

The Common Application

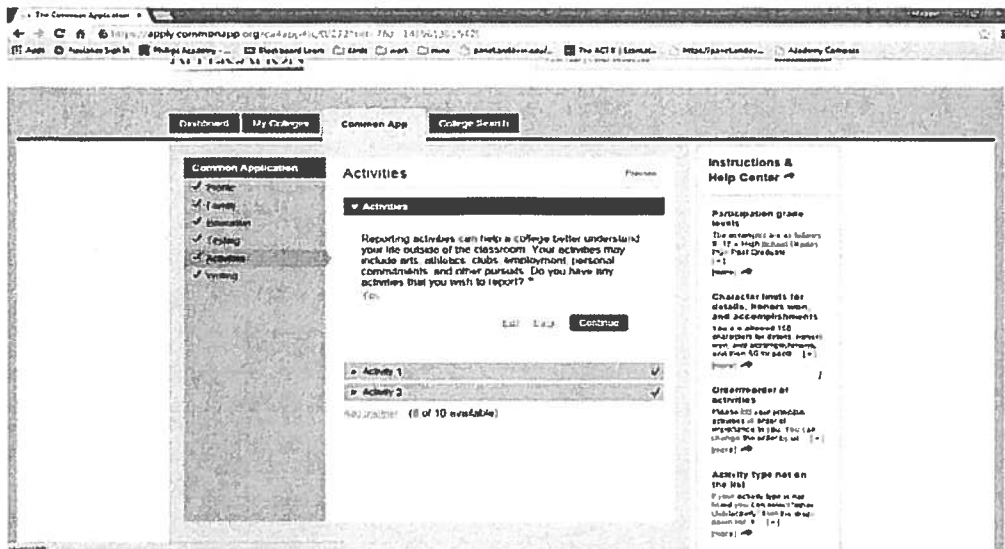
Creating a Common Application Account

- We recommend using Google Chrome as your browser when completing the Common Application.
- To set up your account go to www.commonapp.org. Click “Applicant Log In” and then “Create an Account”.
- Write down your Common App username and password and keep in a secure place, in case you forget either. First and last name for registering with Common App should match what is on your transcript and test score reports. Do not use a nickname. You’ll have a chance to enter a middle name or nickname later.

Once you register, you will see 4 tabs at the top of your page:

- **Dashboard** – will display all of your colleges and the status of your work for each major application component including deadlines and a quick overview of your progress .
- **My Colleges** – provides a list of your colleges in the left hand column and indicates college information such as phone numbers, deadlines, fees, and requirements. This is also where you will complete any college specific questions including additional writing supplements.
- **Common App** – where you complete your general biographical information that is consistent and will be submitted to all of your colleges. This information should be completed first.
- **College Search** – allows you to search for and add different colleges to your Dashboard.

NOTE - Each section has a Preview button next to the section title that will allow you to see what it looks like printed. You should review it every time you complete a section. You can print a copy for your records as well.



