

College & COVID-19 FAQs for the Class of 2021

1. What is the current situation with SAT and ACT test dates and availability?

At this time, the College Board has announced that June test dates have been canceled and we expect similar news about the June ACT soon. For the most up-to-date announcements on COVID-19's impact on standardized testing, we recommend bookmarking and regularly checking the [Impact of COVID-19 on College Admission and Testing](#) blog from Compass Education Group. They provide regular updates and links to announcements and information from [College Board](#) and [ACT](#).

For those students who were planning to take the SAT and/or ACT this spring, I recommend that you still plan to take the SAT and/or ACT this fall, if possible. Though most colleges have announced that they will be test optional for the Class of 2021, strong test scores could be a helpful addition to your application. Please be aware that College Board should have emailed you letting you know that SAT registration for fall test dates will open on May 26th. Please check your email and ACT's website for their updates on new test dates and registration for fall testing.

2. If I'm not testing until the fall, should I continue to do test prep right now?

Whether or not to pay for additional test prep should always be a family decision. I would suggest that formal test prep over the next five months is likely more than you need—if you have already done formal test prep this spring, consider whether pausing your practice and picking it back up again 4-6 weeks before your new test date would make more sense for you. You can certainly keep your test-taking skills sharp by using the free resources through [Khan Academy](#) and [ACT Academy](#) in the meantime.

3. How do I decide whether or not to submit test scores to test optional colleges?

Colleges are sincere when they tell you that they do not require test scores to review your application. Hundreds of colleges have been successfully admitting qualified students to their colleges for years—sometimes decades—without test scores. Their readers review the information you provide in your application holistically. Without test scores, your grades, course selection, recommendations (if accepted), activities, and essays will be the primary factors used to review your application.

Deciding whether or not to apply test-optional to one, some, or all of your colleges is an individual decision. We will give you our best advice based on your college list and your test scores so that you can make an informed decision this fall.

I do encourage you to take at least one test, ACT or SAT, if you are able.

Registration information is available May 26th for the Fall SAT and please continue to check the ACT website for updated information.

4. Are we switching to SCOIR or can we use Naviance?

Due to the significant amount of changes the juniors have had this year, we are going to move forward with using both SCOIR *and* Naviance. Students can continue to put their information in Naviance and when we roll out SCOIR, the juniors can decide which program they would prefer to use. We will appropriately roll out SCOIR over the summer and provide a great training, but in the meantime please use Naviance. If you do not know your Naviance username or password, please email me.

5. How should juniors be thinking about SAT Subject Tests?

SAT Subject Tests should be your lowest priority right now. These tests have become increasingly obsolete over the last decade. No college in the U.S. requires SAT Subject Tests and the very short list of colleges that “recommend” SAT Subject Tests is shrinking every day. If you have not yet taken the SAT or ACT, then those tests should be your first priority this fall, please do not worry about SAT Subject Tests.

6. What about AP exams this year?

AP Exams this year will be offered as 45 minute tests, taken at home. Two different dates will be offered for each test, and those dates were announced on April 3rd. The College Board has an [ongoing updates page](#) for more information. You can also see Compass Education’s thoughts and FAQs [here](#) regarding this adjustment. Please note that submitting AP exam scores is not a college admission requirement. We usually recommend that you report AP scores of 4 or 5 on your college applications, though each student should consult with us this fall to make a final decision.

Your AP teacher will give you specific information and resources about the changes to individual AP exams you are taking. Colleges have announced that they will continue to award AP credit and placement per their individual policies for AP exams taken this year. You can also log into your AP Classroom for more information and resources to help you prepare for your AP exam. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to your AP teacher or email me at fohanessian@mercyhsb.com.

7. How can I research colleges during shelter-in-place?

Whether attending virtual college fairs, virtual campus tours and information sessions, talking with current students and alums, reading college guide books and college websites, watching vlogs on YouTube or [Campus Reel](#), or taking advantage of the college search features in Naviance, you have many opportunities to get to know your colleges without visiting their campuses.

As a reminder, feel free to set up a meeting with Mrs. Ohanessian to discuss your college options. You can do this by emailing me at fohanessian@mercyhsb.com.

8. Will colleges adjust their application deadlines next fall and winter?

It is possible that colleges may shift application deadlines next year in order to allow applicants more time to complete college visits—especially those colleges that often admit a significant percentage of their first-year classes through a binding Early Decision application plan. Our best guess is that the most selective colleges won't make adjustments, but many other colleges may push deadlines back. We are in a holding pattern since most colleges are focused on confirming their class for next fall right now. I think we will start to hear more information from colleges beginning in May and throughout the summer. Remember, colleges want you to know them by visiting their campuses, so if they are able to give you more time to make your choices next year, they will.

9. How is Mercy's College Counseling Office here to support you?

I am available to meet throughout the school day and after school. Feel free to email me at any time (fohanessian@mercyhsb.com) with questions or concerns. I will update you with any information that arises over the next few months.

Additional Information & Resources

[University of California](#) - updates to admission policies for the Class of 2021

[California State University](#) - updates to admission policies for the Class of 2021

[Impact of COVID-19 on College Admission and Testing](#) - Compass Prep's Blog

[Coping in the Time of Corona](#) - Tulane University Admissions Blog

[Change is the Only Constant](#) - Georgia Tech Admissions Blog

[Interview with Director of Admission for UC and the President of Western](#)

[Association of College Admission Counseling](#)

[Live Updates: Latest News on Coronavirus and Higher Education](#) - Inside Higher Ed

[After Coronavirus, Colleges Worry: Will Students Come Back?](#) - New York Times