

## Weekend College



**Making College Work for Adults Who Work:**  
10 questions every adult should ask about college

# Making College Work for Adults Who Work: 10 questions every adult should ask about college.

**1**

Can I complete my degree and have a life too?

**2**

What if I didn't do very well in college previously?

What are the admission requirements?

**3**

Am I too old to do this?

Will I be the oldest person in my class?

**4**

I don't even remember how to write a paper.

What kinds of services are available to adults?

**5**

How does credit transfer between colleges?

Can I get credit for life and work experience?

**6**

Why do colleges require transcripts?

Do I really need transcripts from all previous schools?

**7**

Who teaches the classes?

What are the qualifications of your faculty?

**8**

What kinds of financial aid are available to adults returning to college? Can I qualify for any assistance?

**9**

What if I have college-level coursework from outside of the United States? What do I need to do?

**10**

What makes Augsburg's Weekend College program unique?

What is your mission?

Basic knowledge about a college...  
...determines the real value of an education.



Yes, you can, with some planning and determination. Adding college classes to your already demanding schedule takes

two weeks in between to complete homework, gives adults the flexibility they need when balancing family and work

# 1

## Can I complete my degree and have a life too?

commitment on your part. Most people have to make some adjustments in their lives to make college work. Talk to your family and friends about why it is important for you to continue your education and ask for their support. Try taking just one class to get a sense of how it fits with your other commitments, including time required to read, reflect, and write between classes. If that schedule is manageable, you can try taking two classes at a time. Two courses per term is considered full time and many students are able to maintain this level of enrollment while working full time. You may find yourself doing homework on your lunch break, making temporary changes in your leisure activities, asking family members to pick up a greater share of the chores, and planning vacation time for study. Keep in mind that every class you take is another step toward finishing your degree.

How much flexibility do you need in your class schedule? Some schools offer a cohort program, which predetermines your classes, lays them out in order, and sets the schedule. Some students prefer this model. Classes are taken one after another with the same group of students, and the schedule is very predictable. Other students prefer more options. A non-cohort program like Augsburg Weekend College lets you decide which classes to take each term and how many, gives you choices in electives, and allows you to take a term off if needed. Students mix with a variety of people in general classes, but will get to know individuals within their majors. Do you want to take classes weekly or on alternate weekends? Augsburg students find that taking classes on the weekend, usually with

schedules and the time required to reflect and process what they are learning in each class.



### Action steps

- Ask for support from work, family, and friends.
- Understand the difference between cohort and non-cohort schedules.
- Think about how much flexibility you need and what each college program can provide.
- Determine what type of program fits best in your life.
- Include study and writing time when planning your schedule.
- Try adding one class to your schedule to see how much adjustment you need to make in your life.
- Ask a current student about his or her experience.

### Reference

Look on Web sites for current student stories or ask around at work to find alumni from area colleges.

### Thought

Why wait? If time is going to pass anyway, why not start working towards your degree now, even with just one class? Each course can be a transformative learning experience and brings you one step closer to finishing.

Many adults who did not complete college in the traditional timeframe were affected by factors such as outside distractions, family

## 2

### What if I didn't do very well in college previously? What are the admission requirements?

or health concerns, lack of good academic advising and support, or unclear college policies. For some, school was just not the priority in their life at the time. Ask yourself what is different for you now. Do you have a stronger motivation to complete your degree? Would smaller classes and attentive faculty help you succeed this time? Would applying your studies to your work situation help you to learn better? Do you have a clearer understanding of the support services you need as a student? What have you learned along the way that you can bring to your college experience this time?

We recognize that not everyone had a good experience in college right after high school. But this does not have to stop you from completing your degree. When talking with the admissions staff, be honest about past academic problems. Clarify what the problem was then and how you are better prepared to return to college now. We take into consideration your previous circumstances, recommendations from current associates, and your new motivation to finish what you started. Sometimes the admissions staff will require letters of recommendation or a detailed written explanation of your previous circumstances. If your grade point average (GPA) is well below admission requirements, you may need to take a few courses at a community college to raise your GPA before being accepted into a four-year institution. All of these inform the college of your potential to succeed in a college environment. For many adults, life and work experience has better prepared them to do well in college today. We believe adults deserve a second chance at success.

### Thought

There are no dumb questions. Returning to school can be intimidating and daunting. Be open with your admissions counselor and ask questions.



