

Pathways to College

Coptic Educational Foundation





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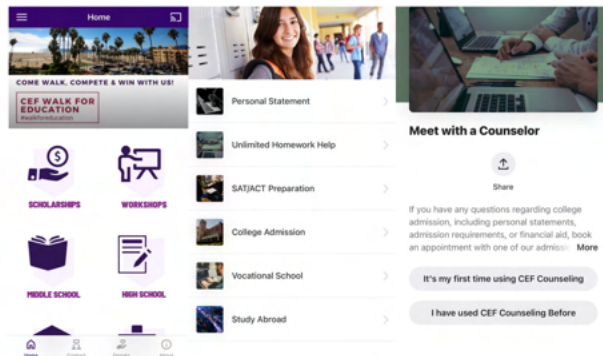
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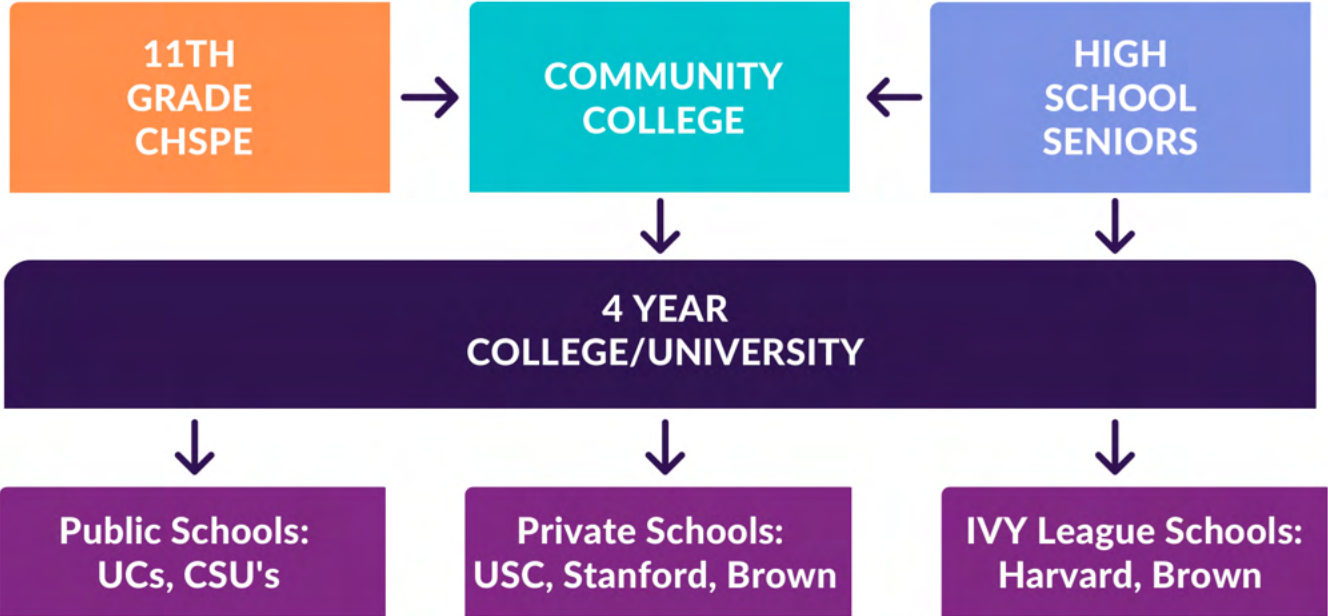
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Pathways To College

There are various pathways you can take to obtain a bachelor's degree. The most common is the high school to four-year university pathway. However, there are other routes to consider and the best route is the one that most likely aligns with your goals! This guide will provide detailed information regarding the various pathways to college to help you understand which pathway is right for you





HIGH SCHOOL TO FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

Completing the A-G requirements throughout four-years of high school with academic excellence, SAT/ACT scores, and well-rounded extracurricular opportunities is the widely recognized method of getting into a four-year university.





REASONS TO GO DIRECTLY FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

College Experience

A four-year university helps develop strong relationships with peers and faculty in a chosen major. This experience allows students to grow intellectually, socially, and culturally.

Networking, Research & Involvement Opportunities

Students have four-years to engage in experiential opportunities, such as study abroad, internships, research, cultural events, Greek life, and professional clubs that develop their network, knowledge, and skill set.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE FACTORS TO BE AWARE OF?

