

The path to becoming a National Merit Scholar can be confusing, we are here to help. Contact us at nationalmerit@UTDallas.edu or (972) 883-4285.

1

TAKE THE PSAT

In your junior year, take the PSAT. This PSAT is the only qualifying entrance exam into the National Merit competition. Cutoff scores to achieve Semifinalist standing vary by state.

2

SEMIFINALISTS ANNOUNCED

In early September of your senior year, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) announces approximately 16,000 Semifinalists who score in the top one-half of one percent of those who tested.

3

APPLY FOR FINALIST STANDING

In early October, Semifinalists apply for Finalist standing. Approximately 90% of Semifinalists will advance to become Finalist in the competition.

4

SEND SAT SCORE TO NMSC

NMSC will accept your best score through the December 31. Update or send new scores through the College Board at sat.collegeboard.org.

5

FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

In early February, NMSC will mail notification letters to the list of Finalists. Permanent Semifinalists (those who do not advance to Finalist standing) are notified in January. Through the end of April, you may change your "school of choice" as many times as you like at osa.nationalmerit.org.

6

DESIGNATE "SCHOOL OF CHOICE"

By the end of April, Finalists must designate their final "school of choice" or list "undecided" with NMSC. On this deadline, the school you choose is the only school who may sponsor you, so if you're not sure, list "undecided." To receive the UT Dallas package, by April 30 you must list UT Dallas as your school of choice, or list "undecided" and select UT Dallas before the final May 31 deadline.

7

AWARD LETTERS MAILED

All Scholars receive one of three awards. Those receiving the Corporate or National awards will be notified early March. The College Sponsor award letters from partnering institutions will be mailed to Finalist recipients in early May. UT Dallas is a partnering institution (not all universities are partnering institutions).

8

ACCEPT AWARD OFFER

In early May, students are designated as National Merit Scholars upon accepting the award offer and naming UT Dallas their "school of choice." The official Scholar announcement by NMSC is not made until the summer.