Dear ASC Volunteer,

Thank you for volunteering for the Alumni Schools Committee! The Alumni Schools Committee (ASC) is a great opportunity to contribute to the legacy of the University, to connect with other bright, passionate, and interesting alumni, and to engage the next generation of UChicago students. As a member of the ASC, you join the single largest volunteer organization within the University. With over 4,000 active members around the world, ASC volunteers represent the Office of College Admissions in their communities by engaging with prospective students at local college fairs, admitted student receptions, and other events.

Our ability to connect with students in a meaningful and personal way—through conversations about their personal interests as well as the College’s outstanding academic programs, outcomes, and extracurricular activities—depends on enthusiastic volunteer support from alumni like you. We value the time and energy that ASC volunteers bring to admissions work. Last year alone, hardworking alumni attended nearly 200 college fairs and special events, interacting with thousands of prospective students and their families. Interest in the University of Chicago continues to grow, and there is much work to be done!

ASC volunteers serve as powerful ambassadors for the University of Chicago. You are a direct and immediate resource to help prospective students and their families gain an understanding of all that UChicago offers its undergraduates: a rich tradition of academics, research and extracurricular opportunities bolstered by a strong support network through our distinctive House model, college advisors, Career Advancement, internships, and of course, alumni like you. In the following pages, you will find instructions and best practices on attending admissions events, as well as an overview of all things UChicago. At the end of this manual, you will also find an updated outline on the major programs and initiatives so that as the College enhances its services for undergraduates, you can stay up-to-date in your conversations with prospective students and their families.

Through the ASC you’ll have interactions with students that transform their relationship with the University. Your conversations can show them how the Life of the Mind shaped your education and impacted your life. You’ll maintain a strong connection with UChicago and keep up with all of the new programs and resources it provides its students. Volunteering with the ASC will allow you to share your love of the University with prospective students and ensure that the brightest young minds in the world are excited about the University of Chicago. The best way you can do this is by making sure each and every student and family walks away from their conversations with a positive and stronger understanding of the University of Chicago.

We look forward to working with you and I would love to hear from you no matter what prompts your communication. Please reach out to your ASC Chair or me directly at christinarivers@uchicago.edu or 773.702.6791. We look forward to an exciting year!

Go Maroons!!

Christina Rivers
Director of the Alumni Schools Committee
The University of Chicago
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Eligibility Requirements & Standards of Best Practices

We’re excited to welcome you on board! As a member of the ASC, you are also now a part of the Admissions Office and serve as an ambassador for our office and our university. Through the sections covered in this manual and in the policies outlined below, we hope to help ensure that both you and the prospective students you connect with have an informative and enjoyable experience.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be an active member of the ASC, you must:

- Be an alumnus/a of the University of Chicago (the College and all graduate divisions and professional schools included)
- Maintain an active email account
- Stay up-to-date with knowledge about the College and be comfortable discussing the undergraduate experience with prospective students from a variety of backgrounds
- Review the ASC training materials, and confirm that you have read and understand the Standards of Best Practice

Any conflicts of interest, either real or perceived, will inform your eligibility to participate in the ASC. Conflicts of interests may arise if you are in any of the following roles or relationships:

- Have any personal interest in the admissions outcome for a specific student, for a particular secondary school, or for another undergraduate institution
- Work as an independent college counselor or for-profit educational consultant
- Are an immediate family member of a current college applicant or applicant to UChicago
- Are an admissions, financial aid, or development officer for UChicago or another institution
- Represent more than one undergraduate institution in the same admissions cycle

If you have any questions about these eligibility requirements and your participation in the ASC, you should contact Christina Rivers at christinarivers@uchicago.edu. If you do not notify the Director of the ASC about any potential conflicts of interest or violate our Standards of Best Practices, you may be deactivated as a volunteer.
Overview for Volunteers

This manual is intended to give ASC volunteers a quick overview to help get them started as volunteers. We encourage you to review this entire document.

Mission of the ASC

As an ASC volunteer, you play a significant ambassadorial role for UChicago that goes beyond the college admissions process. Our primary goal is to elevate awareness of the distinctive undergraduate experience and opportunities afforded by a UChicago education, and one of the most effective ways of doing this is giving prospective students and families the opportunity to interact with alumni, who can speak directly from their own personal experiences. In many cases, these interactions may be the only time a prospective student has direct contact with someone who attended UChicago. Regardless of whether or not that student is eventually admitted, it is important that students have a positive experience and impression of the University.

Who makes up the ASC?

4,000+ Alumni volunteers
65 ASC Chairs
Volunteers representing 47 countries
ASC volunteers span eight decades, from UChicago classes of 1942 to 2018
Alumni from ALL divisions of the University of Chicago (College, Graduate divisions, Professional Schools, etc.)

