

# Southwestern University Application FAQs

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At Southwestern University, we value all our applicants and want to help you understand how we make decisions and what you can expect from us. Our intent is to treat all applicants fairly and with respect. In all cases, our decisions are reached by individuals reviewing the application and voting in a manner they believe is in the best interest of both the student and the University.

We take our responsibility seriously and realize that we are dealing with the lives and future directions of our applicants, who have honored us by their statement of interest in our educational community.

## Will I receive notifications about my application?

If we have the minimal required items (your application, \$40 application fee or fee waiver, high school counselor recommendation, high school transcript and the results of either the SAT or ACT), we will send you notification that your application is complete. If we do not have the above-required items, the notification will inform you of what is still needed. A second notification will be sent once the required items are received.

Ultimately, it is your responsibility to complete the application. Beyond our reminders, you are encouraged to contact your admission counselor whenever you have questions. For example, when we ask for mid-year grades and/or a personal interview, you must take responsibility for being sure the additional grades are received by Southwestern and the interview is completed.

## Do I need to provide any additional information?

In some cases we will ask for mid-year grades (first semester of your senior year), college transcripts for dual-credit work, additional recommendations or a personal interview.

## Who can I contact with further questions?

You are assigned to an admission counselor based on the location of your high school. If you have any questions about which admission counselor is working with you, please call our office at 800-252-3166 or 512-863-1200 or visit [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu) and click on Admission, and then “Meet Your Counselor.” Your admission counselor is your “advisor” and “guide,” representing you and your application through the admission, scholarship and financial assistance process.

## How important is the individual interview?

We **STRONGLY RECOMMEND** personal interviews for ALL applicants by February 1. These can occur on or off campus. Individual hotel interviews are offered annually in several Texas cities and a number of locations outside Texas. When a student lives a considerable distance from Southwestern and has not been able to arrange for an interview in person, a phone interview can be requested. It should be noted that phone interviews are rarely as illuminating as those done in person. In some cases, the lack of a personal interview can result in an admissible candidate being offered admission to the wait list.

## How are decisions made?

Our admission decisions are governed by procedures established each year by the Admission Committee. The committee consists of four faculty members, one from each of the three academic divisions in The Brown College of Arts and Sciences and one from The Sarofim School of Fine Arts, as well as all members of the admission staff.

The committee allows the admission staff to make decisions in most cases. The admission counselor assigned to you will be the first to review your file once it is complete. At this point, mid-year grades and/or a personal interview could be requested before final review. If your credentials meet certain criteria established by the committee, your admission counselor may vote on your application and send your file for additional staff reviews.

In recent years, about 10 to 15 percent of our decisions have been made by the full Admission Committee. When this occurs, each faculty member has a vote, and there are four votes from the admission staff. A majority of the voters must support your application for an acceptance to be possible. Generally, if you do not rank in the top quartile of your high school class, score below 1150 on the SAT (critical reading and math combination) or 24 on the ACT, or if you do not have the recommended college preparatory courses, then your application will be reviewed by the entire Admission Committee to determine if an offer of admission will be made.

## When will I know?

- A. Early Decision candidates with complete applications will receive notification by December 1. The majority of students will either be offered admission or denied admission. A few students may be deferred to a later decision date if we believe new information is necessary and potentially supportive of a positive outcome.
- B. Early Action candidates with complete applications will receive notification by February 15. The majority of students will either be offered admission or denied admission. As with Early Decision, a few students may be deferred to a later decision date if we believe new information is necessary and potentially helpful.
- C. Brown Scholar and/or Dixon Scholar candidates with complete applications will receive notification by February 15. Please refer to current merit scholarship program materials for all award requirements.
- D. Regular Decision candidates with complete applications will receive notification by April 1. Some students with very strong credentials will be offered admission on a “rolling” basis. We typically have more qualified applicants than we have available spaces in the entering class. This usually means more applicants are held until late March, at which time we mail our final decisions.

# Southwestern University Application Instructions

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## Application

Fill out the Southwestern University Application for Admission and Merit Scholarships as carefully and completely as possible. Feel free to attach additional sheets of paper if more space is needed. Please label each additional sheet with your full name and address. A typed or online application is preferred unless your handwriting is very legible.

While not necessary, you also may wish to submit a sample of your creative work (poetry, photography, art, music, research, etc.). Because we are unable to return materials that you submit, please send only copies, slides, CDs or photographs. In addition, the Office of Admission is unable to forward any materials submitted as part of the student's application to any other institution.

## Essay

This is your opportunity to tell us more about yourself as a person and distinguish yourself from others in ways not directly related to courses, grades or test scores.

## Counselor Recommendation and Mid-Year Report

These are required elements of your application to Southwestern University. As an official document from your high school, it provides general information necessary to our decision making. Please request that mid-year grades be sent as soon as they are available after the first semester, but no later than March 1. An official transcript should accompany each of these documents.

## Optional Recommendations

Although not required, every applicant to Southwestern University is encouraged to submit a Teacher Recommendation and/or a Parent/Guardian Recommendation. You should ask a teacher who has taught you in an academic subject and knows you well enough to speak to your academic accomplishments. The Parent/Guardian Recommendation form should give us a more personal observation of your background, interests and ambitions.

## Interviews and Campus Visits

While not required for admission review, an official campus visit and interview are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** and may be considered as a factor in the overall evaluation process. Personal interviews for scholarship consideration must be conducted by February 1. To schedule your visit or interview, please call 800-252-3166.