Higher Tuition & Fees

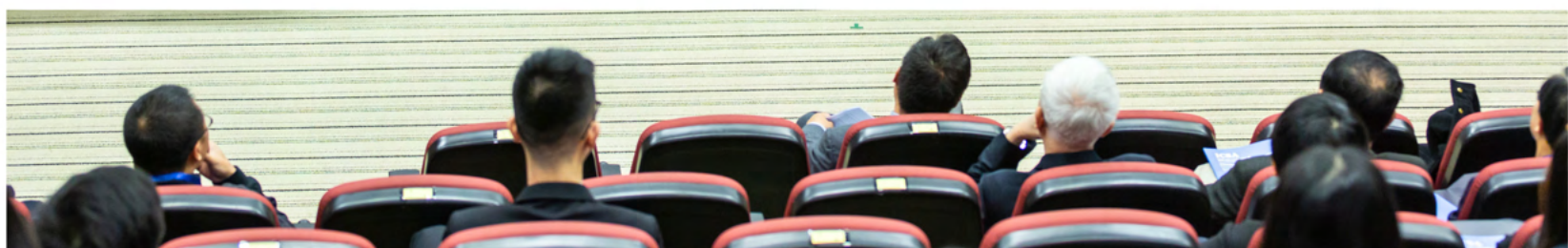
Attending a four-year university straight out of high school is significantly more expensive than if a student transferred from a community college.

Larger Introductory Class Sizes

Introductory class sizes at a four-year university tend to be much larger (250+ students) than introductory courses at the community college (40+). Large class sizes can be difficult for students to engage with the content and form relationships with their professors.

Four-Year University Facts:

- Public universities are cheaper than private universities
- In the state of California there are 23 California State Universities (CSU); 9 University of California (UC) campuses
- 100+ Private universities across the United States





CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Two-year colleges provide open-enrollment and affordable postsecondary education as a pathway to a four-year degree. Community colleges also grant certificates, diplomas, and associate's degrees. There are 116 California community colleges.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ATTENDING A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FIRST?

Lower Tuition & Fees

Since community college tuition is more affordable, students who attend a community college and transfer to a four-year university save a lot of money towards tuition.

More University Options

For students not admitted to their “dream” school, the community college offers students the opportunity to improve their academic transcript and more time to explore other extracurricular opportunities. SAT/ACT scores are **not** required from applicants who are transferring as junior standing.

Flexible Schedule

Due to the diversity of the community college student population, community colleges offer many more classes at a range of times.

Explore Majors

The community college allows students to explore various introductory subjects.

Course Credit

Most class credits from a community college can be transferred to a four-year university as lower-division credit towards elective credit, major credit, or general education credit.

Smaller Class Sizes

Classroom sizes tend to be small with a student-faculty ratio of 30:1.

UC Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG)

Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) program guarantees admission to highly qualified students from all California Community Colleges. Admission to most majors can be guaranteed through TAG for transfer students who meet the eligibility requirements and complete the online TAG application. Six out of the nine UCs participate in TAG except UCLA, UC Berkeley, and UC San Diego. For more information regarding TAG eligibility visit the university website.



IF MY INTENTION IS TO TRANSFER TO A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY, WHAT ARE THE DOWNSIDES OF ATTENDING A COMMUNITY COLLEGE FIRST?

Impacted Courses

At some community colleges, required courses to transfer can be impacted.

Limited curriculum

Community colleges offer lower-division classes that are transferable to a four-year school. They do not offer upper-division courses.

Less Rigorous Courses

Since the courses at a community college are “introductory” level, these courses are generally less rigorous and broader than those found at a four-year institution. This could be a limitation for students when they transfer because they are transferring with basic knowledge, yet will be taking upper-division courses with students who have taken multiple field-specific courses.

Limited Elite Private University Transfer

Although elite universities (e.g., Stanford) accept transfer students from the community college, the portion they accept is exceptionally small.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Applying to a California Community College: <https://home.cccapply.org/en/>
- Transfer requirements from community college to a public four-year university: <https://assist.org>



Limited College Experience

Since transfer students are at a four-year campus for less time than freshmen students, they find themselves a bit “detached” from the college experience. Upon transferring, they may find it difficult to network and make friends.

Transfer students generally enter as juniors, and the majority of their classmates have been there since their freshmen year. These students have already developed connections and friendships, so transfer students often report experiencing a lack of sense of belonging to the campus community.

Limited Extracurricular Activities

There are clubs and activities at community colleges. However, they are not as well established due to lack of funding and because students are there for an average of two years, not four.



Benefits of Attending a Community College	Downsides of Attending a Community College
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower Tuition Fees & Costs• More University Options• Flexible Schedule• Major Exploration• Transferable Course Credit• Smaller Class Sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impacted Courses• Limited Curriculum• Less Rigorous Courses• Limited Elite Private University Transfer• Limited College Experience



CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOL PROFICIENCY EXAM (CHSPE)

California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE) is an early high school exit testing program for students 16+ years old or have completed the 10th grade. The exam tests students in 10th grade level Math and English-Language Arts and those who pass the CHSPE receive a legal diploma equivalent entitled Certificate of Proficiency.



