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## January 2014

### 25<sup>th</sup> – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

Seniors – Apply for a pin and then complete and send the FAFSA any time after Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>.

Apply online at

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Seniors – Search and apply for scholarships that match your qualifications

Seniors – File any additional college applications

Juniors—Investigate summer options

## February 2014

### 8<sup>th</sup> – ACT and ACT plus Writing

(register by 1/10 - late registration 1/24)

Juniors – Begin your college search

Juniors—Map out dates and prepare for spring SAT and/or ACT exams

Seniors – Contact colleges to be sure your applications are complete. Send mid-year grades if required. Update colleges with any new information that might affect admission

## Choosing the “Best” Test Prep

Most students are anxious about taking college entrance exams. Taking a good test prep course or working one-on-one with a tutor can help alleviate some of this anxiety by allowing students to become familiar with the exams and test-taking strategies. Here are some questions to ask when looking for a test prep class:

**Who will be teaching the class?** Some test prep companies use recent college graduates who had high SAT/ACT scores when they took the exam in high school. Be cautious if this is the case. There is a difference between *scoring* well on an exam and being able to *teach others* how to do well. Be sure to ask about the training the instructors receive to help them become effective *teachers*, not just effective *test takers*. The best programs either use experienced educators as instructors, or use educators for training instructors.

**What is the content of the class?** Is time equally divided between the different sections of the exams, or are whole sessions devoted to specific sections? Is more time spent on particular sections or particular skills development? Additionally, ask how many full-length practice exams, using real exams, will be given during the course; the more the better. Also ask how the practice exams are scored and shared with students. Do they get personal feedback on their strengths and weaknesses? Of course, you should always consider how you learn best, and then look for programs that are a good match for your learning style. Some students will do best with private tutoring, while other students can do well in a group setting.

**What materials will be used in the class?** The best test prep classes and test prep tutors will use actual SAT and/or ACT exams for practice rather than create their own exams. While many test prep companies use their own proprietary study

books, they should also incorporate the College Board's and the ACT's own study guides into the classroom.

**What is the class size?** Look for smaller groups, and be sure to ask how much time is allocated in each class session to answering individual questions.

**What is the refund policy?** If your child thinks the course isn't helping after a session or two, can you get a refund? What happens if your child gets sick or has a scheduling conflict that requires dropping out of the course?

**Can you provide references?** Checking references is especially important if you are considering hiring a private tutor. However, keep in mind that what works well for one student isn't necessarily the best fit for all students. When checking references, be sure to dig deeper in your questions to try to get a sense of the tutor's style, approach, and ability to adapt to your child's needs.

**What is the tutor's or prep class success rate?** Use caution here. If a class or tutor suggests that all students who take the course will raise their SAT scores by 100 or 200 points, it should set off warning bells. Students in any class will learn and improve at their own rates; it is very rare to see the same increases across the board for *all* students. Similarly, don't be overly impressed by promises that your son or daughter can retake the prep class for free if their scores don't increase. You want a course that helps the *first* time. A good question to ask of courses or tutors who make this promise is “what percentage of students retake the course because they didn't get the scores they hoped for after the class or working with the tutor?” Listen to the answer carefully. Sometimes what seems like a positive, isn't. A high percentage of repeats is not necessarily a good thing; you want a class that is likely to help the first time you take it.

## Careers for Nutrition Majors

- Dietitian
- Nutritionist
- Pediatric dietitian
- Renal dietitian
- WIC (women, infants and children) counselor
- Dietetic consultant
- Food service manager
- Wellness Coordinator
- Teacher
- Food science researcher



- Pharmaceutical or food sales
- Nutrition Journalist
- Chef
- Consumer Advocate
- Public Health Official
- Food Buyer/ Distributor
- Writer
- Weight Loss Specialist
- Diabetes Specialist

## Majors: Nutrition

Americans are obsessed by food. We spend vast amounts of time and money in a quest for the “perfect diet.” None of us ever seems happy with our current self—we constantly seek to lose or gain weight. By choosing to avoid meat or by not eating veal, we use our diets to make political and ethical statements. We look to nutrition to increase both the length and quality of life, and we search for supplements to enhance physical and mental performance. No wonder that a major in nutrition science, food science, or dietetics attracts so many college students.