Important admissions cycle dates:

- **November 1st**: Early Action and Early Decision I [application deadline](#).
- **Late December**: Early Action and Early Decision I admissions decisions released.
- **January 2nd**: Early Decision II and Regular Decision [application deadline](#).
- **Mid-February**: Early Decision II admissions decisions released.
- **Mid-March**: Regular Decision admissions decisions released.
Standards of Best Practice

We hope this information is helpful in making each conversation a positive experience for both you and the students you meet! All members are expected to follow these Standards of Best Practice, and failing to do so may result in dismissal from the ASC. Please make sure to review these before each admissions cycle, as they are updated annually.

- **Be enthusiastic!** Set a friendly tone and engage prospective students with a curious and pleasant approach. For many students, the college admissions process marks a new stage of life, and even the most socially adept students can sometimes be nervous. This also may be the first personal contact they make with anyone from UChicago. Please use appropriate language to convey warmth and enthusiasm when you meet them.

- **Please do your best to convey accurate information about UChicago, and to not convey any impression or expectation about an applicant's probability of admission.** Keep yourself informed and updated as much as possible by reviewing the resources on the ASC website and the College Admissions website (collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu). If you don’t know the answer to a student’s question, it’s okay to say “I don’t know” and let the student follow up with the admissions office for an answer. Students should be directed to contact the Office of College Admissions with any questions regarding their application status.

- **Keep your contact information current and maintain an active email account.** You can update your information on the Alumni Directory or in your volunteer portal, and you should contact your ASC Chair or the Director of the ASC if any questions arise during the application cycle.

- **Any information shared with you by the Office of College Admissions or the applicant should be considered confidential and should not be shared with anyone.** It is inappropriate to share a student’s personal contact information with other students or any person outside the UChicago College Admissions community without the student’s express consent.

- **Do not offer rides to prospective students to or from events or offer to meet with them outside of admissions events.** While it may seem like a nice gesture, it may create a risk of liability and is prohibited by the ASC.

- **Do not communicate with students outside of admissions events.** It is inappropriate to meet with applicants socially, or to connect with them on social media sites.

- **If your child is applying to UChicago, we require you to take a one-year sabbatical from participating in the ASC.** Despite the best intentions, any public involvement through the ASC during this time may create a perceived conflict of interest. Please notify your Chair and the Director of the ASC of this fact, and we will be happy to reactivate you for the following admission cycle.
• You should not ask questions or make comments related to sexual orientation, race or ethnic background, national origin, marital or family status, dating or relationships, disabilities or physical characteristics, or financial situation. It may be that a student initiates a discussion on these topics to obtain information about resources and environment at UChicago, but please limit your response to relevant information within the scope of your familiarity and be ready to change the subject if it appears the student is uneasy about discussing it further.
Before the Fair

Review the “UChicago in Brief” section of this manual. This section gives a brief overview of important information about the University and can serve as a jumping-off point for your own research into areas in which you feel you need a refresher.

Please arrive at the fair location at least 30 minutes before the fair begins to ensure that you can find parking (if arriving by car), locate the fair venue, and set up your table. The fair’s organizers will be aware of our registration and can direct you to the UChicago table. In the unlikely event that the organizers have not received our registration, they will often be able to accommodate you at an extra table; if not, simply leave your materials for participating counselors to share with their students.

If a last-minute conflict prevents you from attending, please let us know as soon as possible. Contact ASC Director Christina Rivers at christinarivers@uchicago.edu at your earliest convenience.

College Fair Materials

- UChicago Overview Sheet
- Financial Aid Overview Sheet
- UChicago Stickers
- A table banner and/or poster, which can be used to decorate your table

During the Fair

Dress Code
Please wear something presentable and comfortable (think smart casual—formal attire is not required but jeans and t-shirts are not recommended), and be aware that you may be standing for a few hours when making footwear choices.

Interacting with Prospective Students
Students may feel that they need to collect as much information as possible at college fairs, so be prepared for a swell of visitors who may just be looking to grab a quick brochure and move forward. Some students may not know how to begin a conversation, even with the representative of a school they’re interested in, but simply asking, “Does anyone have any questions?” often starts a conversation. If you are able, please stand when talking with people, as it makes them feel welcome and engaged.