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TAKING THE EXAM?

“Graduate” Early

Upon passing the exam, and with verified parental approval, a minor does not legally need to continue attending high school.

Work Opportunities

Students who pass the CHSPE can work without a worker's permit.



WHAT SHOULD I BE AWARE OF IF I TAKE THE CHSPE ROUTE?

Limited College Options

Students who take the CHSPE have limited college options since they have not completed the minimum requirements to apply for four year colleges (A-G requirements). Students' only option for college is the community college system to transfer to a four-year university.

Academic Performance - The exam only covers English and Math materials learned through the 10th grade. If a student only has up to grade 10 education, this can put a student at a disadvantage when starting at the community college. When students apply to community college, they must take english and math placement exams. If the goal is to begin college early, but a student places low on the placement exam, this may not “speed” up the process of graduating early, as students can only register for the course level they place into.

*“As a high schooler, I felt frustrated with the college admissions process and I was getting confused ... thankfully I heard of CEF and they guided me in every step of the way”
Lauren Hanna*



WHAT SHOULD I BE AWARE OF IF I TAKE THE CHSPE ROUTE?

Maturity

The community college is a diverse system with students from various ages and backgrounds. Students who begin community college at 16 may not possess the level of maturity to keep up with older student populations. Students need to be very independent to ensure they understand the course material and complete assignments timely and thoroughly.

Lack of High School Experiences

Students who take the CHSPE and decide not to attend high school anymore miss out on taking advantage of extracurricular opportunities (i.e., clubs, band, sports). These activities are especially important for students to explore and learn what their interests are and make students more competitive applicants for college.

Long Term Impacts

If a student has a difficult start with college level courses (i.e., low GPA) this makes them a less competitive applicant to transfer to a competitive school (e.g., UCLA), which can ultimately limit their graduate school opportunities.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Information regarding CHSPE: <https://www.chspe.org/>
- Signing up for a California Community College: <https://home.cccapply.org/en/>





CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

California State University (CSU) - A California public university is commonly referred to as “Cal State”, “CSU”, or “State University”. There are 23 campuses throughout the state of California and it is the largest public four-year university system.

University of California (UC) - A California public university is commonly referred to as a “UC”. There are 9 UC campuses throughout the state of California and a UC is recognized as one of the best public university systems in the nation.





CSU vs. UC Comparison

CSU

- Lower Tuition
- 23 Campuses
- Located in suburban areas and cities
- More commuter and local students
- Focus on Practical Skills and Applications
- Smaller Classes (direct learning)
- Less Competitive, but impacted
- Largest public four-year university system

UC

- Higher Tuition
- 9 Campuses
- Located in larger cities
- More statewide & nationwide diversity
- Focus on Research and Theory
- Larger Classes (self-motivated learning)
- More Competitive
- One of the best public university systems

Demographics

- CSU - Since CSU campuses (23) are located in smaller and larger cities, the majority of students are local commuter students that do not reside on campus.
- UC - Since UC campuses (9) are located in larger cities, the majority of students are not local. Most students live on or near campus with other students. In comparison to CSUs, UCs are known to provide the traditional “college experience”

Campus Sizes

- CSU - Smaller campuses with a broad range of enrollment from 1,000 - 35,000 students
- UC - Larger campuses with enrollment ranging from 8,000 - 30,000 students

Selectivity

- CSU - CSUs have a higher acceptance rate than UCs. However, there are impacted CSUs (e.g., CSULB) that have lower acceptance rates than several UCs.
- UC - Overall, UC acceptance rates are lower than CSU. Eight out of nine UCs have an acceptance rate of 50% or lower.

Overall Reputation

- CSU - Large, high-quality public university system known for its affordability and flexible class offerings
- UC - World-class public university system known for its premier academics, selectivity, and research

Tuition:

- CSU- Average tuition cost of CSU is around \$7,000+. Tuition prices vary.
- UC - Average tuition cost of UC tuition is around \$14,000+. Tuition prices vary.

Campus Locations

- CSU- There are 23 campuses located in larger and smaller cities
- UC - There are 9 campuses located in larger cities

Teaching Class Size

- CSU - Smaller classes allow for more direct learning and contact with the professor of the course.
- UC - Larger classes that demand self-motivated learning. Due to the class size, students tend to interact with the teaching assistants rather than the professor.

Academic Areas of Focus

- CSU Focuses more on helping students develop professional, practical skills that will lead them to great jobs right out of college.
- UC - Focuses more on theory, research, and academic publishing. This form of teaching provides students with theoretical knowledge and critical thinking skills to prepare them for graduate school.

