

15 Tips for Completing the 2011-2012 UC Application



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Introduction: Here are 15 tips for completing the UC's newly revamped application system. Remember, while the UC application opened on October 1, you cannot submit your application until November 1-30.

But remember-this is a tough year for University of California (UC) admissions. More students than ever are applying, the November 30 application deadline for freshmen and transfers is fixed, and you need to make sure your application is correct and complete.

You only need to complete and submit one application for the 10 campus UC system. Unlike the CSU system, you get to submit your application to all the campuses you select at once. You also pay one total application fee (by number of campuses) to a centralized payment system.

Please let us know if you need help convincing your family of the value of letting you attend a UC, even one a few hours away from home.

1. **Have a working email address:** Create an email address if you don't have one. Gmail and hotmail are free and easy to use. Your high school may provide you with an email as well. **YOU MUST CHECK YOUR EMAIL OFTEN.** The UC campuses will only communicate with you via email. Please save your user name and password.
2. **Investigate how the UCs evaluate applications.** The UCs look at several factors when evaluating applications:
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/how-applications-reviewed/index.html> **Also see how each campus admits students:** The UC campuses use different methods of reading and evaluating applications. Check the right side of this site to see how the UC campuses you are applying to evaluate applications.
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/california-residents/index.html>
3. **Collect high school and college transcripts:** Get a copy of your high school and/or college transcripts. Make sure all your transcripts are correct as you need these transcripts to complete the UC application. Remember, the UCs use your self-reported grades to make admissions decisions.
4. **Determine your UC eligibility-**

California (CA) residents

1. Those applying as freshmen qualify for UC admissions if you will have completed your A-G courses with at least a 3.0 GPA (3.4 for non-residents) and no grade lower than a C- by the end of 12th grade. You must also take the required tests (see below in number 5). Here is a way to check your eligibility:
2. There are state-wide (top 12.5%), local (top 4% of a school), examination, and admissions by exception ways to qualify. Check to see if you qualify... <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/california-residents/index.html>
3. Transfers need to check the academic requirements for transferring by checking whether you have 60 semester or 90 quarter transferrable units. You need to have completed the majority of the IGETC and major requirements for your campus.

Non CA residents

Out of state, international and home-schooled students must provide other materials.

<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/other-applicants/index.html>
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/freshman/other-applicants/index.html>

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5. **Make sure to have taken the required tests:** The UCs require current 12th graders to take the SAT or ACT w/writing AND two SAT Subject Tests. The UCS will accept December test scores. They count your highest overall test date score.
6. **Send your test scores to UC campuses.** Send your SAT, SAT Subject Test, and ACT scores to only one UC campus. Then the UCs will send your scores to the other UC campuses to which you apply for free. Remember, the UCs only use your highest overall one-day test score.
7. **Send other test scores:** If you have taken AP tests, you must send your test scores to the UC campuses to which you apply. Contact the College Board to do this. http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/exgrd_rep.html. You must also sent IB, TOEFL, or IELTS scores.
8. **Collect required and optional identification numbers.** If you were designated eligible in the local context after 11th grade, include the 12-digit identification number that was included in your notification letter from UC. This is called your ELC ID number. Optional: Each K-12 student in California public schools is assigned an ID number. If it's not printed on your transcript, ask your counselor or registrar.
9. **Gather family personal and financial information:** You will need your family's educational backgrounds and income for the past two years if you want a fee waiver for the UC applications and want to be considered for each campus' great support programs for low-income students.
10. **Determine residency status:** You need to know your residency status. Ask your parents or family members. You do not need a SSN number but you need to know how long you have been in the California as the UC system calculates your tuition based on how long you have lived and attended school in California. Remember, AB 540 student can get admitted to the UC system but you cannot qualify for formal financial aid.
11. **Prepare to check interest in scholarships.** The UC application allows you to select 16 scholarships to be considered for without completing any additional paperwork. Go through each category and apply for as many as 16 scholarships that fit your qualifications and background.
12. **Collect information on all of your activities, jobs, honors, specialized programs, and non-A-G courses.** The UCs look for special talents, achievements, and awards in particular fields-in and out school and academic and non-academic. The application provides room for 5 examples within each of the following six categories:

- Coursework Other Than A-G
- Educational Preparation Programs
- Volunteer & Community Service
- Work Experience
- Awards & Honors
- Extracurricular Activities

You need to provide the hours per week and weeks per year and provide short descriptions of each activity. Focus on your leadership and initiative. Prepare to enter 160 character or less descriptions for each item you list. Remember that working for your family, including childcare counts.

13. **Draft the two mandated UC essays:** The UCs require you to write two essays (totaling no more than exactly 1000 words) that you paste into the application. It only gives you 30 minutes on the actual pages so prepare your essays in advance. You can write the essays now and make sure you reveal unique information and qualities about you that are not evident elsewhere in your application. Be brave and describe who are really are as this is the only way the UCs can learn about your life and the powerful ways you will enrich their campuses. Some tips: <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/how-to-apply/personal-statement/index.html>

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- Here are the UC prompts: “Respond to both prompts, using a maximum of 1,000 words total. You may allocate the word count as you wish. If you choose to respond to one prompt at greater length, we suggest your shorter answer be no less than 250 words.”
 - You can no longer go over the 1000 word limit.
 - **Prompt #1 (freshman applicants):** Describe the world you come from — for example, your family, community or school — and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.
 - **Prompt #1 (transfer applicants):** What is your intended major? Discuss how your interest in the subject developed and describe any experience you have had in the field — such as volunteer work, internships and employment, participation in student organizations and activities — and what you have gained from your involvement.
 - **Prompt #2 (all applicants):** Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are
 - **Additional information.** If you wish, you may use this space to tell us anything else you want us to know about you that you have not had the opportunity to describe elsewhere in the application (no more than 550 words)
14. **Pay for applications via fee waivers, credit cards, or check and apply for specialized program for low-income students. Provide household size and income for 2009 and 2010:** To qualify for application fee waivers and to be considered to special programs for low-income students, you need to provide your family’s household size and income for the past two years. **You can get fee waivers for four UC campuses if you qualify.** Additional campuses are \$60 a piece.
15. **Research Blue and Gold Plan:** Most low-income students than ever are attending a UC campus because the UCs have the Blue and Gold Plan.. If your family makes less than \$70,000 per year, you may qualify for the UC’s Blue and Gold Opportunity, which covers the majority of your tuitions, fees, and living expenses.
<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/paying-for-uc/financial-aid/grants/blue-gold/index.html>

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