Students will often ask very specific questions, about a particular major or club, for instance. Whether or not you have specific information to share about that particular area, it can be helpful to situate that specific area within the broader picture, for instance by discussing the Core curriculum, the Houses, or life in Hyde Park. Sometimes questions are underpinned by an implicit assumption, for example that in order to go into business, you need to major in Business. Giving a helpful answer to their question may require addressing that assumption. Any student you speak with who is interested in applying to UChicago will be doing more research on their own, and your discussion can help frame that research by broadening their awareness.
Feel free to draw from your own experience as you feel comfortable—connecting with your first-hand knowledge can resonate particularly strongly with students. At the same time, keep in mind that every UChicago student’s experience is unique. Just as you and your peers came to campus from different backgrounds, spent your time on campus in different ways, and enjoyed different aspects of UChicago, prospective students will have a college experience that is largely what they choose to make of it. Ideally, your conversation will help them understand how their individual experience might fit into the overall culture, environment, and structure of a UChicago education.

At a single fair, you may interact with students or families with greatly varying levels of familiarity with UChicago or the college landscape generally. Maintaining a warm and positive tone helps meet students wherever they are in their college journey. Preliminary college research, like that conducted by attending a college fair, is the foundation for building a more nuanced understanding of higher education and of particular institutions. The students you meet, even if bright and interested, may not yet have that basic knowledge on which a more nuanced understanding is founded and almost certainly will not have the context to appreciate more granular aspects of institutional culture, like inside jokes. Rather than trying to impart a comprehensive, detailed understanding, think of your conversation as a warm invitation to continue learning about UChicago moving forward.

Please limit your responses to what you are personally familiar with, both in speaking about UChicago and if asked about comparing UChicago with other institutions. Never put down another college or university. What is an ideal fit for one student may be a poor fit for another, and students considering UChicago will likely have a number of great college options. It is always better to direct the student to follow up with the admissions office for more information than to give an incorrect, partially correct, or guessed answer. The University is a large and complex organization, and even the most experienced admissions representative will frequently ask students to follow up by email for an answer.

Students may ask you to assess their chances of admission to UChicago, sometimes sharing a few pieces of information they feel are relevant. Please decline to offer any speculation as to whether or not the student might be admitted. As you know, the holistic application review process considers a wide range of essential factors, many of which, such as teacher evaluations and essays, cannot be conveyed by the student in conversation. The context in which an application is produced and the context of the application pool in which it is reviewed are also essential.

Fairs can occasionally feel hectic from a college representative’s perspective, but what feels like one brief interaction among many to you may be a formational moment for the student in their college journey.

**Students might be looking to sign in, or fill out a form.** They may be asking because they think it’s expected, or because they are aware that some schools track “demonstrated interest” through interactions at college fairs. You can let them know that students are able to sign up for our mailing list or update their contact information through the “Contact” section of our website.

**If a student has further questions or is interested in contacting their regional counselor,** please direct them to the “Contact” section of our website, collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu/contact. They can email the general college admissions inbox at collegeadmissions@uchicago.edu with questions about the University or
the admissions process, the Financial Aid Office at college-aid@uchicago.edu with questions about financial aid, and current UChicago students for insights on the student experience at askastudent@uchicago.edu. This last email address is a great resource for students with questions along the lines of “What is it like to do X at UChicago?”

After the Fair:

Please return all left over materials to our office using the return label provided. You may drop the box of materials off at any FedEx location. Because we have a limited number of table banners, please return these materials to us as quickly as possible.
This section serves as an overview of academics, career advancement, and student life at UChicago as well as our admissions process. While you, as an alumna/us, certainly know the University very well, UChicago is a place that is constantly growing and changing. This document can serve as an update, a refresher, and a reference for anything you may be asked about by students.

We encourage you to do further research into any particular aspects of the University you are curious about or feel you need to learn more about. You should always feel comfortable directing students to our website, collegeadmissions.uchicago.edu, and to contact their admissions counselor with additional questions.

**Academics**

- Quick facts
  - Approximately 6,000 undergraduate students
  - More than [50 undergraduate majors and 40 minors](#) in one College
    - Students generally declare a major at the end of their second year (required by Spring Quarter of third year), but can declare earlier
    - Some majors require a senior BA thesis, and many students for whom it is not a requirement will choose to complete one
  - Quarter System
    - 3 academic quarters in school year, plus summer
    - 10 weeks + 1 finals week per quarter
  - 3 or 4 classes at a time to be a full-time student
  - 42 classes required to graduate
  - Class load approximately breaks down into thirds
    - One third for [Core curriculum](#), one third for a major and one third for electives
    - Roughly a quarter of students double major and half have a minor