## Early Decision Applicants

Students for whom Southwestern is their clear first choice may apply under Early Decision. We strongly encourage students to submit all supporting materials by November 1, but no later than November 15. The student will be notified of admission by December 1. Ours is a binding program: if admitted, the enrollment and housing deposit of \$500 (made payable to Southwestern University) will be due by January 10, and the student must withdraw applications from all other schools. Early Decision applicants must also file the Early Decision Commitment form.

## Early Action Applicants

Students with a strong interest in Southwestern may choose to apply under Early Action. Early Action is similar to Early Decision in that you will get a prompt admission notification; however, the process is non-binding. We strongly encourage students to submit all supporting materials by December 1, but no later than December 15. Students will be notified of admission by February 15.

## Regular Decision Applicants

Students are encouraged to complete an application as early as possible in their senior year. Students applying by the Brown Scholar and/or Dixon Scholar Competition Review deadline must submit an application postmarked no later than January 15. All other applications must be postmarked no later than February 1. All Regular Decision applicants will be notified no later than April 1.

## Late Decision Applicants

Students applying after February 1 will be considered late applicants and will receive admission consideration on a space-available basis only. It is not uncommon for late applicants that we consider admissible to be offered a waiting list option until space becomes available.

## Waiting List

Because Southwestern is a residential campus with a commitment to providing campus housing for all students offered admission, some students may be placed on a waiting list of admissible applicants. First-round waiting list decisions are made mid-May. Final waiting list decisions are typically made by the end of June.

## Enrollment Deposit

Following an offer of admission and your acceptance of that offer, you will be required to send a nonrefundable enrollment and housing deposit of \$500 (made payable to Southwestern University) by May 1. (Early Decision applicants must deposit by January 10.) The May 1 National Candidate's Reply Date is established by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), of which Southwestern University is a member. Students are to commit to just one college or university. Please remember to withdraw applications from all other schools once you have submitted your deposit to your school of choice.

## Housing

Living on campus is an important element of the collegiate experience. To assist in the transition to college and to enhance academic success, all new students are required to live on campus for their first two years. Because several housing options are available, it is to your advantage to notify the Office of Admission as soon as you have reached a decision.

## A Note to Transfer Students

This application is intended for college-bound high school students. Transfer students should fill out the Common Application for Transfer Admission at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org). For deadline dates, criteria and general information call 800-252-3166 or visit [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu).

# Southwestern University Application Checklist

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## To the Applicant

Applicants are responsible for ensuring the arrival of all materials necessary to complete their application, including transcripts and recommendations from high school counselors and teachers. Applicants are also responsible for contacting the Office of Admission to determine whether their files are complete prior to deadline dates.

### Required

- *Southwestern University Application for Admission and Merit Scholarships*

Complete all parts of the application and return to Southwestern University. Please be sure to make or print a copy for your records. To access our online application, visit [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu).

- *Application/Scholarship Essay*

The written essay must be submitted with the Application for Admission and Merit Scholarships.

- *Application Fee*

Enclose a nonrefundable application fee of \$40 (made payable to Southwestern University) or approved fee waiver with your application. Do not send cash. In cases of financial hardship, the fee may be waived through the College Board fee waiver program or upon written request from your high school counselor.

- *Early Decision Commitment*

If you are applying Early Decision, you must return the enclosed Early Decision Commitment form and all required signatures with your application. This document is not required for Early Action or Regular Decision applications.

- *Secondary School Counselor Recommendation & Transcript*

Complete the front of the enclosed Secondary School Counselor Recommendation form. Give the form to your high school counselor, who will return it, along with your official high school transcript, to the Southwestern University Office of Admission.

- *Mid-Year Report*

Complete the first section of the Mid-Year Report form and give it to your high school counselor. The Mid-Year Report must be submitted as soon as grades are available, but no later than March 1.

- *Standardized Test Scores*

If your Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) results or your American College Test (ACT) results do not appear on your high school transcript, arrange for a formal report of all college entrance examinations to be sent to Southwestern University directly from the testing agency. Southwestern's identification code for the SAT is 6674; for the ACT it is 4186. College Board SAT Subject Tests are not required. Students whose first language is not English must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Southwestern's identification code for the TOEFL is 6674.

- *For International Students*

A completed Certification of Finances Form will be required of all international applicants. Visit [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu) and click on Admission.

### Strongly Recommended

- *Personal Interview and Campus Visit*

While not required for admission review, an official campus visit and interview are **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** and may be considered as a factor in the overall evaluation process. Personal interviews for scholarship consideration must be conducted by February 1. To schedule your visit or interview, please call 800-252-3166.

### Optional

- *Teacher Recommendation*

Complete the first section of the Teacher Recommendation form. Ask a teacher who has taught you in an academic subject within the past two years to complete the form and return it to the Southwestern University Office of Admission. Extra Teacher Recommendation forms are available at [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu).

- *Parent/Guardian Recommendation*

Provide your parent(s) or guardian(s) with the Parent/Guardian Recommendation form and ask them to return it to the Southwestern University Office of Admission upon completion.

### Financial Assistance Checklist

- *EDFAF*

Due December 1 for Early Decision students applying for financial assistance based on need.\*

- *FAFSA*

Due March 1 for Early Decision, Early Action and Regular Decision students applying for financial assistance based on need. The FAFSA is available at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).

- *FAFSA Verification Form*

Some students will be randomly selected to verify information. Complete and submit to the Office of Financial Assistance as soon as possible.\*

- *Special Circumstances Form*

May be used if you have unusual circumstances not addressed in the data collected on the FAFSA. Complete and submit form to the Office of Financial Assistance as soon as possible.\*

\*You can access these forms and other information at [www.southwestern.edu](http://www.southwestern.edu). Click on Financial Assistance.