Campus Locations

- CSU- There are 23 campuses located in larger and smaller cities
- UC - There are 9 campuses located in larger cities

CSU - 23 Campuses

1. CSU Bakersfield
2. CSU Channel Islands
3. CSU Chico
4. CSU Dominguez Hills
5. CSU East Bay
6. CSU Fresno
7. CSU Fullerton
8. Cal Poly Humboldt
9. CSU Long Beach
10. CSU Los Angeles
11. Cal Maritime Academy
12. CSU Monterey Bay
13. CSU Northridge
14. Cal Poly Pomona
15. CSU Sacramento
16. CSU San Bernardino
17. San Diego State University
18. San Francisco State University
19. San Jose State University
20. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
21. CSU San Marcos
22. Sonoma State University
23. CSU Stanislaus



UC - 9 Campuses

1. UC Berkeley
2. UC Davis
3. UC Irvine
4. UC Los Angeles
5. UC Merced
6. UC Riverside
7. UC San Diego
8. UC Santa Barbara
9. UC Santa Cruz



USEFUL RESOURCES

- [CSU Application: https://www2.calstate.edu/apply](https://www2.calstate.edu/apply)
- [UC Application: https://apply.universityofcalifornia.edu/my-application/login](https://apply.universityofcalifornia.edu/my-application/login)



PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES

Public University - A public university, also commonly called a state university, is publicly funded by the state government. Need-based federal financial aid is available and every state in the US has a public university or college

Private University - A private university is not funded or operated by the government. Need-based federal financial aid is available and every state in the US has private universities or colleges.



Public vs. Private Quick Comparison

Public	Private
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower Tuition Costs• Smaller Endowments → Less Scholarships and Grant Opportunities• More Major & Minor Options• Larger Campuses & Class Sizes• More In-State Diversity• Not Religiously Affiliated• Lower Four-Year Graduation Rates• Rich Campus Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Higher Tuition Costs• Larger Endowments → More Scholarship and Grant Opportunities• Less Major & Minor Options• Smaller Campuses & Class Sizes• More Nationwide and International Diversity• Possibly Religiously Affiliated• Higher Four-Year Graduation Rates• Rich Campus Culture

Public vs. Private Key Differences Explained

Tuition Costs

- Public - Tuition is more affordable. Out-of-state students pay a higher tuition than in-state students.
- Private - Tuition is more expensive. Out-of-state students pay the same rate as in-state students.

Funding

- Public - Public universities rely heavily on government funding, but also receive endowments from alumni, families, and outside affiliates.
- Private - Private universities that are well endowed tend to be more competitive and offer additional financial assistance, such as more grant and scholarship opportunities to students.





Degree Offerings

- Public - Public universities offer a wide range of major and minor degree offerings.
- Private - Many private colleges, such as liberal arts colleges, offer a narrower range of majors and minors to choose from.

Size

- Public - The student population, campus size, and class sizes are larger. The student-faculty ratio is much higher (250:1).
- Private - The student body population, campus size, and class sizes are smaller. The student-faculty ratio is lower (e.g., 30:1).

Demographics

- Public - Since public universities are required to give preference to enroll a certain percentage of state residents, there is a greater statewide demographic attending public universities.
- Private - Private universities are not required to admit a certain number of in-state students and thus have a greater nationwide and international student demographic

Religious Affiliations

- Public - Public institutions cannot be religiously affiliated.
- Private - Private institutions can be religiously affiliated.

Graduation Rates

- Public - Some universities have lower four-year graduation rates due to impactation
- Private - Public universities are less impacted and have higher four-year graduation rates

Campus Culture & Activities

- Public - Larger campus allows for more diverse clubs, activities, sports, and other extracurricular opportunities
- Private - Smaller campuses still allow for clubs, activities, sports, and other extracurricular opportunities, the number and diversity of them are just more limited.



OTHER TYPES OF PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES





Ivy League Universities

There are eight Ivy League universities all located on the east coast-- Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Pennsylvania, Princeton, and Yale. Ivy leagues are small privates known for their academic excellence, highly selective admission process, and excellent career opportunities.

They are all located in the same region of the US, they have large endowments, and tend to offer generous financial aid.

Liberal Arts Colleges

Liberal arts colleges have been known for their strong focus on teaching, individual student development, and being more academic focused than application focused.

In some universities, liberal arts is a type of college in the larger university. Liberal arts college is not “art schools”, and most liberal arts colleges offer many of the same science or mathematics studies as research universities.

Liberal arts colleges have an emphasis on undergraduate studies in the liberal arts and sciences. They allow students to explore different disciplines rather than following a strict academic schedule in preparation for a specific career path.

Examples of liberal arts college

- Pomona College
- Harvey Mudd college
- Claremont Mckenna College
- Occidental College
- Swarthmore College
- Middlebury College

Examples of universities that have liberal arts colleges

- USC, LMU



USEFUL RESOURCES

- Common Application:
<https://www.commonapp.org>

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