- Core Curriculum
  - Approximately one third of your classes
  - Core discussion classes are capped at 19 students
  - Spans 8 disciplines: Humanities, Social Sciences, Civilization Studies, Foreign Languages, Arts, Math, Physical Sciences and Biological Sciences (No more P.E.)
  - All students must complete the Core
  - Teaches students not what, but how to think and provides them with tools for inquiry and analysis across disciplines
  - We do accept up to six quarters worth of AP and IB Credit, usually for 5’s (AP) or 7’s (higher level IB)
    - Does not replace entire Core requirements, but may accelerate into higher levels
    - May count towards elective credits
    - IB Credit for Biology, English, Languages other than English, and Physics

- Research
- 80% of students take their learning beyond the classroom and into labs or research experiences
- Any student who wants to can gain research experience, even starting in their first year
- There are formal databases and avenues to research positions, but the majority are filled by reaching out to professors doing work in an area of interest
- Over 160 research institutions affiliated with UChicago. Some notable ones include:
  - **Institute for Molecular Engineering**
    - An interdisciplinary institute at the intersection of molecular biology, chemistry, and physics
    - Focus on nano-scale phenomena with applications across the traditional engineering disciplines
    - Major and minor in Molecular Engineering are offered
  - **Marine Biology Laboratory**
    - Located in Woods Hole, MA
    - Led by UChicago faculty for the early portion of its existence
    - Today, a strong affiliation provides opportunities for students and faculty to study and do research there
  - **Institute of Politics**
    - Nonpartisan
    - Headed by David Axelrod (advisor to President Obama and alumnus of the College)
    - Brings important political thinkers and figures for talks and discussions (100+ speakers per year)
    - Supports students interested in working in the public sector by facilitating over 300 internships and research positions/year in politically-oriented fields
    - Includes positions working with Chicago politicians, the White House, and even internationally with embassies and non-profits
  - **Argonne National Laboratory and Fermi National Laboratory**
    - UChicago is one of two universities in the country to manage two U.S. Department of Energy National Labs
  - **Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation**
    - Advances entrepreneurship through academics, research, conferences, competitions and community outreach
    - Open to entire University
    - Provides space for proof-of-concept work, business incubation, collaboration opportunities, and programming for new ventures created by UChicago students, staff, and faculty
    - Incubates 10-20 start-ups at a time
    - Connects UChicago innovators with resources in the city of Chicago to facilitate new businesses, job creation, and economic growth
  - **Advising**
    - Each college student is assigned to one full-time staff adviser, who will help guide them through academic opportunities at UChicago.
After students declare a major, they will have faculty advisors who are experts in their chosen field of study.

- **Study Abroad**
  - ~50% of students will study abroad during time at UChicago
  - Permanent centers in Paris, Beijing, Delhi, and Hong Kong
  - Financial aid travels with students
  - **Nearly 60 programs in more than 30 cities around the world**
    - Vary from quarter-long to year-long and fall into a variety of thematic areas including neuroscience and astronomy
  - Civilization Studies program
    - A way to go abroad while fulfilling Core requirements
    - Most students who study abroad do so through a Civilizations program

- **Career Advancement**
  - Empowers students to translate their academic foundation and critical thinking skills into professional success
  - Provides resources for students of all majors to prepare for and apply to jobs, internships, graduate, and professional schools
  - Students are assigned a career adviser, from their first day on campus. This is unique to UChicago!
    - 40+ full time advisers
    - Assist with everything from resume and cover letter crafting to interview skills to business dinner etiquette
  - Career Treks travel to different cities around the country and world to explore different industries—there is significant financial backing for these programs
    - Meet with professionals in various careers to get a personal explanation of what the career entails
    - Allows for a quick overview and personal exploration of various jobs within a career field
  - The Jeff Metcalf Internship Program provides over **2,500 substantive, paid internships exclusively for UChicago students** each year, in fields ranging from finance to theatre production and management
    - Guarantees hands-on experience that contributes to the organization or business during the internship, rather than just fetching coffee or making copies
  - **“UChicago Careers in _________” Programs**
    - Business; Educational Professions; Entrepreneurship; Health Professions; Journalism, Arts and Media; Law; Public Policy and Service; and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
    - These pre-professional tracks are open to students of every major, and are non-selective (with the exception of the Trot Business Program)
    - Facilitate and manage the internships, career fairs, career treks, internships, and advising in these areas
Extensive alumni network is open for undergraduates and alumni to connect with at any point in their lives

Outcomes
- 95% either employed or are pursuing further education one year post-graduation
  - Due in large part to the success of the Career Advancement office
  - UChicago students are valuable due to the critical thinking skills their education has given them, and due to the practical, hands-on experience they garner through the Career Advancement office
- Industry Outcomes
  - Most popular fields include Education/Academia, Financial Services and General Business, Science and Technology, Consulting, and Government/Public/Social Service