### Action steps

- Be honest with yourself on why college was challenging before.
- Determine why you feel ready for college now.
- Be honest with your admissions counselor about your past academic history.
- Find out the admissions requirements and if there is any flexibility in the policy.
- Identify people who can provide good references if needed.
- Consider taking a few courses at a community college to improve your grade point average.
- Ask questions until you feel you have all the information you need.

### Resources

[www.augsburg.edu](http://www.augsburg.edu) for admission information on all programs at Augsburg

Although an 18-year-old student and a 40-year-old student are both considered adults, they are in very different stages in

### 3

## Am I too old to do this? Will I be the oldest person in my class?

life. Many older adults feel out of place in classrooms filled with older teens. While these diverse age groups can learn a tremendous amount from each other, older adults value input from their peers. When extensive life and work experience is part of the classroom discussion it enhances the practical application of class material to realistic situations. As one Augsburg professor noted, "When there are 20 adult students in the room, there are 21 teachers in the class."

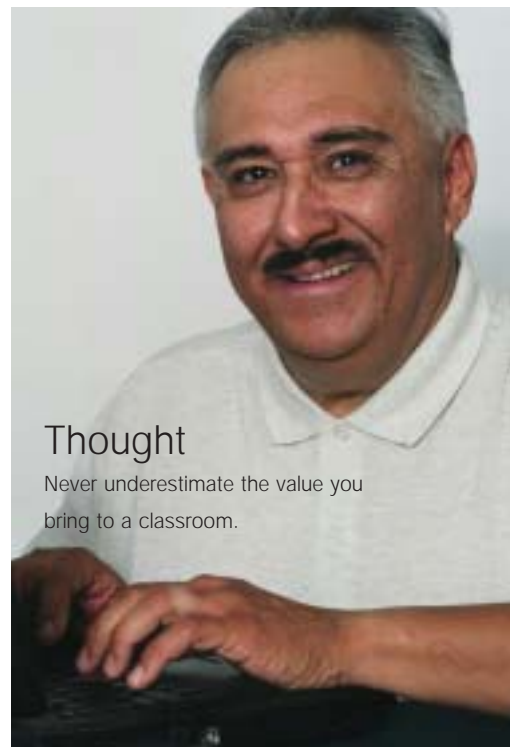
Look for classes that have a wide age range. Our average age is 34, with ages ranging from 24-64. More mature students feel more comfortable studying with their peers. Look for programs that encourage participation from students with diverse backgrounds. What is the climate in the classroom? Is there opportunity for discussion? Do faculty value life and work experience? Is there a competitive or cooperative attitude among students? Do students encourage each other to do well? Is the class material sensitive to different learning styles? The older mind is actually wired to create relationships between theory and real-life situations. Our classes are designed to facilitate such application. The result is practical application of material from every perspective imagined. We have found adult learners to be some of the brightest students in the college. Never underestimate your ability to learn at any age.

### Action steps

- Ask about the diversity of the classes, including the age range of the students.
- Ask about the classroom experience and expectations of the students.
- Find out if the faculty are experienced teaching adult students.
- Determine the style(s) of teaching used in the classroom.
- Develop a support system with family members and other adult students.

### Reference

[www.augsburg.edu/weekend/review](http://www.augsburg.edu/weekend/review) for information on the adult learner.



### Thought

Never underestimate the value you bring to a classroom.

Adults need to study college Web sites carefully to understand which services are available to adult students on a schedule

## 4

### I don't even remember how to write a paper. What kinds of services are available to adults?

that meets their needs. Usually it is up to the student to seek out services, which may include academic advising, mental health counseling, career planning, and tutoring. Some assistance can be provided online; other services are available by appointment. Be sure to take full advantage of any services that may help you. Don't let your ego get in the way of using the resources provided by the college to help you achieve success.

Augsburg offers a writing lab that is open in the evening. Trained writing tutors review papers submitted by e-mail or in person for grammar, spelling, organization, and clarity. Even our graduate students take advantage of this service. We also offer career services such as résumé development, interview training, career interest assessment, and internship placements. Our Academic Enrichment Office helps students with test taking, study skills, and problem solving. The key is to request help early enough to develop skills needed for each course.

