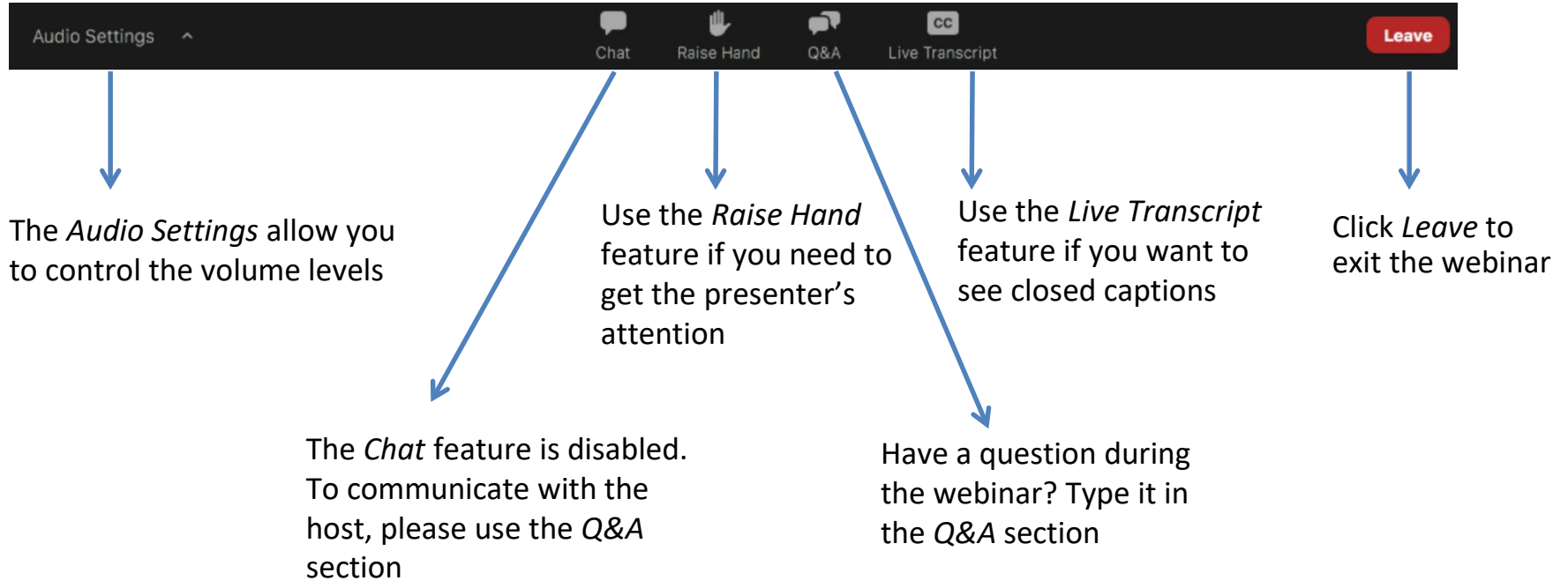




College Admissions Overview

A MEFA Institute Webinar

How to Participate in This Webinar



About MEFA



Not-for-profit state authority created in 1982
helping families plan, save, and pay for college

Webinar Topics

- Current trends
- The college list
- Campus visits
- The application process
- Financial aid
- Free resources



Trends in College Admissions

- Earlier Process
- Students applying to a greater number of schools
- Demonstrated interest a factor
- Has become more a parent-driven process (though students should be driving!)
- Rise of social media
- Cost has become a bigger factor



Staying Organized

Students should use a system to keep track of applications and deadlines, such as MEFA's College Application Manager:

College Application Manager					
As you explore schools and build your college list, keep track of your details here. Remember that deadlines are critical when applying to college and requesting financial aid, so set yourself reminders to ensure you submit all applications on time. If you're applying to more than ten schools, make a copy of this chart.					
School Name	Admissions Deadline*	Send SAT, ACT, or Neither	Required Financial Aid	Financial Aid Deadline*	Notes
1. Example University	November 1st	SAT	FAFSA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSS Profile <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	February 1st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school visit: Oct 1st Strong nursing program 4-hour drive away
2.			FAFSA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSS Profile <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		
3.			FAFSA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSS Profile <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		
4.			FAFSA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CSS Profile <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>		

