

# COLLEGE PREP CHECKLIST

## FOR HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS

### PLANNING & ACADEMICS

- Plan your junior year.** Buy a calendar – write in ACT dates, ACT prep classes, college visits, major fairs, etc. Use folders to organize material for financial aid, majors, scholarships, honors, etc.
- Take the right classes.** Make sure they meet college admissions standards. Ask your school counselor.
- Consider AP classes.** Some may give college credit.
- Your GPA matters.** Finish the year strong.
- Take ACT prep courses.** Ask your school counselor about classes. Visit [www.ACT.org](http://www.ACT.org) for more prep tips.
- Take the ACT.** Take it at least once, but again during your senior year. UNK only looks at your highest score.

### CAMPUS

- Visit UNK campus.** UNK offers many visiting options.
- Get a student's perspective.** Ask friends who attend UNK about college life and visit [unk.edu/MyLoperLife](http://unk.edu/MyLoperLife).
- Follow social media.** See what's happening at UNK.
- Get a taste of college life.** Attend a conference at UNK; have lunch with a friend on campus and visit their room.
- Talk with a UNK rep.** Request information and when a rep visits your school, ask many questions.
- Meet with financial aid and academic reps.** While on campus, see those who can answer your questions.

### MAJOR & CAREER PATH

- Uncertain about your career path?** Identify interests, talk with others in various fields, job shadow, and attend major fairs. It's okay to not declare a major before you start college; college students often change majors.
- Summer employment.** Find jobs in fields you're interested in to give you a better insight to a career path.
- Research.** What are high-demand jobs? What interests you and what degree or training is required? UNK has tools to help you. Visit [unk.edu/Focus2](http://unk.edu/Focus2).
- Reach out.** Find people in industries you are considering. People love to give advice to students.
- Keep your online profile spotless.** Use caution with your social media posts. Delete content that may be viewed unfavorably by employers, colleges, and scholarship committees.

### COSTS & FINANCES

- Discuss college finances with your family.** Will parents help pay? Will loans be necessary? Will you work while attending college?
- Save money.** Continue to save money and watch your account grow. Take on extra summer jobs if needed.
- Understand the FAFSA.** Learn all you can about FAFSA and various aid such as loans, grants, work study, and scholarship. Be two steps ahead of everyone else before your senior year.
- Research scholarships.** Learn all you can about scholarships from UNK, local groups, and businesses. What do they require? Search online to find a larger pool of regional and national scholarships.
- Build scholarship material.** Scholarships may require a resume, essay, and recommendation letters. Start your resume now and fine-tune it later. Think of teachers and counselors who you can ask to write recommendation letters. Maintain those connections.
- Get involved.** Extracurriculars, jobs, and volunteering are important elements for scholarships, especially those that develop leadership skills. Stand out.
- Attend financial aid sessions offered by your high school.** You and your parents will be more informed and prepared your senior year.
- Consider military options.** ROTC and National Guard will help pay for college. Talk to your counselor.
- Compare the cost.** If you consider other colleges, compare annual cost equally using 15 credit hours per semester for tuition/fees, room, meals, and indirect cost (books, clothing, transportation, etc.). UNK offers the lowest cost among all Nebraska universities.
- Weigh the cost.** Some jobs require a certain degree but don't require a degree from a certain school. If you're thinking of a pricier school, don't justify taking on huge debt for the "experience." The 30-year-old you, will thank you.