



April 28, 2022

The Pre-Graduation BIG DAY: May 1st!

So, how important is National College Decision Day (May 1st)?

Well, it depends...

- **If your college or university places students on a waitlist and/or has not told you that they've moved the date, very.** Not accepting these offers by May 1st will likely result in another student taking your spot next fall.
- **If you hope to take advantage of 2 free years of college via the Power of You Program** (see page 2) **you have more time.** The application deadline has been extended!
- **If your school continues to accept applications, as do most community colleges and many four-year schools, not so much.** If you are wondering about their acceptance policy, call their admissions office and ask.

If you're unsure, about your May 1st decision can you say **Yes...**

- to a college and change your mind later? **Yes, but in all likelihood, you will lose your deposit money.**
- to more than one college or university to give yourself more time to make a decision? **Students who make this choice risk having both colleges rescind their admission decisions.**

Are money worries stopping you from saying **Yes?**

- Share your concerns with the Financial Aid Office. **College is expensive but the entire amount is not due on Day 1.** Do they offer a 10-month payment plan (for the Tuition & Fees/Room & Board amounts) to make the cost more manageable?
- Remember: personal expenses, books, transportation are estimates. **Can you reduce these potential expenses to make the actual cost of college more realistic?** Also, how much can you earn **and** save over the school year **starting now** to reduce the need to borrow for college?
- If you are able to manage the first year, **are there cost saving measures you can take in subsequent years** (such as live off campus, get free housing by working in a Resident Advisor role or take reduced tuition summer classes and graduate early) that may help longer term?

Having a change of heart? No longer sure of your career interests?

- **Reconsider what opportunities your college may provide.** Ask to speak to an admissions representative about switching areas of interest or pursuing new passions while on campus. You may have more options than you currently realize.
- Not attending college isn't necessarily easier than attending college. **It takes effort to create a meaningful day-to-day existence without the supports and social connections of an academic setting to fall back on.** A well-planned Gap Year can be awesome. Developing goals and creating plans now may help clarify the pros and cons of delaying college enrollment.

Important information for college applications:

SPCPA School Code: 242 284

Counselor: Alison Green
(greena@spcpa.org)

School Information:
16 W 5th St
St Paul, MN 55102
(651) 290-2225

Need more options?

Minnesota State System schools are still accepting applications for the fall. Students who qualify for the need-based Minnesota State Grant can apply these funds to any of these schools creating a potentially more affordable option. These schools offer a huge range of majors including many designed for students interested in the performing/creative arts:

- **Metro State** – offers BAs in Advocacy & Leadership and Theatre, as well as minors in Community Organizing & Development and Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Game Studies, Gender Studies, and Screen Writing.
- **Bemidji State** – offers an Integrated Media degree combining video, digital, multimedia, web and print skills.

Merit scholarship deadlines vary by school. Apply now to have the most affordable options!

Community colleges also accept students well into the summer (June/July/August) before the fall term starts!



Important

SPCPA transcripts/student reports are NOT processed June 30 - July 10 (4th of July break). **Final transcripts will be submitted to the address noted on your Exit Survey (or home address if none listed) prior to the 4th of July break.** Please confirm the accuracy of your primary address on Infinite Campus to ensure proper delivery of your diploma packet.



Is taking college classes part of your gap year plan? Great! MOOCs (Massive Online Open Classes) offer free classes by well thought of colleges and universities. Click [here](#) for a general link or here by provider: [Coursera](#), [Udemy](#) and [edX](#). The nice thing about the free not for credit options is that failure to complete one of their online courses or do well in it has no impact on a college transcript/GPA. Some courses offer (for a fee) certificates of completion, which may or may not be useful when enrolling at a college or university. Students of all ages choose this path to learn more about a subject and/or their interests in hopes of being better prepared when they enroll in a credit bearing course somewhere else.

Interested in getting college credit for online classes? Enroll at a local community college and only choose online courses. The application process is quick (approximately 20 minutes not including the untimed Accuplacer exam) and free or low cost depending on where you apply. Students who sign up for a single class (typically 3-5 credits) to "try the waters" would not have access to federal student loans, which means paying something around \$200/credit for the course.

Students taking two or more classes (at least 6 credits) who have completed their [FAFSA](#) could take advantage of the federal Stafford loan program. This is a great option for someone who wants to begin building their college transcript albeit at a slower pace than required to graduate within the expected time frames (2- and 4- year degrees typically require an average of 15 credits per semester). Courses taken via this route will appear on a college transcript and may be transferred to another institution. A big caveat with this choice -- taking college credits as part of a gap year may impact the student's application status later. I'd suggest specifically asking, "At what number of college credits will I be considered a transfer student rather than a first-year student." The change in designation impacts application deadlines and more.

Finally, there are entirely online for-profit institutions offering these classes. For profit schools have [higher loan default rates](#) and [less rigorous accreditation](#) processes making transferring credits more difficult. That does not mean that there aren't good options out there. The best tends to offer highly technical degrees and have access to federal student aid (FAFSA ID numbers). Locally, Dunwoody College of Technology is just such a school.

the Power of YOU™

Application Deadline Extended to: June 1st

- Free tuition & fees for students who enroll in one of the participating community colleges in the fall after high school graduation
- SPCPA students have 2 options: [Minneapolis Community and Technical College](#) (MCTC) and [St Paul College](#) (SPC)
- 2 years/72 credits covered
- Transfer agreements with U of MN-TC, Augsburg, MN State Schools (Mankato, St Cloud, etc.)
- 2022 Graduate
- \$75,000 Family income cap



As we draw closer to the **May 1st National College Decision Day** please consider alerting the colleges and universities you will **NOT** be attending earlier rather than later. Taking this step prior to May 1st allows students on their waitlists a chance to know as early as possible if a spot has opened up for them. Be an agent of good karma. **Make your decision to decline your offer official** (by emailing the admissions office) **so that they can turn around and make someone else's day during this stressful season!**