The food industry is the fourth largest industry in the world. Nutritional science is a great major for people interested in a health-related career, for those who want to work in the fitness industry, for individuals who love to cook and create recipes, and for budding entrepreneurs. Through this major, you’ll learn about the scientific basis of good nutrition as well as the behavioral and social issues that affect the way people view food.

Nutritional Science focuses on the physiological and biological aspects of foods and nutrients. Graduates go on to research positions in laboratories, hospitals, and industry, often after completing graduate programs in their chosen specialty. Some nutritional science majors go on to medical or dental school since the major meets pre-medical educational requirements.

Food Science majors study the principles of both science and engineering as they apply to food and nutrients. Graduates find themselves in demand by the government and the global food industry. Job opportunities for food scientists are found in areas such as food safety, quality control, product development, production and ingredient management, technical sales and service, and in research. If you’re interested in a food science major, look for one approved by the Institute of Food Technologists.

Dietetics majors generally go on to become registered dietitians. As RDs they

work in nutritional counseling and education, public health programs, in wellness centers and hospital settings, in community health organizations, and for governmental agencies. Money Magazine has named the field of dietetics as one of the top 50 jobs in America today.

All dietetics programs must be approved by CADE, the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education. Programs are classified by CADE as either Coordinated Programs (CP) or Didactic Programs (DP). Coordinated programs provide both classroom and at least 900 hours of supervised practical experience. CP graduates are eligible to take the licensing exam to become credentialed as RDs, registered dietitians. Didactic programs offer only accredited classroom experiences. After graduation, participants would have to complete a CADE-accredited Dietetic Internship Program including at least 900 hours of practical experience before being eligible to take the exam to become a registered dietitian.

Dietetics programs differ in their emphasis, with some being more science-based than others. Typical programs include hard sciences such as organic chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology and anatomy. These are supplemented by courses in nutrition, food chemistry and food science, public health, medical nutrition, maternal and child nutrition, geriatric nutrition, and diet selection and management.

Nutritional science programs usually include more science classes such as cell biology and physiology, genetics, biometrics, mammalian physiology, physics, and food and nutrient analysis. Food science programs may include some engineering classes.

You can differentiate among accredited programs by looking for those that emphasize the fields most interesting to you. Check out the course catalogues to see courses offered in each major. You’ll also want to ask about the success of graduates in obtaining internships and/or jobs.

### Financial Matters: Beware Scholarship Scams



Have you ever been invited to a “free scholarship seminar” or received an official-looking letter from a company that “guarantees to find you financial aid or your money back?” If so, you may have been the target of a scholarship scam. Each year, families trying to find money to pay for college expenses fall victim to such scams; estimates of losses each year are in excess of a hundred million dollars.

Scholarship search firms attempt to attract clients by proclaiming that millions of dollars in college aid goes unclaimed each year. The “unclaimed” scholarships, however, are tied up in trusts or through a company’s program for children of employees or earmarked for members of a union or organization. This “unclaimed” scholarship money is not available to the general public. Although scholarship search services offer, for a fee, to provide you with lists of sources of financial aid, you can do your own scholarship search on the web for free. Begin your search with sites like [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com) or [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com).

Other scholarship services invite prospective clients to a free seminar. After a general talk, they use high-

pressure tactics to convince families to sign up for their services.

Still other scams claim that you’ve won a scholarship (that you never applied for) and now need to pay a fee for processing. Beware any scholarship offers that come with a fee attached—you should not need to pay money to be awarded a scholarship. Be especially careful if asked for a credit card or bank account number.

Legitimate companies never guarantee or promise scholarships or grants. If you are not sure if an offer of aid is genuine, check with your college advisor. More information about scholarship scams is available at the Federal Trade Commission’s website at [www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams](http://www.ftc.gov/scholarshipscams).