mefa.org/college-application-manager

Researching Colleges

Research thoroughly

College Navigator: CollegeNavigator.gov

College search with admissions, academic, & cost info

College Scorecard: CollegeScorecard.ed.gov

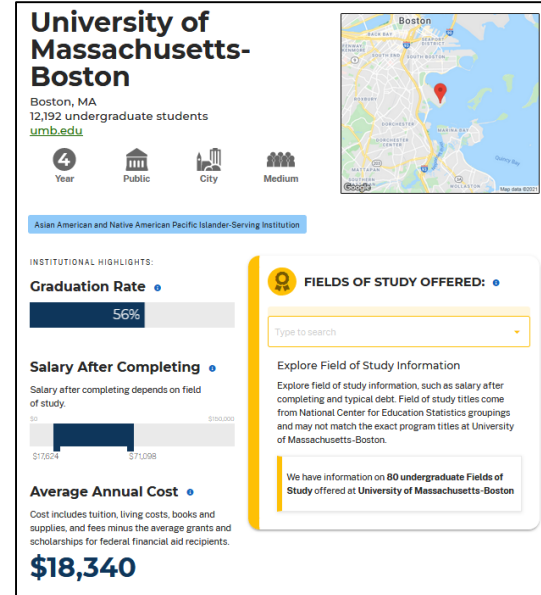
College info including average net price, student debt, grad rate, & alumni salary

Big Future: bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search

College search with info on academics, applying, & paying

MEFA Pathway: mefapathway.org

College search and matching tool based on preferences



University of Massachusetts-Boston
Boston, MA
12,192 undergraduate students
umb.edu

Year Public City Medium

Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution

INSTITUTIONAL HIGHLIGHTS:

Graduation Rate 56%

Salary After Completing
Salary after completing depends on field of study.
\$17,624 - \$71,038

Average Annual Cost
Cost includes tuition, living costs, books and supplies, and fees minus the average grants and scholarships for federal financial aid recipients.
\$18,340

FIELDS OF STUDY OFFERED:
Type to search

Explore Field of Study Information
Explore field of study information, such as salary after completing and typical debt. Field of study titles come from National Center for Education Statistics groupings and may not match the exact program titles at University of Massachusetts-Boston.

We have information on 80 undergraduate Fields of Study offered at University of Massachusetts-Boston

College Factors to Consider



Informal & Formal Campus Visits

Informal visits

- Size
- Setting
- Culture



Formal visits

- Academics
- Activities
- Housing
- Q&A



College Fair Tips for Students

*NACAC is holding virtual college fairs Sept – Nov 2021: nacacfairs.org/virtual/



- Sign up
- Check out the college list beforehand
- Have a plan of attack before you start
- Take advantage of information sessions
- Schedule 1-on-1 meetings with colleges if available

Assess Prospects for Admission

Students should develop a final list with colleges of each type:

Probable

Chances for admission are strong (Make sure at least one is affordable)

Target

Chances for admission are 50/50

Reach

Chances for admission are less than 50%

College Application Types



- **Regular Decision:** Usually an early Jan deadline
- **Early Action:** Deadlines in Nov & Dec, non-binding agreement
- **Early Decision:** Deadlines in Nov & Dec, binding agreement
- **Rolling Admission:** Decisions on a rolling basis, Nov-May
- **Open Admission:** Admits most students for most programs anytime

College Application Forms & Components

Application requirements may vary at each college

College Application Forms:

- Common App
CommonApp.org
- Universal College App
UniversalCollegeApp.com
- Coalition App
CoalitionForCollegeAccess.org
- College website application
- Paper app

Your application may include:

- Application form
- High school transcript
- Standardized test scores
- Letters of recommendation
- Activity list or resume
- Personal essay
- Interview
- Audition
- Portfolio

Academic Readiness



- Rigor
- Good grades vs. challenging classes
- Improvement over time
- Exceeding minimum requirements
- Relevance to college plans
- Sliding scale for MA public colleges & universities

Standardized Tests

*Some colleges may not require standardized tests for those applying for Fall 2022 admission

PSAT	Offers practice and assessment
SAT	Measures college readiness Offers free test prep online
ACT	Measures college readiness Offers free test prep online
AP Exam	Shows subject knowledge

- Register at:
- act.org (for the ACT)
 - collegereadiness.collegeboard.org (for the PSAT & SAT)
 - apstudents.collegeboard.org (for AP exams)

[Fairtest.org](https://fairtest.org) provides a list of over 1,600 test-optional schools

Activity List & Resume

- Extracurricular activities
- Showcase the depth of the activity
- Include family responsibilities and employment
- Highlight the impact on the community



Essay Tips for Students



An application essay says a lot about someone

- Share something meaningful and personal
- Start writing early
- Try different topics and approaches
- Plagiarism is taken very seriously
- Leave time for careful proof-reading

Common App Essay Prompts for Fall 2022 Admission

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

Letters of Recommendation



Adults who know students well can offer a helpful perspective on their strengths

- What are the high school guidelines?
- Whom should students ask?
- When should they ask?
- Remind students to say thank you!