#### Action steps

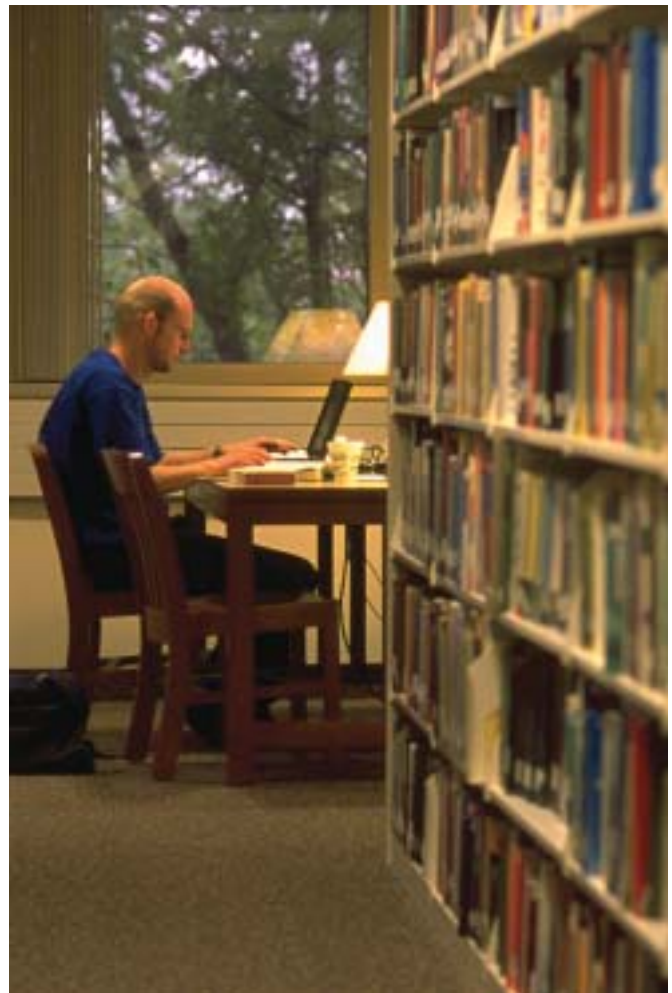
- Determine whether you have any learning or physical challenges that may affect your success in college courses.
- Ask about services available to adult students.
- Visit some of the support service offices to learn how they might benefit you.
- Seek out assistance early if you are having difficulty in a class.
- Use the writing lab if one is provided.

#### Reference

[www.augsburg.edu/services](http://www.augsburg.edu/services) to explore services offered at Augsburg College

#### Thought

Using support services is not an admission of failure but a step toward helping yourself succeed.



There is a wide variety of transfer standards for different institutions. Colleges consider the content of a course, the way in which

## 5

### How does credit transfer between colleges? Can I get credit for life and work experience?

the credit was earned or delivered, and the type of institution that awarded the credit to determine transferability. Some colleges want their degrees to be primarily completed “in house.” These institutions will not accept many courses in transfer. Consequently, if a student wants a degree from this type of school, they will have to take virtually all of their coursework at that institution. At the other end of the spectrum are institutions that will accept nearly anything in transfer. Their degrees can be comprised of credits from a variety of institutional and life experiences. These schools work from a broad definition of competencies completed within a major area of study. In the middle are institutions that set specific standards for transfer credit and require a significant portion of the degree to be completed “in house.” Credits are accepted from appropriately accredited institutions. Life and work experience is evaluated against high academic standards to determine whether they meet the requirements of a particular course or program.

Many colleges have agreements as to which courses will meet each other's requirements. If you plan to attend more than one institution (e.g., a two-year school and then a four-year college), it is important to find out in advance which courses will transfer between programs.

A general rule for course transferability is “like transfers to like.” Colleges consider not only whether the institution that awarded the credit is accredited, and by which agency it is accredited, but also the type of degree program offered by the institution. In other words, if you took a writing class as part of a vocational/technical program, that course might not be accepted in transfer at a liberal arts college, even if the vocational technical program is “accredited.”

#### Action steps

- Find out if your previous college is accredited and by which associations or agencies.
- Ask about assessment of previous learning policies and procedures.
- Request a student copy of your transcript to review what you have taken and grades earned.
- Request transfer guides for any college to which you may transfer.

