FAFSA priority deadlines: Schools have different deadlines. Submit your FAFSA by those dates. Funds are limited and may be awarded on a first-come basis.

Search and apply for scholarship: Start at scholarships.delawaregoestocollege.org. You should complete your FAFSA by March to meet most scholarship deadlines.

Complete the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®: Some programs and colleges require this to see if you qualify for grants and scholarships. Applications open October 1. student.collegeboard.org/css-financial-aid-profile

Review SEED/Inspire deadlines: Delaware high school graduates must start college in the fall following graduation to be eligible.

- SEED Scholarship: You need at least a 2.5 GPA (80%) and can go tuition-free for your associate degree at the University of Delaware or Delaware Tech (up to 6 semesters).
- Inspire Scholarship: You need a 2.75 GPA (80%) and can receive approximately \$3,900 per year (up to 8 semesters) at Delaware State University.

delawaregoestocollege.org/step-2-find-state-aid

November – December: **Apply**

Research a military career: If you are considering the military, talk to recruiters. You will need to consider branches, careers, time commitments and education offerings. You'll also need to take the ASVAB test. Plan to apply to a few colleges as a backup.

Work on your applications: Some schools have deadlines as early as November.

Continue applying for scholarships and completing your FAFSA!

Check out the Academic Common Market: You may be able to pay in-state tuition at some out-of-state universities. Go to delawaregoestocollege.org/acm to search schools and programs.

Send your SAT, ACT and AP scores: These scores can help with scholarships, course placement or selection to certain programs or majors.

Attend a college fair: Military, certificate and apprenticeship programs also participate.

- Kent County: Nov. 13, 2018, 7-9 p.m., Polytech HS
 - New Castle County: Nov. 14, 2018, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Carpenter Center, UD; How to Pay for College Presentation, 6:15-7 p.m.
 - Sussex County: Nov. 15, 2018, 7-9 p.m., Sussex Tech HS
- delawaregoestocollege.org/events-calendar

Consider the Common Application: More than 500 colleges use this form. Many colleges waive application fees if you have a fee waiver or explain that you can't afford it. Check commonapp.org for the programs and colleges you are considering.

Send transcripts: Ask your counselor to send your transcript to your chosen programs or colleges.

January – March: **Apply for Financial Aid**

Complete your FAFSA by March 1 to get the maximum aid for which you qualify.

Look at trade programs: If you are considering a trade or apprenticeship program, attend an info session. Learn what type of career the program will lead to, the salary you can expect and what the cost will be. Meet with an adviser to schedule your entrance exam and complete other requirements. Remember to ask about job placement to choose the best option. delawaregoestocollege.org/registered-apprenticeship

April – May: **Decide**

Contact the school's financial aid office with any questions: Know how much aid you will be required to repay. You will need money for non-tuition items: housing, meal plans, books, transportation to/from school, lab/art supplies and computer. Plan for these expenses.

Compare award letters: Examine the financial aid packages offered to you. Some schools may be more affordable than you think! bit.ly/CompareAidCalculator

Choose the best fit: Be sure to weigh the cost of attendance with the salary you might earn to choose the best fit academically and financially.

June – August: **Prepare for Your Next Steps**

Send transcripts: Ask your counselor to send your final transcript to your chosen program or college.

Graduate: Stay on track and celebrate!

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