Interviews

A face-to-face conversation lets colleges see the person behind the numbers

- Only offered at a small number of schools
- Two types: Informational and Evaluative
- Students should:
 - Be prepared to answer open-ended questions
 - Know their reasons for applying to the college
 - Ask thoughtful questions
 - Cover the basics
 - Relax and be themselves

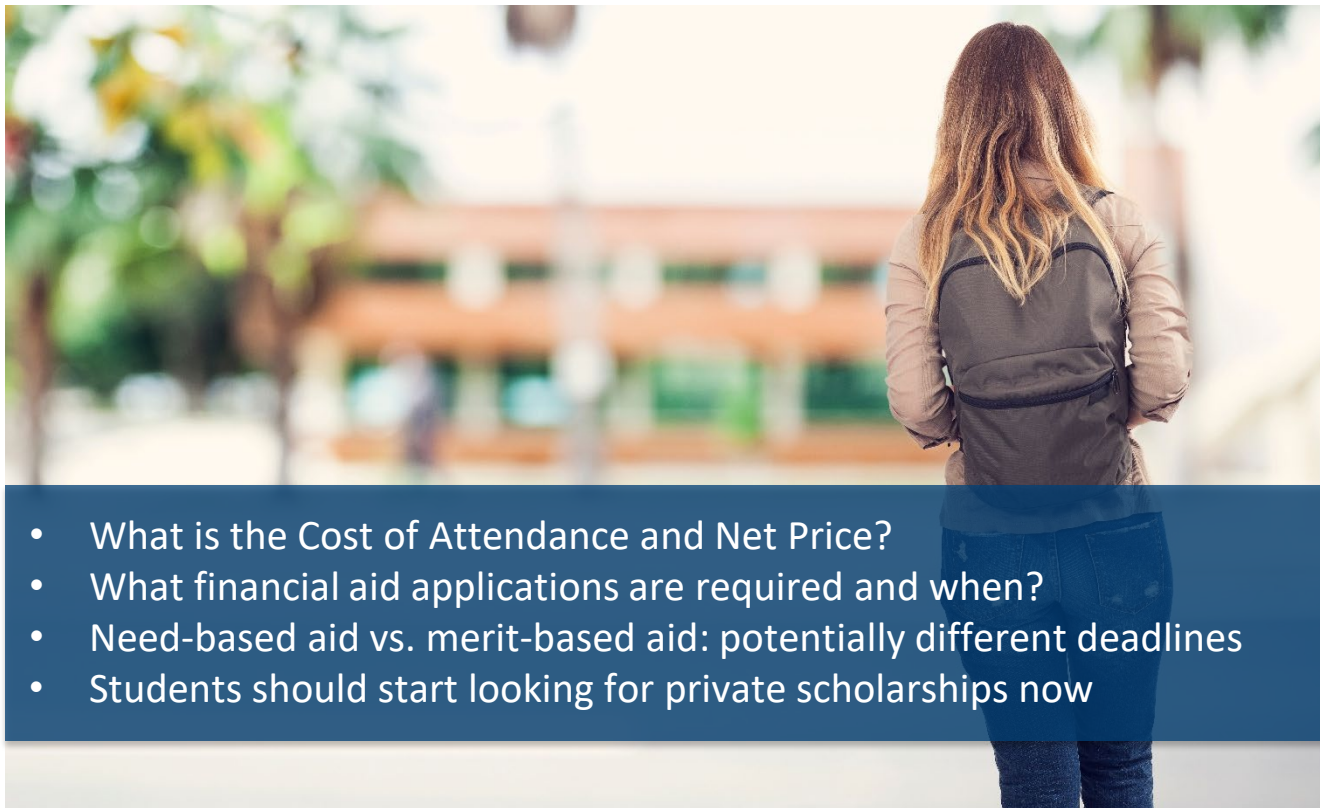


The Admissions Decision

Admitted	Student is accepted Student may also be accepted to begin at a later semester
Deferred	Student is not accepted Early Action/Decision but will be considered in the regular applicant pool
Denied	Student is not accepted
Waitlisted	Student is not yet accepted and may not get accepted off the waitlist

- Most colleges send decisions over email or post to their online portal
- Students should deposit by the deadline (usually May 1st) to secure a spot at a school

Understanding College Affordability



- What is the Cost of Attendance and Net Price?
- What financial aid applications are required and when?
- Need-based aid vs. merit-based aid: potentially different deadlines
- Students should start looking for private scholarships now

Net Price Calculators

- Online tool found on each college's website
- Asks questions about family finances & student academics
- Provides personal, estimated net college price
- Displays federal & institutional financial aid
- Merit-based aid may also be calculated



Applying for Financial Aid

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®):

- Required by every college and university
- 2022-23 FAFSA available Oct 1, 2021
- Will ask about 2020 income

CSS Profile™:

- Required by 250+ colleges and scholarship agencies
- 2022-23 Profile available Oct 1, 2021
- Will ask about 2020 income

College-specific financial aid applications

- Posted on each college's financial aid website

The screenshot shows the Federal Student Aid website. At the top, it says "Federal Student Aid" and "PRINCIPAL SPONSOR OF THE AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP". There are navigation links for "UNDERSTAND AID", "APPLY FOR AID", and "COMPLETE AID PROCESS". The main content area has a dark blue background with the text "Complete the FAFSA® Form" and "New To The FAFSA® Process? Completing the FAFSA form is free. Fill it out now." with a "Start Here" button. Below that, it says "Use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) form to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school." There is also a "Returning User?" section with links for "Correct info | Add a school" and "View your Student Aid Report (SAR)", and a "Log In" button.