Profile Section

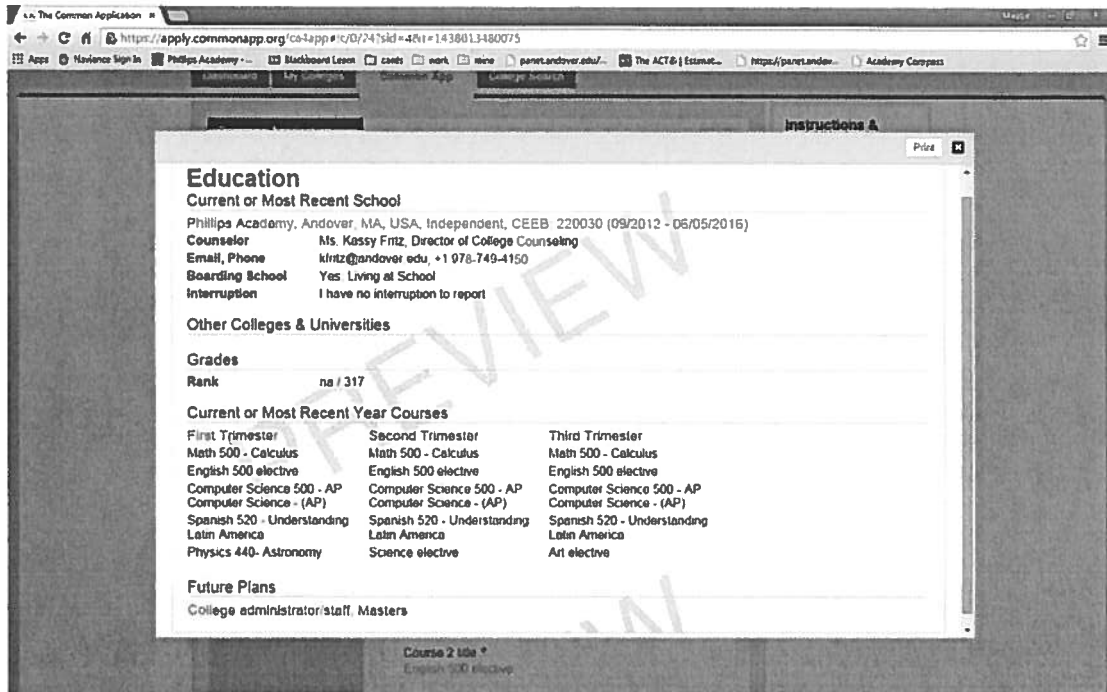
- Each page has a help bar down the right side. When you have questions, start here.
- Enter an email address that is appropriate and that you check frequently as it will be shared with the colleges to which you apply so that they can provide updates regarding your application.
- Enter a phone number that you check and make sure it has an appropriate voicemail message.
- None of the demographic information is required. These responses will help the college target information to you and will be used in Department of Education data.
- If you are multi-racial or multi-cultural, you can check as many boxes as apply to you.
- Your Social Security number (if you have one) is not required unless you are applying for need-based financial aid. That said, your SSN is often used as an identifying number to match documents. It may be easier for colleges to identify you with your SSN.
- If you are interested in applying for national scholarships, be sure to check “Yes” under Scholarship Information for Scholar Snapp. Your demographic information will automatically be sent to schools where you qualify.
- If application fees (approximately \$70/application) present a financial hardship for your family, you may qualify for a Common Application fee waiver. Select yes and read the requirements. Talk to your college counselor if you have questions.

Family Section

- Before you do this section, ask your parents to tell you:
 - Whether they earned any college degrees
 - If so, confirm how many degrees they have
 - Where they earned those degrees
 - What degree they earned at each college
 - When they earned each degree
- Get the same information for any siblings who have attended college.
- If your parents have multiple college degrees – Bachelor, Masters (like MFA, MBA), and/or PhD – select the number of institutions that granted their degrees.

Education Section

- Graduation Date (high school)
- Counselor information: Enter your local school counselor name/contract information.
- Other Schools – select zero unless you have attended another high school.
- Education Interruption – Talk to your college counselor if you think this applies to you.
- Colleges and Universities – select zero unless you have taken a class for college credit. Select the correct number of colleges if you have taken college courses, including courses at summer programs.
- Community Based Organizations – talk to your college counselor if you think this applies to you.
- Grades:
 - Class Rank
 - Graduating Class Size
 - Cumulative GPA
 - GPA Scale
 - GPA Weighting
- Current Year Courses:
 - Select the maximum number of unique courses you will take senior year. Classes that are year-long can be listed as one course. This part can be a bit confusing so make sure your counselor reviews what is listed.
 - Be specific with fall term courses and include course number and title when listing your classes.
 - However, **DO NOT** use course titles of anticipated winter and spring electives, as these are subject to change. You can just list the department, level number and “elective”.
 - **Only indicate a course level (Accelerated, AP or Honors) if it is in the title of the course.**



- Honors:
 - You can select up to 5 separate awards to enter here.
 - Note honors earned in high school, not earlier.
 - Significant honors that do not fit here can be noted in the Additional Information section at the end of the application.