#### Resources

<http://www.augsburg.edu/weekend/review.html> for information on transferring credit

<http://www.augsburg.edu/transfer/future.html> for transfer guides to Augsburg

<http://www.augsburg.edu/advising/clep.html> CLEP test information

<http://www.ncacihe.org/> to find out if your institution is accredited

Augsburg College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, and many of our programs carry accreditation by professional associations. Augsburg generally accepts transfer credit from other institutions accredited by the Higher Learning Commission that offer courses leading to an Associate of Arts or Bachelor of Arts degree. Augsburg also considers the grade earned in the course in deciding whether to accept it in transfer: students must earn a grade of C or better in order for a course to be accepted in

transfer at Augsburg. This indicates that the student mastered the basic material in the course.

There are many different associations and agencies that accredit schools and programs. When you hear that a college is "accredited," be sure you understand who has accredited the program and whether that accreditation is relevant to your course of study, as well as what it means for the transferability of courses from that school.

Transfer credit may have been applicable to a program at the original college, but must apply to the requirements of the new

college to be accepted in transfer. For instance, a course in family relations may not meet the requirement for a general sociology course. A lower level course may not qualify as a substitute for an upper level course in the same subject area. Because of this common confusion, Augsburg College provides transfer guides for every community college in the metropolitan area. This takes the guesswork out of deciding which courses will transfer to meet individual requirements.

## Thought

Balance the integrity of the degree with the ease of transferring credit to evaluate college options.



Exchange of transcripts is a form of communication between educational institutions verifying the previous

## 6

### Why do colleges require transcripts? Do I really need transcripts from all previous schools?

coursework completed by the student. Federal privacy laws require that the student give written permission for their records (transcripts) to be sent from one school to another. Each transcript provides a GPA (grade point average) or test scores that give information about the student's performance and any degrees or certificates earned. Official transcripts also prove that a student does not have any outstanding financial obligations to a previous college. Official transcripts must arrive in a sealed envelope directly from the sending institution, assuring the authenticity of the transcript.

Transcripts from every previous college or school, including proprietary (for-profit) and technical schools, are required. Even if transferred credit appears on another transcript, a transcript from the institution which originally granted the credit is required. This ensures that the receiving institution has complete information about previous courses, and demonstrates that financial obligations to each institution have been satisfied.

#### Action steps

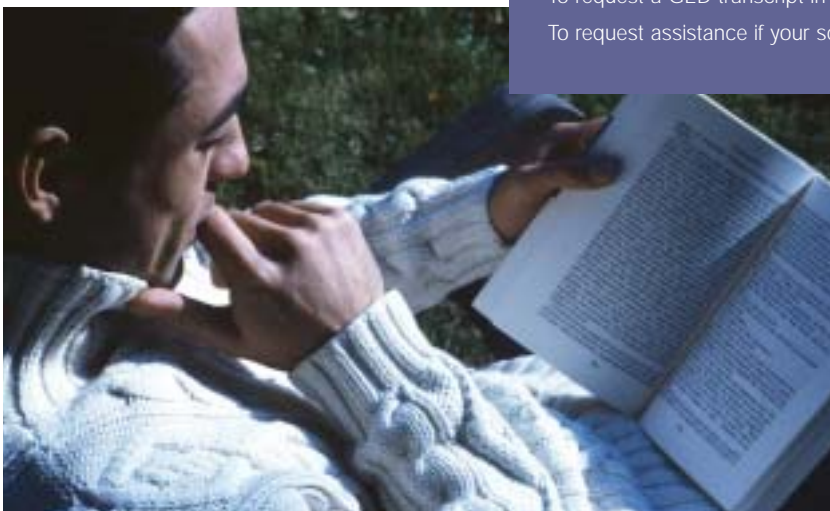
- Request all previous postsecondary transcripts to be sent to the admissions office.
- Visit each school's Web site or call to find out how to request a transcript.
- If you receive a transcript in a sealed envelope, keep it sealed so it remains official.
- If you have financial obligations at previous schools, work out a payment plan.
- Be honest with admissions counselors about your previous college experiences.

#### Resources

[www.pearlharbor.navy.mil/nco/smart\\_htm.htm](http://www.pearlharbor.navy.mil/nco/smart_htm.htm) to request military transcripts.

To request a GED transcript in Minnesota, call 651-582-8445.

To request assistance if your school has closed, contact the local district office.



