



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2026



## IN THE NEWS:

- If you're applying to any SUNYs, wait for SUNY Free Weeks! You can apply to up to five SUNY schools with no application fee from **October 19 – November 2**.
- With the Cornell sexual assault in the news, I want you to know of a federal resource to find safety and security data for colleges and universities. Go to <https://ope.ed.gov/campusafety/#/>

## KEY CONCEPT: FAFSA AND CSS PROFILE

The FAFSA and CSS Profile are open! Take a look at this very thorough guide as you fill out these forms: [Big J's Brief Guide to the FAFSA and CSS Profile](#)

Please check this website to see if your colleges require the CSS Profile:

<https://profile.collegeboard.org/profile/ppi/participatingInstitutions.aspx>

Most are expecting that fullpay students will continue to be prioritized. If you're in that category, please plan to submit the FAFSA once your student decides where they'll enroll; if your financial situation were to change, many colleges will not consider giving financial aid to enrolled students if a FAFSA is not already on file.

## COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE

- Location: Los Angeles, CA
- # of Undergrads: 1,858
- Acceptance Rate: 44%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 9:1
- Returning Freshmen: 87%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 37%

### INTERESTING FACTS:

- Urban oasis with a Mediterranean-style campus
- Strong focus on social justice. Innovative diplomacy program features internships in UN agencies. Campaign Semester lets you work fulltime on political campaigns.
- Excellent academics, especially in economics, politics, biology, and chemistry
- All must complete a senior "comprehensive" project
- 2/3 study abroad; Summer Research Program supports 100 students
- Students are creative, smart self-starters who are politically and socially engaged
- 81% live on campus; food is fresh and delicious.
- Most participate in community service through the Center for Comm-Based Learning
- Greek organizations are not selective or exclusive. Students stay on campus or head into LA on weekends. Beaches and ski slopes are close by.

## COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

- Location: Los Angeles, CA
- # of Undergrads: 7,086
- Acceptance Rate: 40%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 11:1
- Returning Freshmen: 88%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 55%

### INTERESTING FACTS:

- Ideal setting on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean and Marina del Rey, a peaceful residential neighborhood, with great weather all year
- Fantastic programs in film, business, engineering, psychology, and communications
- Students in the School of Film and TV have access to great resources; the program has a strong international emphasis
- Professors take a real interest in knowing their students personally
- The LA locale means that students have access to an abundance of internships
- 37% are Catholic; one theology course is required (with many options to choose from)
- 70% participate in community service, volunteering more than 200,000 service hours each year
- Social life takes place on and off campus; Greek life influences the scene, but campus clubs host many events all year. Everyone looks forward to Fallapalooza, an outdoor music festival that kicks off the school year.

## THOUGHTS FOR SENIORS:

Most seniors I know are hard at work on their college applications. Many have realized just how tough the fall of senior year can be; academics have ramped up, and they're often busy leading extra-curriculars or sports teams. And many regret not getting more done over the summer (take note, Juniors!)-! But, if they **work slowly and steadily**--instead of waiting last minute to write supplemental essays--they **still have time** to put together solid applications.

Students should let their guidance counselors know if they plan to apply Early Decision or Early Action. Most schools and counselors have deadlines around this; please be considerate of their time!

## THOUGHTS FOR JUNIORS:

Juniors and their parents should do their best to get on several college campuses this fall. Visiting when college students are on campus is best; it's very hard to get a sense of the vibe of colleges when they're not. Don't worry yet about visiting colleges that you might apply to. Instead, focus on visiting a mix of sizes (from huge to small) and locations (from urban to rural). Without making these visits, it is VERY HARD for students to figure out what they are looking for in a college. And when you're visiting, be sure to drive around the perimeter of the campus, and listen for laughter (a sign that kids are happy and interacting with each other!). AND ask whether anyone can join clubs (at far too many colleges, there is an application process to join clubs, and it can be quite competitive).

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHER FAMILIES WHO WOULD  
BENEFIT FROM MY APPROACH AND PERSPECTIVE!**  
(They can subscribe on my website)

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*I help students and their families navigate the college admissions process while decreasing confusion and stress. I empower students to figure out who they are and where they belong, and I provide structure, insight, and enthusiasm as they apply to colleges that are the best fit academically, socially, and financially. Contact me for a 30 minute complimentary session to learn more!*



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