

GETTING STARTED ON THE COMMON APPLICATION

Completing The Common Application allows you to apply to several universities with one primary application. There will be an application fee for each campus you apply to.

You must first to see if the university you are applying to uses The Common Application. The Common Application does not have one common deadline; deadlines vary for each university.

1. Prepare. Have available:

- unofficial transcript of 9-11th grades
- social security number (US students)
- SAT/ACT scores
- TOEFL scores (International students)
- Completed “Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire”
- credit card

2. Go to: “The Common Application” on your Internet browser. *It is preferable to use Chrome.*

3. Click on “Create a New Account”. Your username will be your email address, so make sure you use one that you check ... on a regular basis. You’ll also be asked to set up a password. Write it down in a place where you will be able to find it when you need it.

4. Add some colleges to your list — After you log in, click on the College Search tab to add schools to your My Colleges list.

5. Know what each college will require of you — The information you share through the Common App will tell colleges a lot about you, but colleges will also have additional questions that are unique to them. You can get to each school’s “Questions” from your Dashboard, where you’ll find them listed under Application and Writing Supplement. (Not all schools will have a separate Writing Supplement.) You can also search for deadlines, Teacher Evaluation requirements, and other information on the Requirements Grid.

6. The Dashboard can be considered the “home base” for managing your Common Application process. At a glance, you can quickly check on the progress of your Common App for all schools you’ve added to your list.

7. Before you “invite” your counselor and teachers to complete a recommendation on The Common Application, you must ask them personally. Give them a copy of your completed “Letter of Recommendation Questionnaire”, and make sure they have at least two weeks’ notice before your college deadline.

8. Here is my info as your counselor, to include: Mrs. Anna M. Dickan Guidance Counselor adickan@stpaulhs.org 562-698-6246 ext. 723. I will be completing an Initial Report, Mid-year Report, and Final Report for you on The Common Application, and I will upload scanned transcripts on each report.

9. Provide all information you are asked for on each page of the application.

10. Refer to your unofficial transcript to enter your courses/grades. Only report UC-approved courses marked with “p” or “p+”.

11. International students: refer to transcripts from China (or other country) for grades before you came to St. Paul High School. You must enter these grades and course names exactly as they are given on your transcript. →

12. Complete The Common Application in at least a few sittings, rather than all at once.

13. Prepare your required essay on a WORD doc first, then copy/paste into your application.

14. Here are The Common Application Fall 2016 prompts: (Respond to one prompt, max of 650 words total).

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

2. The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?

4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma-anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.

5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

15. Forward all test scores (SAT/ACT) from CollegeBoard to each university you apply to on The Common Application (electronic). The counselors cannot do this for you. TOEFL scores must be forwarded by international students.

16. Be sure to submit your application for each university before its deadline. Do not wait until the last day! ☺