Instructors really shape the college experience, and yet adult students don't always investigate the faculty who will be

# 7

## Who teaches the classes? What are the qualifications of your faculty?

teaching their courses when they look at their college options. Ask the admissions counselor about the credentials of the faculty teaching in the adult program. Do they have practical experience in their subject area? What degrees or professional certifications do they hold? How are they hired? Are they experienced in teaching adult learners? Do they have a long-term commitment to the college program in which they teach? What are the teaching styles used in the program? Answers to these questions help determine the depth and quality of instruction you can expect from a college.

At Augsburg, 79% of the faculty hold the highest degree possible in their field, and many have practical experience in their discipline as well. Both are important to the learning process. Many of our faculty are also involved in research, but teaching is always their primary focus.

### Action steps

- Ask who teaches the classes and their qualifications.
- Ask about the hiring process for faculty.
- Ask faculty about their research projects or community connections.
- Request to speak with a faculty member from your major department.
- Ask for course descriptions or sample course outlines (syllabi).
- Talk to current students or alumni about their experience in the classroom.
- Check the human resources page on the college Web site for job requirements.

### Thought

Ask yourself if you prefer instructors who emphasize "real-world" experiences, academic theory, or a combination.



There are three primary factors that affect a student's eligibility for financial aid: income, household size, and the number of full-time

process, such as copies of tax forms. Be sure to find out exactly what each college requires.

## 8

## What kinds of financial aid are available to adults returning to college? Can I qualify for any assistance?

college students in the family. Students may qualify for grants or scholarships from federal, state, institutional, or private sources. Low-interest education loans are also available to students, many without regard to income. Find out whether the colleges you are considering participate in federal and state financial aid programs, and whether they provide any institutional assistance to students.

Most colleges will ask students who want to be considered for financial assistance to complete the FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, by visiting [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). The FAFSA is used to create an index that helps colleges understand each student's financial situation. Additional documents are often requested in the financial aid application

The school's financial aid office will determine each financial aid applicant's eligibility for federal or state grants and loans. Scholarships or grants from foundations, community organizations, corporations, churches, or other organizations usually must be sought out by the student. One excellent source of scholarship information is [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com). Never pay a fee for scholarship searching; the information is available to the general public if you are willing to spend a little time looking for it. Some students qualify for assistance through the Veteran's Administration, Department of Vocational Rehabilitation or

### Action steps

- Ask about tuition and fees; look for hidden costs such as fees for services.
- Weigh the value of the college program.
- Apply for financial aid to determine your actual costs.
- Actively pursue scholarship opportunities on your own.
- Talk to the financial aid office if you have questions or to review your financial aid award.

### Resources

[www.finaid.org/calculators](http://www.finaid.org/calculators) to estimate your financial aid  
[www.augsburg.edu/weekend/review](http://www.augsburg.edu/weekend/review) for detailed information on financial aid  
[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) to learn about tax incentives for higher education  
To request a transcript of previous year's tax return call 1-800-829-1040

Displaced Workers programs. Check with local business, service organizations, your local places of worship, community groups, or professional organizations with which you are affiliated to learn about scholarships they may offer.

Adults returning to college should not assume that they will not qualify for financial



aid. Take time to complete the FAFSA and talk with a financial aid counselor about your situation. Extenuating circumstances may affect your eligibility for financial aid if you provide documentation.

Ask about financing options as well as financial aid. Some colleges offer deferred payment options that can make tuition expenses more manageable. Augsburg allows students who receive tuition reimbursement from their employers to defer payment until after they have a chance to submit grades and request funding from the employer.

Finally, always consider the value of the college programs you are considering. How will your investment in your education pay off? You may increase your earning power, as well as develop your confidence and add a sense of fulfillment in your life. The final cost should be weighed against the quality of the program. Conversations with admissions counselors, other students, and faculty can help adults evaluate the true value of their educational options.



Education systems around the world have a great variety of academic systems and standards. To determine the U.S.

## 9

## What if I have college-level course work from outside of the United States? What do I need to do?

equivalency of international academic experiences, have them evaluated by an international transcript evaluation service. These agencies review the credit and translate it into transcripts that U.S. colleges and universities can use to determine admission and credit transfer toward a specific program. There is a fee for this service and it adds time to the admission process, so students should plan ahead. Request a course-by-course evaluation of the transcripts and keep several copies of the final report for future reference. Augsburg's admission office can provide contact information for several different evaluation services.

