IN EARLY SEPTEMBER OF YOUR SENIOR YEAR, THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP CORPORATION (NMSC) WILL ANNOUNCE THE NAMES OF APPROXIMATELY 16,000 SEMIFINALISTS IN THE COMPETITION. If you are notified that you are a Semifinalist, congratulations! You are among the top one-half of one percent of students who took the PSAT in your state!

1. APPLY FOR ADMISSION AND SCHOLARSHIPS EARLY. Visit apply.ou.edu to access our admission application and OU supplemental questions through the Common Application. To be considered for leadership, community involvement and some departmental scholarships, submit the admission application and supplemental questions by Feb. 1. (OU’s admission application deadline is April 1).

2. VISIT. The best way to experience the Sooner tradition is to visit our beautiful campus. To arrange your personalized campus tour and appointments tailored to your interests, submit your request at ou.edu/go2/nmvisit. We recommend visiting on a weekday during the school year so you can get a feel for the campus environment. Visiting during a weekday will also enable you to speak with a professor or advisor in the academic and extracurricular areas you are considering and meet current OU National Merit Scholars. Please give us about one week of notice to make the best arrangements for your visit.

3. COMPLETE THE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION TO BE CONSIDERED FOR FINALIST STANDING. Your National Merit Scholarship Application packet will be sent to your high school. Along with the completed application, your high school must provide your transcript and a letter of recommendation. You must also submit scores from an SAT exam. You have through the December national test date to submit your SAT score. Submit these materials and provide any additional documentation that NMSC requests no later than their October Finalist application deadline.

4. SET UP YOUR OU EMAIL ACCOUNT. After admission, your ou.edu email address is the primary means of communication for housing, financial aid and other important campus notifications. To access your official email, you must activate your OUNet Account — your key to accessing OU technology resources such as email, enrollment, grades, course materials, computer labs and OU Libraries resources. Get started by clicking “I’m New to OU” at account.ou.edu. Visit ou.edu/ouit/new or call (405) 325-HELP if you need help getting started.

5. COMPLETE HOUSING PROCESS. Visit ou.edu/housingandfood to complete your application and contract for housing. The application will be available upon admission to OU and the contract will be available by November. The earlier you complete your online housing contract along with submitting the enrollment commitment, the better your chances of receiving the residence hall options you most want. We offer a wide range of housing options for our students, but many of our National Merit Scholars decide to live on our National Merit Scholar floor in the Towers or in our Honors College housing. You should consider all the options and decide which one best fits your preferences. Priority roommate matching consideration will be given to students who submit their mutually requested roommate information on the Housing and Food Services contract before May 1. Housing assignments will be emailed to students in the summer. Email housinginfo@ou.edu if you have questions or would like to make any changes to your contract prior to when housing assignments are sent.

6. AFTER BEING ADMITTED TO OU, COMPLETE THE SEPARATE APPLICATION FOR OU’S HONORS COLLEGE. Being a part of OU’s Honors College will allow you to take classes at OU limited to 19 - 22 students and participate in additional research opportunities. You are not required to be a part of OU’s Honors College, but we think you will like the opportunities it provides outstanding students like you! For more information about OU’s Honors College or to complete the separate Honors College application, visit ou.edu/honors. Although there is no deadline, we encourage you to complete this application as soon as possible.

7. SUBMIT THE FAFSA AS SOON AFTER JANUARY 1 AS POSSIBLE. Go to financialaid.ou.edu to access the online FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and make sure you list OU as one of the schools to receive your information. Our code is 003184. Complete your tax return early so you can submit the FAFSA no later than March 1. This will maximize your opportunities for financial assistance. After OU’s Financial Aid Services has your FAFSA information from the government, allow 4 - 6 weeks for processing and then check your OU email account to get your Financial Aid Notification (FAN). Students receive their OU email address once admitted to OU.
EXPLORE OTHER SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES. While our National Merit scholarship is a competitive financial package, it does not cover all of your expenses. But the great news is that we allow you to stack any outside scholarships or Federal Financial Aid you may receive with our National Merit scholarship, helping to further reduce your out-of-pocket expense. To maximize your options for covering this out-of-pocket expense, we encourage all students to submit the Common Application and OU supplemental questions by Feb. 1 in order to be considered for leadership, community involvement and some departmental scholarships. A list of the general freshman scholarships covered by the admission application and supplemental questions is available at ou.edu/go2/scholarships. For other scholarship opportunities, a comprehensive list of OU scholarships may be found at scholarships.ou.edu.

VISIT OU! If you have narrowed down your college choices but are still struggling to make a final decision, visit campus or make a return visit! The spring is a great time to schedule your personalized visit. Go to ou.edu/go2/nmvisit to submit your request.

STILL HAVEN'T APPLIED FOR ADMISSION OR HOUSING? JUST CONTACT US. OU's admission application deadline is April 1, but we will work with you past that deadline if you let us know you are applying late.

SET UP YOUR ENROLLMENT APPOINTMENT. Keep an eye on the mail and your OU email account in April for details about enrollment and choosing your fall classes. Set your appointment as soon as you can to get the best choice of classes and times. You will come to campus for advisement and enrollment through very personalized programs coordinated by the OU Scholars Program. (Beginning your second semester at OU, you will receive early enrollment privileges based on your National Merit Scholar status.)

DESIGNATE “SCHOOL OF CHOICE” OR “UNDECIDED.” By April 30, seniors must designate their final “school of choice” or list “undecided” with NMSC at osa.nationalmerit.org. On this deadline, the school you choose is the only school who may sponsor you, so if you’re not sure of your college decision, list “undecided.” To receive OU’s National Merit scholarship, by April 30 you must list OU as your school of choice, or list “undecided” and then list OU before the final May 31 deadline.

COMMIT TO OU. If you plan to be a Sooner (which we certainly hope you do), submit your $250 enrollment commitment by May 1 of your senior year. This commitment will cover your housing advance payment and enrollment program fee and will be used to secure your place at OU. If you become exempt from university housing, the housing portion of the commitment will be applied to academic charges in the first semester at OU. (This enrollment commitment is fully refundable if requested in writing prior to May 1). Admitted students with financial need will be considered for deferment upon written request. For details and to pay the enrollment commitment, visit commit.ou.edu.

DESIGNATE “SCHOOL OF CHOICE.” By May 31, students who previously listed “undecided” must designate a “school of choice” at osa.nationalmerit.org. In order to receive OU’s National Merit scholarship, you must list OU.

QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? WANT TO SHARE YOUR EXCITEMENT ABOUT BECOMING A SOONER? The National Scholars office has five full-time staff members dedicated to assisting you throughout your transition to and during your time at OU. We also coordinate a “First Year Experience” for our freshman Scholars to assist in this transition, helping you to get to know other Scholars from around the country and to become familiar with faculty, staff and student resources on campus. Feel free to call, email or come by our office anytime! We look forward to seeing you.