

## Before you begin

- You will want to make sure that you have the following pieces of information:
  - o Social Security Number (if applying for financial aid)
  - o Parent(s) full name, country of birth, occupation, education level, school(s) attended, and graduation years
  - o Copy of Sidwell Friends School transcript (and any other institutions you have attended). Email [registrar@sidwell.edu](mailto:registrar@sidwell.edu) if you need an unofficial SFS transcript.

## Important deadlines

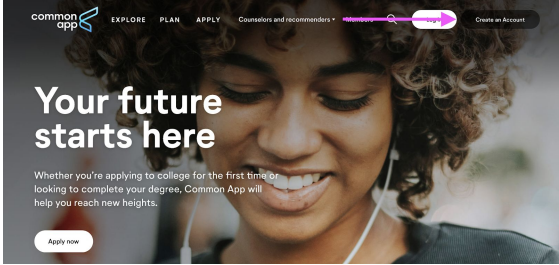
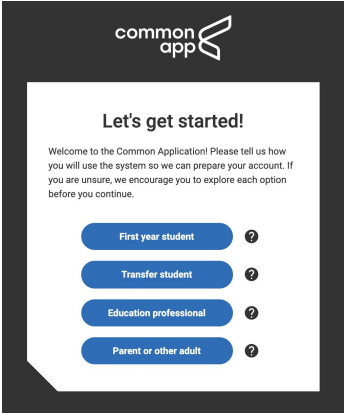
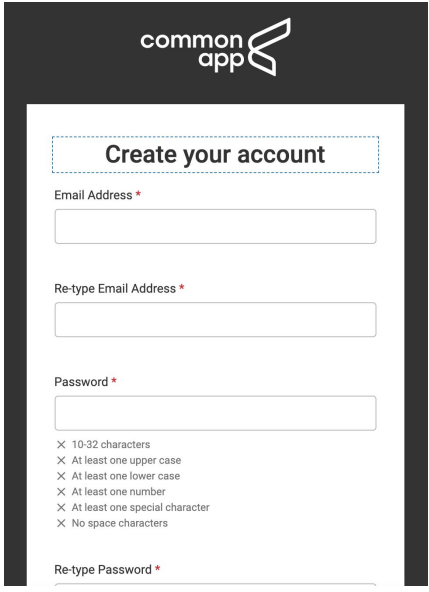
- Some public universities have an application due date of **October 15** (e.g., UNC Chapel Hill, Georgia Tech).
- Many Early Action/Early Decision deadlines will take place **November 1**, others might be **November 15** or **December 1**.
- Most Regular Decision/Early Decision II deadlines are **January 1**, though the date may vary through early February.
- Please note that specific programs or scholarships may change the actual deadline – *it is the student's responsibility to be aware of each institution's deadline.*

## Important notes

- This worksheet should help you complete the Common Application, but feel free to utilize the Video Tutorials located throughout the application in the top right-hand corner of the screen.

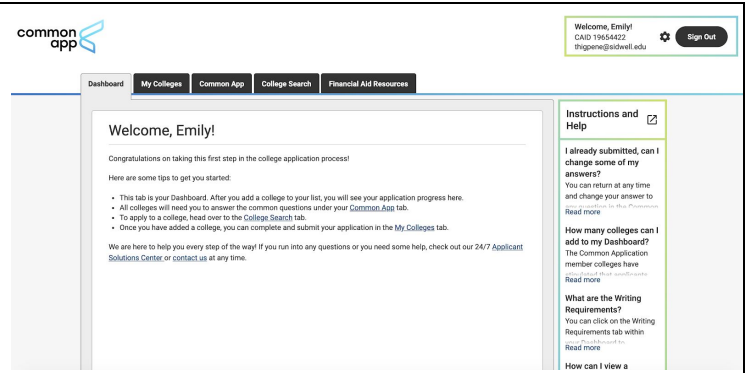
The screenshot shows the Common App interface. At the top left is the 'common app' logo. A navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid Resources'. The 'Common App' section is active, showing a sidebar with 'Common Application' (Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, Writing, Courses & Grades) and a main content area titled 'Testing'. A pink arrow points from the 'Testing' header to a 'Video Tutorials' button. The 'Testing' section contains a 'Tests Taken' form with a question about self-reporting scores, radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No', a 'Clear Answer' button, and checkboxes for 'ACT Tests', 'SAT (March 2016 or after)', and 'AP Subject Tests'. On the right, an 'Instructions and Help' sidebar lists topics like 'What is Score Choice', 'I already submitted, can I change some of my answers?', and 'How do I decide which ACT scores to report?'.