Testing Section

- Tests Taken:
 - “Do you want to self-report scores?” If you are applying to test optional schools, don’t self-report your scores. If you are not applying to test optional schools, then it is fine to self-report only your best scores. Keep in mind that you will still need to send official score reports to each college from the testing agencies.
 - Second question – no.
- ACT and SAT Tests:
 - If you have multiple SAT and/or ACT test dates, enter your highest section score, even if earned on different test dates.
- AP Scores – report only 4s or 5s.

Activity Section

- You have only 10 unique entries, so choose wisely. Talk to your college counselor if you have more than 10 you’d like to report.
- Add activities by selecting “Add Another” at the bottom of each Activity.
- The “Details, Honors and Accomplishment” section seems to give you significant space to describe your activity.

- You CANNOT attach a resume to your Common Application unless a college requests it in their supplement.

Writing Section

- The essay is no longer required for every college (although most still require it). If a college you are applying to requires it, it will be noted here.
- Personal Essay – Bold, italics and underline are the only formatting options in the essay.
- No titles on essays.
- Discipline History – Talk to your college counselor if you need to reply “yes” to either of these questions.
- Additional Information – This is a good place for anything that you think is missing. Remember, you CANNOT upload a resume here. Talk to your college counselor if you think you should use this space.

My Colleges

Be sure to enter all of your colleges that utilize the Common Application. You can always delete a college if you don't apply, but not after you submit your application. Make sure that your Common Application list and Naviance (if applicable) list are always updated.

Select one of your colleges and click on Recommenders and FERPA on the left hand side. Here you'll complete the FERPA Release Authorization. We cannot submit recommendations or other school documents until this has been completed. You only have to do this step once. We suggest that you waive your rights to your recommendations. If you have any questions about this, please speak to your college counselor. **Once you fill it out, please note that you cannot go back and change your decision to waive your rights.**

Each college has three sections:

- Questions – Typically major choice, connections, points of contact.
- Recommenders and FERPA– Because we use Naviance to submit documents, you don't have to do anything here unless you have a non-PA recommender. You can add non-PA recommenders in this section by selecting the “Invite and Manage Recommenders” in gray at the top right of the page. Some schools may not allow you to do this. If they do allow outside recommendations, you should see a section titled Other Recommenders and it will list how many can be submitted.
- Review and Submit Common App – Select to start the submission process or to get a Print Preview of the application.
 - Review your applications with your college counselor before you submit them to colleges.
 - You will be asked to review a PDF of the application, provide an electronic signature, and pay the application fee in this section.

If a college requires a writing supplement, they will have two more sections:

- Questions- There may be extra essays in this section. Be sure to edit them as carefully as your main essay.
- Review and Submit Writing Supplement- make sure you fully complete this section and submit it. Some colleges may not consider your application complete until it is received.

To print a full draft of your application

- You can either print out each section separately by using the Preview button next to the Section title in each section.
OR
- Complete the Common Application, including a draft essay.
- Complete the College questions for a college in your My Colleges section.
- When you have all green checks, select Review & Submit- Common App. Follow the steps until you produce a PDF. When your application produces a PDF, print and/or save as a PDF.
- ***DON 'T GO ANY FURTHER!!*** Don't complete the steps to submit the application. Delete this college if you aren't planning on applying there.

Once you are done

Once you have submitted the application to one college, it is possible to return to the application and edit it for future submissions to other colleges.

You can track the status of each application in the "Dashboard" section of the Common Application.

- **Green ✓ = Submitted**
- **Grey – = Not Applicable**
- **Red – = Not Required**
- **Yellow ● = Pending**

The dashboard allows you to view and sort by deadline (it will also indicate when a college application deadline has passed). You can remove any colleges from the list by clicking on the trash can in the right hand column.