Student & Campus Life
- Student Housing
  - 39 Houses in 7 residence halls
  - **The Houses give each student a home community from the beginning, creating ties across place of origin, academic interests, and extracurricular activities**
    - Campus North, designed by the firm of noted architect Jeanne Gang, opened in Fall of 2016
  - No themed Houses—all are microcosms of the diverse University community
  - Each house has 1 or 2 Resident Assistants (upperclassmen), and 1 or 2 Resident Heads (usually young faculty, graduate students, or staff)
  - All first-years must live in housing
  - Guaranteed all four years
  - ~60% of students live in campus housing
  - Each house has its own table in one of three dining halls
- Student organizations
  - More than 400 student run organizations (RSOs)
  - All are open to students of any major or career interest
  - Many have different levels of commitment available; student can devote a few hours a week or become heavily involved in these groups
  - Students can start their own groups very easily—only 7 students are required to form a student organization
- The Arts
  - Very popular, ranging from University Theatre to MODA (a student run fashion magazine) to vocal and music ensembles
  - No need to major in the arts to participate, even for groups that are sponsored by the Music, Visual Arts, or TAPS departments
    - Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts
      - 4 purpose-built new theater and performance spaces
      - State-of-the art sound and digital editing labs
      - Music practice rooms and rehearsal spaces
      - Costume design and set design spaces
Academic
- Groups with competitive programming like Model UN and Debate are consistently in the top 5 in the Country
  - Model UN ranked #1 in the world 2013-2016
- Other groups maintain academic focuses in a variety of areas

Community Service
- University Community Service Center
- Provides service opportunities for students to connect with the many communities throughout the city
- Clearinghouse for everything from internships to days of service to community building and social justice work

Athletics
- We have 20 varsity teams (including, as of fall 2018, women’s lacrosse), and around 10% of our students are varsity athletes
- We are an NCAA Division III institution, which means that we recruit top athletes but are not permitted to offer athletic scholarships. Prospective varsity athletes should connect with coaches first.
- Club and intramural levels also available
  - 35+ active athletic clubs, some competitive and others not
  - The majority of students are involved in intramurals, many through their House

Hyde Park and Chicago
- Hyde Park
  - Offers the benefits of having our own college town-like community within Chicago
  - Great commercial and dining options along the 57th, 55th, and 53rd Street corridors and sprinkled throughout the neighborhood
  - Hyatt Place and Sophy hotels now open
  - Relatively new attractions include a movie theatre, several great restaurants, and many new retail options, including a Target
  - Old favorites like Valois, Harold’s and the Medici remain
  - ~2/3 of Faculty live in or around Hyde Park
  - Campus is a nationally recognized botanical garden
  - Jackson Park is the future home of the Obama Presidential Center
  - CTA routes that operate around Hyde Park during the day are free for students with their ID, and are supplemented by daytime University shuttle routes. Nighttime University shuttle routes take students within two blocks of anywhere in Hyde Park they might need to go.

- Chicago
  - U-Pass gives students unlimited rides on Chicago Public Transit during the academic year
  - Arts Pass
    - Free or discounted access with UChicago student ID to over 70 arts and cultural institutions, like the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago Symphony, Lyric Opera, and Museum of Contemporary Art
• Students explore Chicago through organized House trips
• Great professional sports teams
• 77 neighborhoods each with their own distinct culture and feel
• Two international airports (O’Hare and Midway) with direct flights to many major domestic and international cities
Overview of Admissions

The Holistic Reading Process

The admissions committee considers a candidate’s entire application—academic and extracurricular records, essays, letters of recommendation, and other information submitted.

What does this mean for students?

- There is no minimum GPA or test score required to be considered for admission, nor is there any single piece of information that can determine the strength of an application and whether or not a student could be a good fit for the College.

- There are no mandatory curricular requirements for incoming students, but we recommend that students seek to challenge themselves productively in a range of core academic subjects, whatever that may look like in their educational context.
  - Competitive applicants have engaged in the most rigorous curriculum available in their high school within reason, and have been successful in this environment. This does not mean having taken and aced every single hardest class possible, but rather demonstrating interest and ability in academic pursuits.

- Every high school is different, and each application is reviewed in light of the context it comes from. Regional counselors with specific knowledge of their territory read all applications first.

- Applications are reviewed multiple times and presented to an admissions committee.

We look for bright students with a passion for seeking out and engaging new ideas, a willingness to change their ways of thinking as they encounter new evidence and new perspectives, and an interest in joining a community of similar scholars. Students should share how they made the most of their high school experience and the aspects of what they've done or who they are that are most important to them.