If you cannot obtain your official transcripts, try presenting any personal copies you may have of your academic history for review by an international transcript evaluation service for admission purposes. Students may be able to "test out" of courses using the CLEP (College Level Examination Program) test option. Or students may choose to take one year of coursework at a community college, or complete the GED, and be admitted based on that academic history.

Most schools ask on their application whether English is your first language. If you indicate that your primary language is not English, Augsburg requires that you take the MELAB or TOEFL test if you have less than one year of academic course work completed in the U.S. Both tests require a fee and the student must achieve a minimum score to be admitted. After admission you would take the Michigan Test of Aural Skills, which is free. These

results determine whether English as a Second Language courses will be required, and also provide exemption from Augsburg's modern language requirement.

### Action steps

- Have transcripts evaluated by an international credit evaluator.
- Ask for a course-by-course evaluation.
- Request additional copies of the report; keep in sealed envelopes.
- Ask admissions counselors for guidance in your unique situation.
- Study and take the GED if you have no previous educational credit.
- Take the TOEFL or MELAB if English is not your first language and you have less than one year of academic credit in the U.S.
- Take the Michigan Test once admitted to the college.
- Ask your admissions counselor for ESL class information if needed.

### Resources

[www.naces.org/members.htm](http://www.naces.org/members.htm) for international credit evaluation  
[www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/melab.htm](http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli/melab.htm) for information on the MELAB  
[www.ets.org/toefl/.htm](http://www.ets.org/toefl/.htm) for information on the TOEFL

Every college has its niche. The answer to this question gives you an idea of the college's priorities. Does the college

10

## What makes Augsburg's Weekend College program unique? What is your mission?

emphasize the speed with which you can complete their program? Does the college promote certain values or a religious perspective? Are the skills learned for a specific career? What is their specialty area? Does the college emphasize online learning or face-to-face classroom experience? Will the program improve your technical skills, broaden your thinking, or both? What sort of learning environment is cultivated by the college? You know yourself best and it is important to attend a school that aligns with your priorities. Ultimately, your investment in time and effort will be better served if your motivations for education are the same as the college you attend.

At the heart of Augsburg College is the idea of helping students discover their calling and providing the education needed to live it out. The dedication of the faculty creates this possibility. The depth of the material provides the skills to make this happen. And the values of the college propel this ideal into reality.

We believe in not only providing degrees, but helping people lead fulfilling lives along the way. That is transforming education.

### The Augsburg College Mission

To nurture future leaders in service to the world by providing high quality educational opportunities, which are based in the liberal arts and shaped by the faith and values of the Christian Church, by the context of a vital metropolitan area, and by an intentionally diverse campus community.

### Action steps

- Ask about the mission of the college.
- Listen to the messages about this mission expressed by the admissions counselor.
- Find out what is emphasized in each program, such as speed or depth.
- Ask current students or alumni what they found meaningful in the program.

### Resources

[www.augsburg.edu/lilly](http://www.augsburg.edu/lilly) for information about vocation at Augsburg  
[www.augsburg.edu/transforming](http://www.augsburg.edu/transforming) for information on programs  
[www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/majors](http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/majors) for what major to choose



# Weekend College



We believe in not only providing degrees, but helping people lead fulfilling lives along the way. That is transforming education.

## TAKE the next step

**Attend an Information Session** Scheduled year-round, Weekend College Information Sessions are a convenient way to learn more about Weekend College and to get all your questions answered. You'll learn about the academic programs, support services, financing options, and much more. For dates and times of upcoming sessions, check our Web site at [www.augsburg.edu/weekend](http://www.augsburg.edu/weekend) or call 612-330-1101.

**Call us** The admissions staff of Augsburg Weekend College invites you to call or e-mail with any questions you have. We are happy to meet with you to discuss your situation and give you a personal tour of the campus. To set up a meeting or to receive a catalog or other information, please call the admissions office at 612-330-1101, or e-mail us at [wecinfo@augsb.org](mailto:wecinfo@augsb.org).

**Apply for admission** If you know Augsburg Weekend College is the right choice for you, apply online or request an application. Students are accepted for admission throughout the year on a rolling basis. We welcome new students each trimester: fall (September-December), winter (January-March), and spring (April-June).



# Weekend College