## Account registration

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When you are on <a href="http://www.commonapp.org">www.commonapp.org</a>, you will see the “Create an Account” button in the top right hand corner. Click on that.</li> </ul>	 <p>The image shows the Common App homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: EXPLORE, PLAN, APPLY, Counselors and recommenders, and a highlighted 'Create an Account' button. Below the navigation bar is a large banner featuring a smiling woman with curly hair. The text on the banner reads: 'Your future starts here'. Below this, it says: 'Whether you're applying to college for the first time or looking to complete your degree, Common App will help you reach new heights.' At the bottom of the banner is an 'Apply now' button.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You will be brought to the “Let’s get started” page and will want to click on “First year student” to create an account.</li> </ul>	 <p>The image shows the 'Let's get started!' page. It has a dark header with the Common App logo. The main content area is white and contains the text: 'Welcome to the Common Application! Please tell us how you will use the system so we can prepare your account. If you are unsure, we encourage you to explore each option before you continue.' Below this text are four blue buttons with white text and question marks: 'First year student', 'Transfer student', 'Education professional', and 'Parent or other adult'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You will then create your account. <b>YOU SHOULD ONLY DO THIS ONCE.</b> If you think you may have created an account previously, please speak to your college counselor before you register a different email.</li> <li>- <i>Login credentials:</i> Make sure to use the email you will check regularly throughout the process. Your SFS email is great, but you can also use a personal email if you prefer. Make sure that your password is something you will remember!</li> <li>- <i>Registration information:</i> You will need to enter your first name, last name, phone, date of birth, mailing address, year you plan to start in college, and check boxes about your contact preferences/confirming your age and that you have read the terms of use and privacy policy. Once that is completed, you can go back to the Sign In page to log in!</li> </ul>	 <p>The image shows the 'Create your account' page. It has a dark header with the Common App logo. The main content area is white and contains the title 'Create your account' in a dashed box. Below the title are four input fields: 'Email Address *', 'Re-type Email Address *', 'Password *', and 'Re-type Password *'. The 'Password *' field has a list of requirements below it: '10-32 characters', 'At least one upper case', 'At least one lower case', 'At least one number', 'At least one special character', and 'No space characters'.</p>

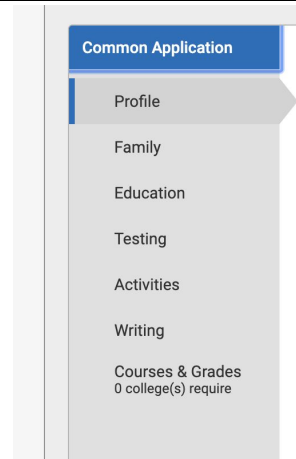
## Common App Dashboard

- Once you have registered for a first-year account, you will be brought to the Dashboard.
- The Dashboard is the place to monitor your applications, including deadlines, requirements, and progress. The menu across the top will take you to different parts of the system to complete each section of your application.



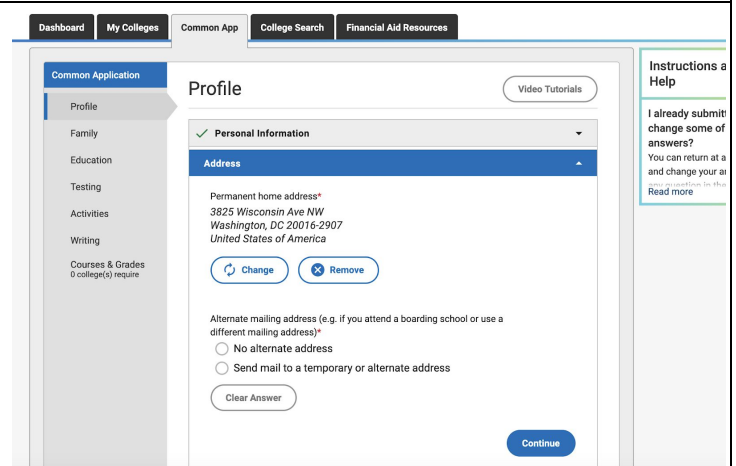
## Common App

- When you click on the “Common App” tab, you will see all of the sections that need to be completed and will be shared with each school you apply to.



### PROFILE

- **Personal Information:** Fill out this section as required, but make sure that your first name and last name match the information on your official documents (birth certificate, passport, transcript and College Board/ACT account). If they do not match, it may present a challenge for colleges to correctly match your application to other materials.
- **Address:** Make sure your permanent home address is where you want to receive mailings from the college.
- **Contact details:** Colleges may try to contact you on the preferred phone number about missing application materials, so it is encouraged to use the number they can best reach you on.
- **Demographics:** These questions are optional. Please mark each question as you see fit.
- **Geography:** If you were born outside of the US or spent any years living outside of the US, you can indicate that in this section.