A Word on Highly Selective Admissions

It is no secret that there are far many more talented and qualified students who apply than there are spots for in our incoming class. We receive around 30,000 applications each year for an incoming class size of about 1,600 students. It is thanks to you, our alumni volunteers who serve as amazing ambassadors of the University, that we are able to attract an outstanding pool of applicants and enroll a remarkable class each year. Our review process takes months of careful deliberation, but inevitably there will be those who are disappointed when we release decisions. It’s important to keep in mind that the admissions process is not a judgement about the applicant as a person, about their future prospects, or about their ability to succeed at a school like UChicago. That a student is not admitted does not mean that they couldn't be successful here or that they couldn't have been a good fit for UChicago. Regardless of whether a student applies or is admitted to UChicago, your conversation with that student may have left an indelible mark on their college search and a positive impression of the University that they'll carry with them.
Application Cycle Dates

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Application Due Date</th>
<th>Early Action</th>
<th>Early Decision 1</th>
<th>Early Decision 2</th>
<th>Regular Decision</th>
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<td>November 1</td>
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<td>May 1</td>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>May 1</td>
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**EA- Early Action** - Deadline November 1.

Our Early Action (EA) deadline is best for students who would like to apply early and receive an admissions decision early, but are not certain about what college they would like to attend. Applying as an Early Action applicant does not constitute a binding commitment to attend if admitted, and students have several months to let us know whether or not they will attend. If students would like to compare admissions offers and financial aid packages from multiple colleges when making your final decision, Early Action is a better choice than an Early Decision plan.

Early Action applicants will receive an admissions decision of admit, deny, or defer.

**Early Decision I** – Deadline November 1.

Our Early Decision I (ED I) application option is best for students who have identified UChicago as their absolute first choice and know they would choose to attend UChicago immediately if offered admission. This admissions plan is binding, meaning that if admitted, applicants commit to attending UChicago, withdrawing outstanding applications from any other school, and not applying to any additional colleges. If students are enthusiastic about applying to UChicago early but would like to compare admissions offers and financial aid packages from multiple colleges before making a final decision, they should consider applying through the Early Action plan.

Students may only apply Early Decision to one college, but may additionally apply to other schools through non-binding admission plans, so long as there is no restriction to the contrary as part of those non-binding plans. Early Decision I applicants will receive an admissions decision of admit, deny, or defer.

**Early Decision II** – Deadline January 2

Our Early Decision II (ED II) application option is best for students who have identified UChicago as their absolute first choice and know they would choose to attend UChicago immediately if offered admission, but are not ready to apply by the November 1 Early Decision I deadline. This admissions plan is binding, meaning that if admitted, applicants commit to attending UChicago, withdrawing outstanding applications from any other school, and not applying to any additional colleges. If students are enthusiastic about applying
to UChicago but would like to compare admissions offers and financial aid packages from multiple colleges before making a final decision, they should consider applying through the Regular Decision plan.

Students may only apply Early Decision to one college, but may apply to other schools through non-binding admission plans in addition to an Early Decision application. Early Decision II applicants will receive an admissions decision of admit, deny, or waitlist.

**RD- Regular Decision**- Deadline January 2

Our Regular Decision (RD) deadline is the standard non-binding application plan, and the bulk of applications we see come in Regular Decision. Applying as a Regular Decision applicant does not constitute a binding commitment to attend if admitted, and students have over a month to let us know if you will attend. If students feel that they will be able to prepare a stronger application by January than by November and would like to be able to compare admissions offers and financial aid packages from multiple colleges, Regular Decision could be the best choice for them.

Regular Decision applicants will receive an admissions decision of admit, deny, or waitlist.

**What Do Decisions Mean?**

Applicants will receive one of four possible admissions decisions.

- **Admit.** Hooray! If a student has applied through the Early Decision I or Early Decision II plans, they have made a binding commitment to attend UChicago. If they have applied through Early Action or Regular Decision, they will have until May 1st to confirm their enrollment (and they certainly should!).

- **Deny.** Unfortunately, there is not a spot in the class for this student that year. There is no appeals process, and they may not apply through a later application round that same year.

- **Defer.** If a student applied through the Early Action or Early Decision I application plans, their application may be deferred. This means that the admissions committee wants to review it again in the context of the broader Regular Decision pool. Their application will be automatically rolled over to the Regular Decision round, and they do not need to reapply or submit additional application materials. Early Action applicants whose applications have been deferred may contact the admissions office to request that their applications be switched over to the Early Decision II round for consideration. This option is not open to deferred Early Decision I applicants.

