

2012 Application Instructions

Imagine Yourself ...

... learning to track and image a near-earth asteroid with your two teammates, up in the dome after midnight ... writing your own software to calculate its orbit ... working harder and learning faster than you ever thought possible ... and sharing the whole mind-expanding experience with some of the brightest, most interesting friends you'll ever make!

The Summer Science Program is a 39-day residential enrichment program, held on two campuses (one in Southern California, one in New Mexico). Since 1959, talented high school students from diverse backgrounds have come to SSP for its research-based curriculum, stimulating guest lectures, and behind-the-scenes field trips to places like NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab or the Very Large Array (of radio telescopes). The challenging, college-like "SSP experience" accelerates students' academic and personal development, by immersing them in a supportive community of scholars. And, it's a lot of fun!

Is SSP for You?

Are you currently a high school junior (graduating next year), now taking calculus or pre-calculus? Will you be at least 15 years old, but not yet 18, on Aug. 1? If so, you're eligible to apply. Sophomores may also apply, although most sophomores should wait a year to avoid being disappointed. You should apply as a sophomore if a) you will turn 17 before August, or b) you are already taking calculus. (Sorry, there are **no exceptions** to the age restrictions, nor do we admit graduating seniors or freshmen.)

The academic program is challenging - lectures in astronomy, physics, calculus, and programming are taught at a college level - but every one of the 36 students receives a very high level of personal attention from the seven resident faculty, so no one is left behind. Teams of three students tackle the asteroid orbit determination research project together. The spirit of collaboration is reinforced by the absence of grades, tests, or formal credit.

To be admitted, you should be earning top grades in the most advanced math & science courses available to you. Your standardized test scores in math and science should also be strong. However, we do not require any particular test, nor do we rank applicants by test scores. We do look for scientific pursuits outside of the classroom, and evidence of good character and motivation. We take into account any personal or family circumstances that may have presented obstacles to your academic achievements. The application will provide an opportunity for you to explain your interests and background.

The Summer Science Program seeks a diverse enrollment on the basis of gender, ethnicity, citizenship, national origin, and socioeconomic status. Young women, and students from racial and ethnic groups that are traditionally underrepresented in science, are especially encouraged to apply.

For much more information, including admissions FAQ and comments from hundreds of alumni and parents, visit www.summerscience.org.

Choosing a Campus

SSP takes place at two campuses, starting and ending one week apart:

- on the campus of New Mexico Tech in Socorro, New Mexico (about 70 miles south of Albuquerque), **Sunday, June 17 - Wednesday, July 25, 2012**
- on the campus of Westmont College in Santa Barbara, CA (about 90 miles northwest of Los Angeles), **Sunday, June 24 - Wednesday, Aug. 1, 2012**



The curriculum and facilities are largely identical at the two campuses. You will tell us in the online form whether you are applying for a particular campus only, or either campus. You may also indicate a preference. Check your school's academic calendar and ask your parent or guardian. Your chance of admission will be somewhat higher if you can attend either campus, since one may fill before the other. (Note: we cannot accommodate late arrivals or early departures; do not apply unless you can be on campus for the dates shown.)

How to Apply

SSP's college-like experience starts with the application process itself. To open your application, you first complete an online form that tells us who and where you are. You can log back in later (before the deadline) to change or add information.

Next, download the application instructions and forms. The rest of your application will consist of short answers, official transcript, test score reports, evaluations from your current math and science teachers, and an optional third evaluation from another adult who knows you well. For details see the section below on "Your Application". Incomplete applications cannot be reviewed. Give your teachers as much time as possible to complete their evaluations.

There is no advantage to sending your application early, or in sending some parts while you wait for other parts to be finished. **We prefer to receive everything together in one envelope.** If necessary, we will accept teacher evaluations or transcripts sent separately.

If you attend school **outside** the USA:

➤ your application must **arrive at our office** by **Wednesday, Feb. 8.**

If you attend school **inside** the USA:

➤ your application must **arrive at our office** by **Friday, March 2.**

Send by postal mail or courier to: SSP Admissions, 108 Whiteberry Dr, Cary, NC 27519 USA.

Our reviewers will carefully consider all of the information presented in your application. Admissions decisions are sent by both email and letter as soon as possible, about 6 weeks after the respective deadline.

Program Fee and Financial Aid

There is no application fee. **Financial concerns should not be a factor in your decision to apply.**

We understand that many families have little or no room in their budgets for a residential summer science program. The published program fee, the maximum any family will pay, is \$3,950 (much less than our actual cost of \$6,200). It covers tuition, room & board, supplies, and local transportation: everything except travel to campus.

Thanks to the generosity of SSP alumni and other donors, generous need-based financial aid is available to further reduce the cost. We take into account both income and other educational expenses for you and any siblings. Students qualifying for free or reduced price lunch at school are likely to attend at no charge. In some cases we will also pay your airfare. (Note: international students are eligible for financial aid; however, travel support is limited to \$500 for international students.) In 2012, 32 students (out of 72) received a total of \$120,000 in financial aid.