- *Language:* If you speak a language other than English at home, you most definitely can put that you are proficient in another language (and make sure to check the box if it was your first language or you speak it at home). If you have taken a second language through schooling, you can put that you are proficient.
- *Citizenship:* If you are a US citizen, you **MUST** enter your Social Security Number if you plan on filling out the FAFSA (important for financial aid).
- *Common App Fee Waiver:* Please speak directly to your counselor if you are wondering if you qualify for a fee waiver.

- **FAMILY**
- *Household:* Answer required questions.
- *Parent 1:* Enter information.
- *Parent 2 (if applicable):* Enter information.
- *Sibling:* Enter information. If you have more than five siblings, their information can be entered in the “Additional Information” section.

The screenshot displays the 'Common App' interface, specifically the 'Family' section. The top navigation bar includes 'Dashboard', 'My Colleges', 'Common App', 'College Search', and 'Financial Aid Resources'. The left sidebar lists 'Common Application' categories: Profile, Family (selected), Education, Testing, Activities, Writing, and Courses & Grades. The main content area is titled 'Family' and includes a 'Preview' button. Below this is the 'Household' section, which contains the following fields:

- 'Parents' marital status (relative to each other) \*' with a dropdown menu.
- 'With whom do you make your permanent home? \*' with a dropdown menu.
- 'Do you have any children?' with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No', and a 'Clear' link below.

At the bottom of the household section are expandable sections for 'Parent 1', 'Parent 2', and 'Sibling'. On the right side of the page, there is an 'Instructions and Help' sidebar with two sections: 'I already submitted, can I change some of my answers?' and 'What are the hours for Applicant Chat?'.

- **EDUCATION**
- *Current or most recent secondary school:* Sidwell Friends School (CEEB Code: 090200)
  - o Date of entry = enter date you entered the Upper School (not Lower or Middle)
  - o Graduation date = June 2021
  - o Unless you have transferred schools (this does not include years/semesters away), you will check “No change in progression” under the “Please indicate if any of these options will have affected your progression through or since secondary school. “
  - o Counselor information for Ms. Carter
    - First name = Laurén
    - Last name = Carter
    - Job title = Director of College Counseling
    - Email = [carterl@sidwell.edu](mailto:carterl@sidwell.edu)
    - Phone = 202-537-8167
  - o Counselor information for Mr. Cunningham
    - First name = Matt
    - Last name = Cunningham
    - Job title = Associate Director of College Counseling
    - Email = [cunninghamm@sidwell.edu](mailto:cunninghamm@sidwell.edu)
    - Phone = 202-537-8167
  - o Counselor information for Ms. Fields
    - First name = Lauren
    - Last name = Fields
    - Job title = Associate Director of College Counseling
    - Email = [fieldsl@sidwell.edu](mailto:fieldsl@sidwell.edu)
    - Phone = 202-537-8167
  - o Counselor information for Ms. Salone
    - First name = Danita
    - Last name = Salone
    - Job title = Associate Director of College Counseling
    - Email = [saloned@sidwell.edu](mailto:saloned@sidwell.edu)
    - Phone = 202-537-8167
- *Other Secondary Schools:* Unless you transferred from another school, you should answer 0 to other schools you have attended.
- *Colleges & Universities:* If you completed any summer courses, you are welcome to enter them in this section.
- *Grades:*
  - o Graduating class size = 125
  - o Class rank reporting = None
  - o GPA scale = leave blank
  - o Cumulative GPA = leave blank
  - o GPA weighting = leave blank
- *Current or Most Recent Year Courses:* Once you have your senior year schedule, you can answer this section.
  - o Please select the course scheduling system your institution is using. = Semester

The screenshot shows the 'Education' section of the Common App. The left sidebar has a menu with 'Common Application' selected, and sub-items: Profile, Family, Education, Testing, Activities, Writing, and Courses & Grades. The main content area is titled 'Education' and has a 'Video Tutorials' link. Below this is a section titled 'Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School' with a dropdown arrow. The form contains the following information:
 

- Current or most recent secondary/high school \*
- Sidwell Friends School
- 3825 Wisconsin Ave NW
- Washington, DC 20016-2907
- USA
- Religious
- CEEB Code : 090200
- Buttons: Change, Remove
- Date of entry\*
- September 2016
- Date should be entered in the Month Year format.
- Is this a boarding school?\*
- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No
- Clear Answer