### Making Summer Count

As competition for college admission increases, those lazy days of summer are a distant memory for most high school students.

Some colleges allow high school students to attend summer sessions, where they can study subjects that are not offered in high school, explore possible college majors, and earn transferable college credits. This is serious school, and students need to be motivated to spend two or three hours in class and then study several hours every day.

Spending six weeks at University of Pennsylvania or Boston University is a great way to find out if urban life is as exciting as it sounds. For those who prefer a more scenic environment, Cornell has a strong summer program and a beautiful campus.

While summer college programs are expensive, often costing more than \$1,000 a week (financial aid is limited), for motivated students, they provide a head start on the transition to college. Learning how to do research in a university library, how to live with a roommate, even how to do laundry, can help students feel more independent

and self-confident.

There are many enrichment programs that don’t offer college credit but do provide an opportunity for students to pursue their interests. Students who want to perfect their Spanish may want to do a homestay in Spain or Latin America. A budding engineer might enjoy a camp where they build robots.

For others, community service is the way to create a meaningful summer experience.

The Student Conservation Association sends crews of six to eight students, with two adult leaders, to national parks, forests and urban green spaces. Crews spend their days repairing hiking trails, building shelters, fighting invasive species and protecting wildlife habitats.

Of course, you don’t have to travel across the country to be involved in community service. There are many local organizations that also offer the opportunity to stay involved through the school year.

Some students need or want to earn money over the summer. Having a job can help you learn how to work with

people, prioritize tasks and manage time. Earning a paycheck can also provide a wonderful boost to self-esteem.

Summer jobs can also offer opportunities to explore career interests. If a student wants to be a veterinarian, a job at an animal hospital is an excellent way to see what’s involved in being a vet. Working as a camp counselor is great for students who may be interested in teaching or psychology.

Some students create their own summer programs. A prospective science major might contact professors at local colleges who are doing interesting research and see if they could use some help in the lab over the summer. This can be a way for a student to check out if microbiology is really where she’s headed, and if things go well, ask for a recommendation letter. Internship spots fill early; contact prospective mentors now.

With so many options, students need to keep in mind that there’s not one “best” summer activity. If you find something you are excited about doing, you’re likely to experience the kind of personal growth that makes for interesting college applications.

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## Dealing with Deferrals

Early decision, early action and priority applicants receive admissions decisions on a time frame that coincides with the holidays. Some will be thrilled with acceptance, others disappointed by rejection, and still others left in limbo by a letter deferring the decision until a later time. While disappointing, a deferral is actually a “maybe”; it’s up to you now to convince your chosen college that you really are an excellent candidate for admission.

Colleges generally defer applicants because they need more information to make a decision. Sometimes, the applicant’s grades may be in question; the admissions committee would like to see some senior year grades before acting on your application. A strong showing in challenging senior classes will help sway the committee to “accept”. Have your midyear grades sent as soon as they are available. Be sure to tell your school counselor about any new achievements so she can include mention of these in her mid-year report.

Or perhaps, the college would really like to see higher SAT or ACT scores. If you’ve retaken the SAT or ACT this winter, have the testing agency send

the new scores to the college. Another strong recommendation letter (perhaps from a senior year teacher or an employer), copies of articles you’ve written for the newspaper, or other more recent evidence of achievement could be sent in support of your application. Just be sure that you read the college’s deferral letter carefully; it will state exactly what type of information they would welcome. Follow their lead.

Sometimes, the decision was deferred by circumstances that are beyond your control. The college may be looking to increase diversity or, perhaps, had too many qualified applicants from your region. You can still influence the final decision by letting “Deferral U.” know how interested you are in attending. Write directly to the admissions officer in charge of your region, expressing your continued interest in attending and asking if any additional information would be helpful. A call from your school counselor to the college could provide you with insight into the reasons behind the deferral. Don’t give up, but rethink all of your college options—there are many colleges that can provide a perfect fit.