The optional Financial Aid Application form is included below. If you are admitted, your parent may apply for financial aid at that time. Applying for financial aid has **no impact** on admissions decisions. **Financial concerns should not be a factor in your decision to apply.**

Your Application

Online form at www.summerscience.org (required first)

This must be completed **before** you send the rest of your application. Click the Admissions tab, then "Start / Edit Your Application"

Short Answers (required)

We are interested in getting to know more about you, and your background and interests. There are no right or wrong answers; let your personality shine through. Include your name and date of birth at the top of each page, number your responses, and use single-spacing. **No staples** please!

- 1) What topic in science do you currently find most interesting and why? **When** and **how** did you become aware of this topic? (150 words or fewer)
- 2) Describe your specific experience with a) physics and b) calculus, including any coursework and/or extracurricular studies (150 words or fewer).
- 3) We know you lead a busy life, full of activities, many of which are required of you. Tell us about something you do simply for the pleasure of it. This isn't a trick question. We want to see how you bring balance to your life. (150 words or fewer)
- 4) Describe the world you come from; for example, your family, school, community, city, or town. How has that world shaped your dreams and aspirations? (150 words or fewer).
- 5) Respond to **any or all** of these topics with up to 500 words **altogether**:
 - Describe a life challenge (of any nature, past or present) you have faced.
 - Describe an achievement that you are personally proud of.
 - Describe any science or math reading, research, projects, or competitions (individual or team) you have done outside of regular coursework.
 - Why do you want to participate in SSP?

For questions 6-8, **answer yes or no**, and provide an explanation of any "yes":

- 6) Is there a broader context that we should consider when comparing your qualifications (including grades and test scores) to other academically gifted students? Examples include family responsibilities, English as a second language, or other personal circumstances.
- 7) Are there any special accommodations you would request in order to participate, physically, academically, or socially, in an intensive six-week residential program?
- 8) Have you ever been suspended or subjected to any school or legal disciplinary action?

Official school transcript and fall grades (required)

An "official transcript" is a complete list of the courses you have taken and grades received, prepared by your school. Ask your school to give the transcript to you in a **sealed envelope** to enclose with your application (or if they prefer, send it to us directly). If a "school profile" is available, ask for that to be included. If the transcript does not show your **fall courses and grades**, you **must** send a copy of a recent report card.

Test Scores (required)

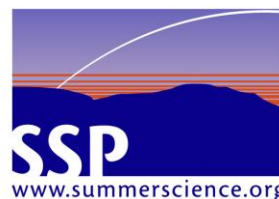
SSP does not require any particular test, but we do require your scores from any and all of the following standardized tests you may have taken: PSAT, SAT, SAT II, PLAN, ACT, AP, TOEFL. Do not ask the testing service to send the report to us directly. We accept copies of reports sent to you, printouts of online reports, and/or test scores recorded on your official transcript by your school. For the PSAT, only send the top part of the report, showing your name and 3 scores.

Science & Math Teacher Evaluations (required)

Two evaluation forms are included below. Give one to your **current science teacher**, the other to your **current math teacher**. Ask each of them to return the form to you in a **sealed envelope** to enclose with your application. If your teachers prefer to send the evaluation to us directly, they may do so. If there is a **third adult** who knows you well (a teacher, counselor, employer, coach, etc.), feel free to include a letter of recommendation from that person too. *Note: if you are not currently taking math or science, or if your current teacher has known you for less than two months, you may ask a previous teacher to complete the evaluation.*

Supplemental Information (optional)

You may include a résumé or other supplementary information of your choice, **up to two pages**.



Evaluation by Science Teacher

Name of Student _____

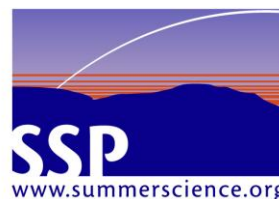
birthdate MM/DD/YYYY _____

This student is in competition with other academically gifted applicants for admission to the Summer Science Program. By requesting this evaluation, the student has authorized your frank and confidential assessment. To learn more about SSP, visit our website at www.summerscience.org.

On the back or on another sheet, describe the applicant’s motivation, intellectual curiosity, and potential contributions to a residential science program. **No staples, please.**

Note that we have a strict deadline and the student’s application is not complete until we receive this form. **Return it to the student in a sealed envelope.** Thank you very much for your time.