- Enter the titles exactly as they are listed on your schedule.
- Unless your course is designated as “Advanced/Accelerated” on your transcript, you should mark its level as “Regular/Standard.”
- *Honors*: Most SFS students will not have any academic honors (as there is no honor roll). If you have any sort of National Merit status, that is appropriate to place here.
- *Community-Based Organizations*: Unless you are working with an organization like Jack Kent Cooke, ABC, or POSSE, etc. it is likely your answer to this question will be 0.
- *Future Plans*: If you have an idea of what you want to do for a career, feel free to put this down. It is not required – but for example, if you put down artist and you are applying to an engineering program, make sure that you intend to explain that somewhere in your application since it might not make sense if someone is looking quickly.

- **TESTING**
- If you wish to self-report any test scores (SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, AP exams), you may do so in this section.
- You will need to select each test you wish to report and then enter the individual scores.
  - Make sure to verify your scores with the official score reports so you do not make any errors.
- Remember: it is the student’s responsibility to send any official test scores to institutions that need them. While many schools will accept self-reported scores, not all will.

- **ACTIVITIES**
- You will want to mark that you wish to report your activities, and then you may enter up to 10 activities.
- Each explanation is allowed 150 characters – make use of the space wisely (including titles).
- It is encouraged that you list the activities in order of importance.
- Use your best guess for the time spent on each activity weekly (it is okay if it is not exact).
- Most important: be consistent! Use capital letters, punctuation, and style in a similar fashion for each activity.
- You do not have to fill this section with 10 activities if you don’t have 10 activities! And, if you feel strongly that you wish to add more than 10 activities, you can try to add them in the “additional information” section.



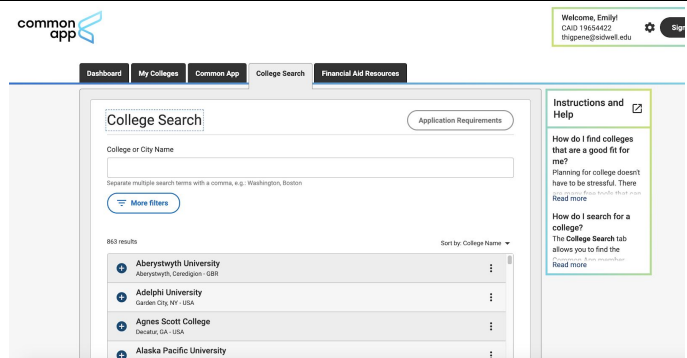

- **WRITING**
- *Personal essay:* You will need to state “I understand” that the essay may be sent to colleges, even if not required.
  - o You will then select a prompt and enter your essay. You may edit it in between application submissions, but we do not encourage that as it can lead to errors.
- *Disciplinary history:* It is the student’s responsibility to report any disciplinary or criminal history.
  - o If the answer is yes, you will have space to explain your situation. Please work with your college counselor on how to best language these situations.
- *Additional information:* This section should only be used sparingly. It should never repeat information already noted elsewhere, but instead, further explain something that did not fit or is not noted anywhere else. Students occasionally use this space to make note of any scheduling issues, learning differences, mental health information. It should not be used to submit another full essay.

- **COURSES & GRADES**
- If any of your [colleges require this section](#), you will need to complete it. Make sure to have a copy of your SFS transcript available to enter the information appropriately.
- For 12<sup>th</sup> grade, you will click “no” to “Do you have 12<sup>th</sup> grade courses listed on your transcript that have been issued official transcript grades?” – *unless* you are submitting after you received first semester grades.

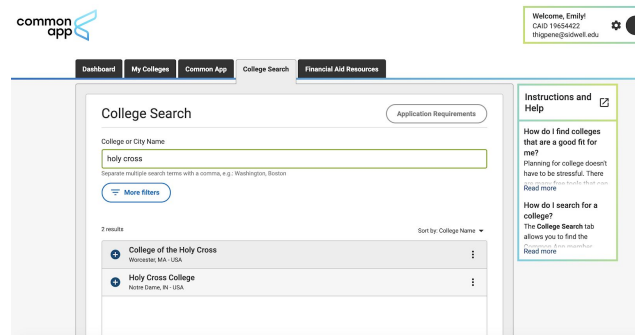
## My Colleges

- The “My Colleges” screen is where you will complete work for each college to which you intend to apply.
- To add colleges, go to the “College Search” screen.