The screenshot shows the CSS Profile website. At the top, it says "CSS Profile" and has navigation links for "Home", "Getting Started", "Fee Waivers", "Divorced or Separated Families", and "International Applicants". The main content area has a purple background with a photo of two women talking. The text says "Apply with CSS Profile" and "Each year CSS Profile gives access to more than \$9 billion for thousands of undergraduate, graduate and professional students." There is a yellow button that says "Sign In to Fall 2021/Spring 2022". At the bottom, there are three icons with text: "Check participating Schools and Scholarships", "Learn how to apply", and "Completing the CSS Profile for the Noncustodial Parent".

Paying for College in MA: You Have Options

MassTransfer

- Makes transfer from community college to a 4-year public MA college more affordable
- Benefits include guaranteed credit transfer, tuition credit, & freeze on tuition
- mass.edu/masstransfer



Tuition Break

- Reduction on out-of-state tuition costs at New England schools for certain programs
- nebhe.org/tuitionbreak



Staying on Track Through Senior Year

Spring/Summer Junior Year

- Research colleges
- Visit campuses & college fairs
- Ask teachers for letters of recommendation
- Take the SAT/ACT
- Start writing the college essay

Fall Senior Year

- Retake the SAT/ACT
- Secure letters of recommendation
- Finalize the college essay(s)
- Attend MEFA's *College Financing* webinar
- Complete all admissions applications
- Submit financial aid applications

Winter Senior Year

- Submit admissions applications
- Submit financial aid applications
- Apply for private scholarships
- Send in mid-year grade reports

Spring Senior Year

- Receive admissions and financial aid offers
- Attend MEFA's *After the College Acceptance* webinar
- Attend college open house programs
- Choose your college by May 1st

View an extended timeline at: mefa.org/college-admissions-and-financial-aid-timeline

MEFA Pathway *Your Plan for the Future*

FREE college and career planning tool

Resources include:

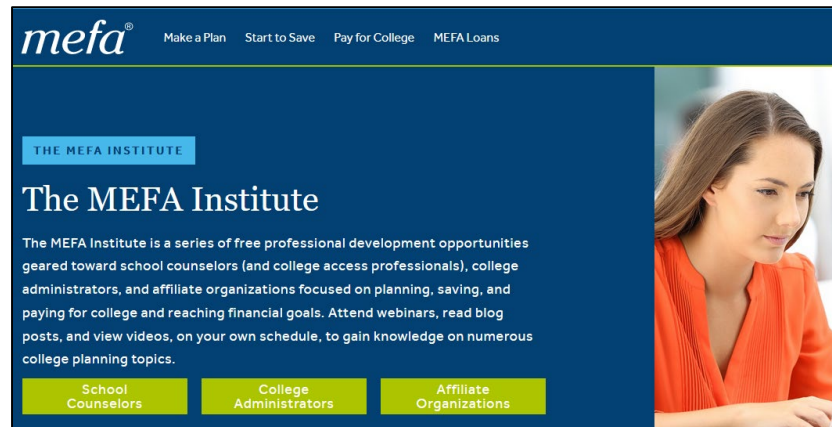
- Skills and interests assessments
- Career exploration
- College search
- Financial aid and scholarship information
- Personalized digital portfolio
- Visit mefapathway.org to get started



mefa
pathway YOUR PLAN
FOR THE FUTURE®

What You Can Do Now

- Register for upcoming MEFA Institute webinars and complete lessons to earn PDPs: mefa.org/mefa-institute
- Share MEFA resources with families: mefa.org/applying-to-college
- Visit mefa.org/counselors



The screenshot displays the MEFA website's header and a section for 'The MEFA Institute'. The header includes the 'mefa' logo and navigation links: 'Make a Plan', 'Start to Save', 'Pay for College', and 'MEFA Loans'. The main content area features a blue background with a white box containing the text 'THE MEFA INSTITUTE' and 'The MEFA Institute'. Below this, a paragraph describes the institute as a series of free professional development opportunities for school counselors, college administrators, and affiliate organizations. At the bottom, three green buttons are labeled 'School Counselors', 'College Administrators', and 'Affiliate Organizations'. A photograph of a woman in an orange top is visible on the right side of the page.

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Thank You

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Questions?

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