- **Waitlist.** If a student applied through the Early Decision II or Regular Decision application plans, they may be put on the waitlist. This means that the admissions committee thought this student put together a strong application and may offer them admission if there is space in the class.
  - Our waitlist is not ranked.
  - Students are usually notified of a final decision from the waitlist between May 1 and mid-June.
  - The number of students admitted from the waitlist varies greatly from year to year.
Waitlisted students who remain interested in attending UChicago should complete the waitlist form in their UChicago account and write to their regional admissions officer to express their continued interest.

The Application and UChicago Supplement

Students may apply through either the Common Application or the Coalition Application, and submit the UChicago Supplement essays either through one of these platforms or their UChicago Account. A complete application includes a high school transcript, letters of recommendation from two teachers of academic subjects, supporting school forms found on the applications’ websites, and, in some cases, standardized test scores—must be submitted for the application to be considered. There is no preference given to either the Common App or the Coalition App, and applications submitted both platforms are considered in the same way. Full application instructions are available on our website.

Required Materials

- Application for Admission (Common or Coalition)
- Application Fee (only required for students not applying for need-based financial aid)
- Secondary School Report
- Two teacher evaluations
- If applicable, standardized test scores
- Midyear Report
- English language proficiency test scores (international applicants only)

Test-Optional Policy

A student’s transcript shows their academic record in the context of their school, but, since one school can be very different from another, it is useful to see evidence of academic achievement that exists outside of the school context. This is why some colleges ask applicants to submit an SAT or ACT score. For many applicants, an SAT or ACT score can reflect their academic preparedness in this broader context.

Some applicants may feel that an SAT or ACT score does not fully reflect their academic preparedness or potential. If this is the case for a domestic first-year applicant, they may select UChicago’s test-optional method of application and not supply SAT or ACT scores with their application.

While traditional college interviews are no longer a part of our application process, applicants are invited to include a 2-minute introductory video with their application, as well as any projects, performances, or other achievements that wouldn’t otherwise fit on a traditional college application. We welcome any student, regardless of testing plan, to submit additional material that they feel best highlights their skills, talents, and potential contributions to UChicago.
A copy of this year’s UChicago supplement is included in the appendix of this manual, but here are a few important points about it:

**UChicago Extended Essay:** The extended essay prompts change every year and are inspired by students and alumni. Some past examples include:

- *Where is Waldo, really?*
- *Find x.*
- *Dog and Cat. Coffee and Tea. Great Gatsby and Catcher in the Rye. Everyone knows there are two types of people in the world. What are they?*
- *Don’t write about Reverse Psychology.*

Students have their choice of several prompts each year. Students may also write a response to any past UChicago prompt that appeals to them, or they may write their own essay prompt. We encourage students to pick the prompt that most speaks to them, respond in a way that feels genuine, and hopefully have a little bit of fun.

**“Why Chicago?” Essay:** This is students’ opportunity to share why they are interested in attending the College. UChicago looks for students who are familiar with the distinctive academic experience, opportunities, and community that they will find at UChicago, and are able to express why they would be a good fit for the College. Students are encouraged to do research into a range of college options before answering this question.
Financial Aid and Scholarships

UChicago’s No Barriers philosophy means increasing access to the College, supporting students in receiving a transformative education, and preparing them for lifelong success. The latest initiative to bolster these efforts, UChicago Empower, expands access for first-generation and rural students, enhances financial support for those who serve our communities, and enables greater student agency and ownership in the college admissions process.

- **No application fee for students applying for need-based aid**
  - The application fee is automatically waived for students who indicate in their application that they intend to apply for financial aid.

- **No student loan expectation**
  - UChicago’s need-based financial aid involves no loans and is awarded as grants, which do not need to be repaid. Students can graduate without debt influencing their plans for the future.

- **Funded opportunities**
  - Generous funding for summer and school-year involvement is available—from internships and research positions to study abroad and career exploration treks for all majors and interests.

- **Robust career support**
  - Starting from their first day on campus and continuing long after graduation, students have accessed to truly unparalleled resources: a dedicated career adviser from first year, a suite of pre-professional “UChicago Careers In” programs open to any student of any major, exclusive access to over 2,500 paid Metcalf internships annually, and one of the most dynamic alumni networks in the world.