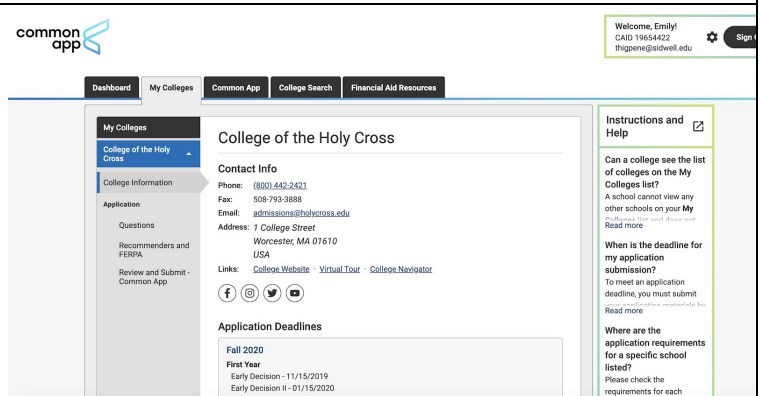
- When on the “College Search” screen, you can enter the college or city name to search, or enter specific criteria.



- Once you enter your criteria and hit search, you will be brought to the result list. Make sure to click on the plus sign next to the college you wish to add, and it should turn to a green check (indicating you successfully added the college to your “My Colleges.”

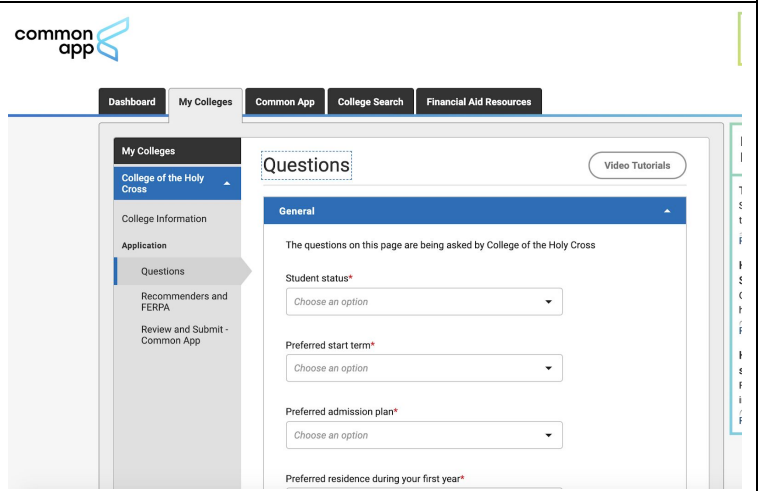


- Once the college has been added to your “My Colleges” and you return to that section, when you click on the college, you will see “College Information” that includes “Questions,” “Recommendations and FERPA,” and “Review and Submit – Common App” sections. **If a college also has a writing supplement, you may have another “Questions” section along with a “Review and Submit – Writing Supplement.”**



## QUESTIONS

- This section is specific to each college. While some of the questions may be identical, they are sent directly to each college so it is imperative that you correct thoroughly and accurately each time. **Be aware – some colleges will hide additional writing supplements in here!** Look closely and complete fully.



## RECOMMENDATIONS AND FERPA

- **FERPA Release Authorization:** You will need to “release authorization” for any SFS materials to be sent to your colleges. Once you hit the “Complete release authorization” button, you will need to read the instructions and check the box stating you have fully read and understood the explanation. You should then hit continue, where you will then check a box saying you authorize every school to release materials. Finally, we recommend that you select that you “waive your right to review all recommendations and supporting documents” and then check the box stating your waiver cannot be changed. You then will electronically sign your name. **Bottom line = you have to do this correctly the first time or it cannot be changed.** If you have any questions, please check in with your college counselor.
- **Once complete you will see Invite Recommenders:** This section should only be used if you plan on asking for a non-SFS letter of recommendation (coach, instructor, boss, etc.). **Do not enter any of your teachers or your college counselor.**
- **Counselor and Teacher: ignore this section.** SFS sends these materials through our database.
- **Other recommenders:** if you invite an outside recommender, you will see their information here.
- **Advisor:** If you wish to give anyone access to review your application (parent, college counselor, trusted friend), you may do so here.



## REVIEW AND SUBMIT – COMMON APP

- You will come back to this page when you are ready to submit your application.
- You will need to have completed all sections before you can review them on this page. From here, you will also be prompted to pay – so make sure you have your credit card!

## WRITING SUPPLEMENT

- Don't forget to fill this out if required by the university. This is specific to each school!

**After completing the “Common App” section, the College Information section (including Application and Writing Supplement, if applicable) in the “My Colleges” tab, go back to Review and Submit to submit each application! Congrats!**