

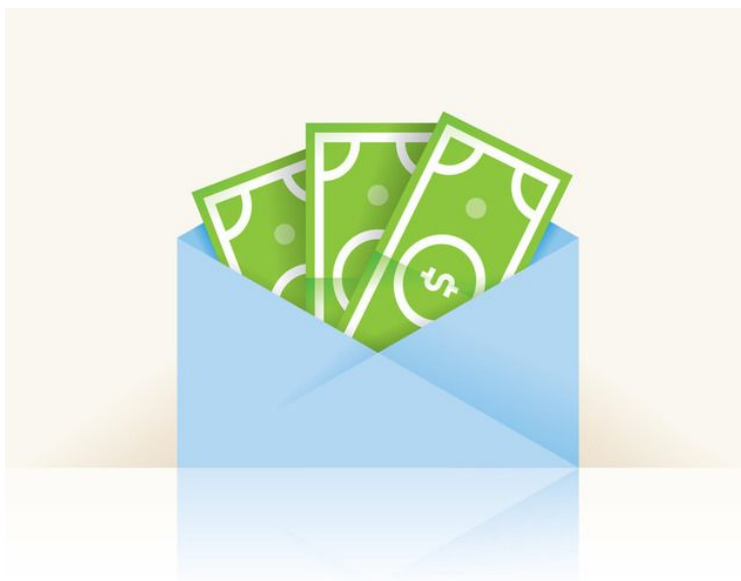


**BAYLOR**

College Counseling February Newsletter

.....

## Seniors: How to decipher your financial aid award letters.



Many of you have already received acceptance letters. Soon to follow is the financial aid package. These can often be difficult to compare because they don't all look alike. Below are a few resources to help you breakdown your cost of attendance for each college. Sallie Mae has a great [video](#) and a few tips which help explain.

- You may have to accept or decline your award with the school, either online or by returning a signed form by the deadline.
- You are not required to accept all the terms in your financial award letter. You can choose to decline loans, work-study, etc.
- Your award letter covers one year only; you'll need to fill out the FAFSA and apply for financial aid every year you're in school.
- Aid is limited, so if you don't accept an award on time, it may go to another student.

The CollegeBoard has also created a [tool](#) to help students compare financial aid awards side by side.

.....

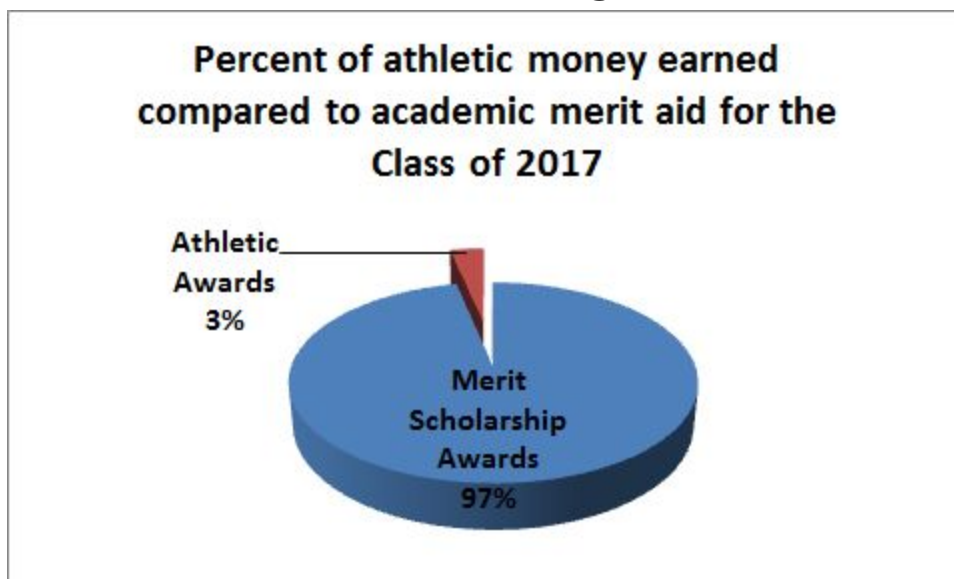


A gap year is typically the period between completing high school and the beginning of college. This time can be either a semester or a full year away from traditional classroom studies. Gap years come in all shapes and sizes including experiential learning, research opportunities, volunteering, outdoor education, travel, or even internships. The rise in popularity of the gap year has created even more opportunities for students worldwide. Some students and parents are concerned about possible negative effects of students taking a gap year. However, research conducted by Middlebury College and UNC, Chapel Hill shows that students who participate in a structured gap program perform better academically than they would have without a gap year. There are many tangible benefits to taking a structured gap year: increased self awareness, broadened cultural perspective, and even experimenting with possible future careers. Here are a few websites which provide more information regarding gap year programs. There is also a gap year fair in Atlanta at Pace Academy on February 14 @ 6pm.

- [American Gap Association](#)
- [USA Gap Year Fairs](#)

---

### Food for thought...



---

### UPCOMING EVENTS

February 10: Deadline to register for the March SAT at Baylor

February 11: ACT at Baylor

February 14: College Matters for parents regarding course sequencing and selection

February 24: Red Raider Road Trip to Sewanee

- For the first time, the Red Raider Road Trip is taking a comprehensive college visit and exploring a highly selective liberal arts institution. The purpose of this year's road trip is two-fold. Our first goal is to look at the campus visit through an academic lens and provide students with an in-depth look into the life of a college student. The second goal is for students to establish the necessary skills to conduct deliberate campus visits in the future.

March 3: Deadline to register for the April 8 ACT

March 14: College Matters for parents: Spring Workshop

March 30: Coast-to-Coast College Fair (required for juniors)

.....

Recommended Reading

[Gap to Great: A Parent's Guide to the Gap Year](#) by Andrea Wien

[Mental Health In Schools: A Hidden Crisis Affecting Millions Of Students](#)

Trivia Spotlight

Where did actor Brad Pitt attend college?

January Trivia Answer: Wabash College voted in 1992 to remain this type of college. (A men's college)

**FOLLOW US ON TWITTER: @BaylorCC411**  
[Visit our Moodle page](#)