**Need-Based Aid**

- The University of Chicago's consideration of applications for admission is need-blind for citizens of the U.S. and Canada as well as U.S. permanent residents.
- The Office of College Aid meets the full demonstrated need of every admitted student with a financial aid award that includes no student loan expectation.
- Families must submit three types of documentation to be considered for need-based financial aid:
  1. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  2. The UChicago Financial Aid Worksheet (submitted through the student’s UChicago Account) or the CSS Profile
  3. Parental Tax Returns (submitted through the student’s UChicago Account)

**Net Price Calculator**

Most colleges, including UChicago, provide an online tool that lets students and their families calculate their Estimated Family Contribution. This should not be treated as a final aid award, but gives a general idea of what it would cost to attend UChicago. More information on applying for financial aid can be found here.
Scholarships

- Merit awards (University Scholarships) range in value, but most are between $5,000 and $15,000 per year for four years. A merit award may also be given to support summer research or study. All students are automatically considered for merit awards on the basis of their application for admission, with no additional application required.
- First-Generation Scholarships are awarded to students whose parents did not graduate from college and provide $20,000 over the course of four years.
- Full-tuition Police and Fire Scholarships are offered to the children of professional, active-duty or killed on duty municipal, county, and state police and firefighters.
- Full-tuition Chicago Public Schools Educator Award scholarships are offered to the children of CPS school staff.

Odyssey Scholarship

In 2007, the College received a donation of $100 million to increase financial aid for undergraduates. This donation has translated into the [Odyssey Scholarship Program](#), which offers enhanced academic, social, and career support to students from low-income or first-generation backgrounds. Odyssey Scholars are eligible for additional funding for study abroad, health insurance, and other costs. Odyssey Scholars have the opportunity to receive a funded summer internship or research opportunity after their first year.
Appendix: 2018-2019 UChicago Supplement Essay Questions

The University of Chicago has long been renowned for its provocative essay questions. We think of them as an opportunity for students to tell us about themselves, their tastes, and their ambitions. They can be approached with utter seriousness, complete fancy, or something in between.

Each year we email newly admitted and current College students and ask them for essay topics. We receive several hundred responses, many of which are eloquent, intriguing, or downright wacky.

2017-18 UChicago Supplement

Required “Why UChicago?” Question:

How does the University of Chicago, as you know it now, satisfy your desire for a particular kind of learning, community, and future? Please address with some specificity your own wishes and how they relate to UChicago.

Required Extended Essay Questions (Choose only one):

Essay Option 1

In 2015, the city of Melbourne, Australia created a "tree-mail" service, in which all of the trees in the city received an email address so that residents could report any tree-related issues. As an unexpected result, people began to email their favorite trees sweet and occasionally humorous letters. Imagine this has been expanded to any object (tree or otherwise) in the world, and share with us the letter you’d send to your favorite.

-Inspired by Hannah Lu, Class of 2020

Essay Option 2

You’re on a voyage in the thirteenth century, sailing across the tempestuous seas. What if, suddenly, you fell off the edge of the Earth?

-Inspired by Chandani Latey, AB'93

Essay Option 3

The word floccinaucinihilipilification is the act or habit of describing or regarding something as unimportant or of having no value. It originated in the mid-18th century from the Latin words "floccus," "naucum," "nihilum," and "pilus"—all words meaning “of little use.” Coin your own word using parts from any language you choose, tell us its meaning, and describe the plausible (if only to you) scenarios in which it would be most appropriately used.
Essay Option 4

Lost your keys? Alohomora. Noisy roommate? Quietus. Feel the need to shatter windows for some reason? Finestra. Create your own spell, charm, jinx, or other means for magical mayhem. How is it enacted? Is there an incantation? Does it involve a potion or other magical object? If so, what's in it or what is it? What does it do?

- Inspired by Emma Sorkin, Class of 2021

Essay Option 5

Imagine you’ve struck a deal with the Dean of Admissions himself, Dean Nondorf. It goes as follows: you’re guaranteed admission to the University of Chicago regardless of any circumstances that arise. This bond is grounded on the condition that you'll obtain a blank, 8.5 x 11 piece of paper, and draw, write, sketch, shade, stencil, paint etc., anything and everything you want on it; your only limitations will be the boundaries of both sides on the single page. Now the catch… your submission, for the rest of your life, will always be the first thing anyone you meet for the first time will see. Whether it’s at a job interview, a blind date, arrival at your first Humanities class, before you even say, “hey,” they’ll already have seen your page, and formulated that first impression. Show us your page. What’s on it, and why? If your piece is largely or exclusively visual, please make sure to share a creator's accompanying statement of at least 300 words, which we will happily allow to be on its own, separate page.

PS: This is a creative thought experiment, and selecting this essay prompt does not guarantee your admission to UChicago.

- Inspired by Amandeep Singh Ahluwalia, Class of 2022

Essay Option 6

In the spirit of adventurous inquiry, pose your own question or choose one of our past prompts. Be original, creative, thought provoking. Draw on your best qualities as a writer, thinker, visionary, social critic, sage, citizen of the world, or future citizen of the University of Chicago; take a little risk, and have fun.