Teacher name							
Teacher phone number				email			
Course(s) you taught this student:							<input type="checkbox"/> your current student
Please place check marks in the single most appropriate box that represents your evaluation of this applicant in comparison with other college-bound students at your school.							
ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL QUALITY	NO BASIS FOR JUDGMENT	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	TOP 15% THIS YEAR	TOP 5% THIS YEAR	ONE OF THE TOP FEW I HAVE EVER TAUGHT
Academic Ability							
Motivation							
Listening / following instructions							
Class Participation							
Written Communication							
Interest in subject material							
Originality							
Teamwork							
Dependability and Work Habits							
Energy and Initiative							
Emotional Maturity							
Concern for Others							
Warmth of Personality							
I recommend this applicant:		NOT RECOMMENDED	WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM	FAIRLY STRONGLY	STRONGLY	ENTHUSIASTICALLY	
For academic promise		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For personal character		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Responses to the following are required. Use the back or another sheet to elaborate.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Is there a broader context in which we should consider the candidate’s performance and involvements? Some examples include family situation or responsibilities, after-school work obligations, sibling childcare, or other circumstances, either positive or negative.							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO Are there any observed problematic behaviors (e.g., discipline problems, intolerance or anti-social behavior in interactions with peers or teachers), perhaps separable from academic performance, which should be explored further by the Admissions Committee?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge has the student ever been subjected to any school-related or legal disciplinary action?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge, has the student taken advantage of the most challenging math & science courses and enrichment activities available to him or her?							



Evaluation by Math Teacher

Name of Student _____

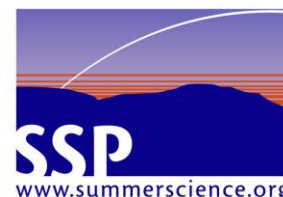
birthdate MM/DD/YYYY _____

This student is in competition with other academically gifted applicants for admission to the Summer Science Program. By requesting this evaluation, the student has authorized full disclosure of this information. Please give us your frank and confidential assessment. To learn more about SSP, visit our website at www.summerscience.org.

On the back or on another sheet, describe the applicant’s motivation, intellectual curiosity, and potential contributions to a residential science program like SSP. No staples, please.

Note that we have strict deadlines and the student’s application cannot be reviewed until we receive this form. **Return it to the student in a sealed envelope.** Thank you very much for your time.

Teacher name							
Teacher phone number				email			
Course(s) you taught this student:							<input type="checkbox"/> your current student
Please place check marks in the single most appropriate box that represents your evaluation of this applicant in comparison with other college-bound students at your school.							
ACADEMIC OR PERSONAL QUALITY	NO BASIS FOR JUDGMENT	BELOW AVERAGE	AVERAGE	ABOVE AVERAGE	TOP 15% THIS YEAR	TOP 5% THIS YEAR	ONE OF THE TOP FEW I HAVE EVER TAUGHT
Academic Ability							
Motivation							
Listening / following instructions							
Class Participation							
Written Communication							
Interest in subject material							
Originality							
Teamwork							
Dependability and Work Habits							
Energy and Initiative							
Emotional Maturity							
Concern for Others							
Warmth of Personality							
5) I recommend this applicant:		NOT RECOMMENDED	WITHOUT ENTHUSIASM	FAIRLY STRONGLY	STRONGLY	ENTHUSIASTICALLY	
For academic promise		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
For personal character		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Responses to the following are required. Use the back or another sheet to elaborate.							
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<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge has the student ever been subjected to any school-related or legal disciplinary action?							
<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO To your knowledge, has the student taken advantage of the most challenging math & science courses and enrichment activities available to him or her?							



Optional: Financial Aid Application

Generous need-based financial aid is available up to and including the entire program fee of \$3,950 plus travel aid. Applying for aid has no effect on whether admission will be offered. The Admissions Committee is not informed of which applicants have applied for financial aid, and you may wait until after admission is offered to apply for aid. This form must be completed by the applicant's parent or legal guardian.

Your information will be held in strict confidence, used only to determine the applicant's eligibility for financial aid, then destroyed. Financial aid is granted on the basis of information you provide here and limited by our budgeted funds. Use separate sheets to explain any unusual financial circumstances. Send by email, fax, or mail (do not staple pages), with these **required attachments**:

- U.S. Citizens / Residents: attach your **Federal tax return for 2011**: IRS Form 1040, 1040A, or 1040EZ, with **all associated schedules**.
- If you are **not** the head of the applicant's household, also attach the tax return of that person. If father and mother file separate tax returns, include copies of both if available. If the applicant (student) filed a return, include it also.
- **International applicants** should attach official documents (such as tax returns and employer income statements) showing all family income and taxes paid. (*Note: travel aid is limited to \$500 for students traveling from outside of the U.S.*)

Applicant's name	
Your name	<input type="checkbox"/> mother <input type="checkbox"/> father <input type="checkbox"/> guardian
Are you the head of household? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Do you <input type="checkbox"/> rent or <input type="checkbox"/> own your home?
Are you also requesting travel aid? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO	Number of dependent children:
Your phone numbers: daytime _____	evening _____
Father/stepfather _____ occupation _____ employer (if any) _____ expected 2012 income from this job \$ _____	
Mother/stepmother _____ occupation _____ employer (if any) _____ expected 2012 income from this job \$ _____	
Income (yours and applicant's combined), if any, that is not reflected in the attached tax return(s) , such as untaxed child support, trust fund, survivor benefit, interest from tax-exempt bonds, etc.: \$ _____ from this source: _____	
How do you expect your 2012 income to be different from what is shown in the attached tax return(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> increase -or- <input type="checkbox"/> decrease, by amount \$ _____	

