

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESS AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES

The college application process is a cooperative effort involving students, parents, and Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Since we are dependant upon each other, it is important to understand what these responsibilities are and whose duty it is to fulfill them.

THE STUDENT is responsible for:

Carefully researching and selecting the colleges to which he or she may apply.

Completing applications and submitting all secondary school report forms to the College Counselor at least two weeks prior to their deadline.

Notifying College Counselor in writing of all deadlines for receipt of school transcripts and recommendations at least two weeks prior to the earliest deadline.

Communicating with the Guidance Office, keeping the Guidance Office up to date on extracurricular activities, and writing a practice essay. Please be thorough and specific. The information you provide will be used to help the College Counselor write your official school recommendation letter.

Seeing College Counselor to discuss college plans as often as you need, but at least once before October 1. Any student considering an early decision plan should notify College Counselor as soon as possible.

Asking teachers, coaches, or employers for recommendations to support your application. Be sure to request them well in advance (a month's notice is advisable), and ask the person to keep a copy in case you need another reference. You must provide them with a stamped envelope addressed to the college.

Making appointments for interviews and tours at the colleges you wish to visit.

Being aware of the test requirements (ACT, SAT I, SAT II, TOEFL) at each college and when those tests should be taken. (See section on testing)

NOTE: Students and parents should pay attention to the calendars of deadlines (p.3) and test dates (p.13).

Meeting with college admissions representatives when they visit Maur Hill - Mount Academy. Such visits will be announced a week in advance. Students must get a pass from the College Counselor's office at least a day prior to the visit.

Keeping informed about college fairs, guest speakers, and any special events relating to the admissions process.

Having a great senior year !

THE PARENT is responsible for:

Helping students arrange interviews and visits to colleges where possible.

Completing the financial aid forms and filing them on time, if aid is being requested.

Providing emotional support and encouragement through this long and anxious process.

Maintaining communication with the College Counseling Office.

N.B. It's a good idea to keep copies of everything you send to colleges in case it gets lost in transit or at the college, and be sure to check a few weeks after the deadline to make sure they have received everything.

Once they have your application, colleges will notify you of any missing material. If you receive such a notice, do not be alarmed. Please call the Guidance Office so we can check our records and proceed accordingly. (Often their notification and our information crosses in the mail; more commonly, the materials have reached the college, but are not yet entered in their system.)

The College Application Process and its Responsibilities continued

MAUR HILL-MOUNT ACADEMY is responsible for:

Sending transcripts, College Counselor recommendations, Secondary School Report forms, and other school information to the colleges to which you apply.

Providing an official letter or reference to accompany your applications. This reference involves a candid appraisal of your academic abilities, extracurricular interests, character traits, and potential for success in college. It is intended to support your application by emphasizing your strengths, special talents, and contributions to the school and community. We will, however, be honest in our evaluation of your attitude, effort, and achievements.

Being available to students for counseling and support; helping with the application process as needed.

More about what to expect at Maur-Hill Mount Academy

PSAT/NMSQT

The PSAT is offered to juniors in October. It is administered at Maur Hill- Mount Academy. There is no nominal fee.

STUDENT AND PARENT CONSULTATIONS

Juniors meet with the College Counselor in the fall of the junior year, both in groups and individually. As seniors, students again meet with the College Counselor the following fall. In addition, seniors receive information via morning and afternoon announcements or the college board. Parents are also welcome to call with questions or to schedule a meeting with the College Counselor at any time.

COLLEGE RESOURCES

Information on colleges is available in the Library, and in the College Counseling Office, in addition to the information available on the web through any computer. The information in the library and in the College Counseling Office includes college guidebooks, view books and catalogs, videos, financial aid information, ACT and SAT Prep books. SAT, ACT, and TOEFL, booklets are available in the Guidance Office. ACT and SAT registration packets are available in the guidance and main office, the student may also register online.

COLLEGE ADMISSION REPRESENTATIVES

Each fall, more than 25 college representatives visit Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Juniors and Seniors are encouraged to meet with the representatives of colleges of which they are interested. If the visit requires the student to miss a class, he/she must check with his/her teacher first, and get a pass from the College Counselor's office.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS SENT TO COLLEGES

Students send their applications to colleges and inform the College Counselor's Office; at that time, supporting materials- including transcripts(s), secondary school reports, a profile of Maur Hill-Mount Academy, a grade distribution sheet, and a recommendation by the College Counselor- are sent from Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Teachers send their recommendations separately. SAT or ACT scores are included in the packet if the student has entered the CEEB code on the ACT or SAT registration.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Maur Hill - Mount Academy
1000 Green Street
Atchison, KS 66002

CEEB Code: 170145

Telephone: 913-367-5482

Fax: 913-367- 5096

Director of College Counseling-
Carrie Fowler, ext. 221

JUNIOR YEAR

- October** Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) given at Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Specific test date and registration information will be available in the College Counselor's Office and will be announced during morning announcements.
- March** Juniors should plan to take an SAT or ACT either in March, May, or June. Students considering early decision should take 3 SAT II's in May or June, preferably Writing, Math 1 or 2, and another of your choice.
- Mar- May** Conferences for juniors with College Counselor. Students often visit colleges during spring break. Think about which teachers you might ask to write recommendations. Save your best work from these teachers; they can refer to it when writing your recommendation.
- July- August** Juniors should obtain information about colleges, visit colleges, begin to narrow their list of choices, work on a resume of activities/accomplishments, and practice writing essays. Call well in advance to schedule an appointment for a college visit.

**SENIOR YEAR****Don't Be Late**

- September** Application deadlines for October, November, and December SATs. College representatives visit Maur Hill-Mount Academy. Early Decision, Early Action deadlines may be in November.
- October** Seniors meet with College Counselor to finalize list of colleges. Students work on college application essays, turn in extracurricular activity sheets, and review transcripts at Senior class meeting.
- November** Students should know what each college requires and keep track of deadlines: for college applications, ACT's, SAT's, and to request transcripts and secondary school reports from Maur Hill-Mount Academy and recommendations from teachers well in advance of deadlines. Check College Counseling Office for scholarship opportunities and deadlines. Pick up financial aid forms.
- December**
- January** January is the last chance for seniors to take an ACT or SAT. Most college applications are due between January 1 and March 1. Note dates carefully, and submit applications in advance of deadlines. Parents complete financial aid forms. Many are due by February 15th.
- February** Many scholarship applications are due March 1.
- April** Most colleges notify students of their admission status after April 1. Students must make their decisions and notify colleges in writing by May 1 to accept and/or decline offers.
- May** Advanced Placement Tests. Graduation! Final transcripts are sent to colleges by the end of May.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE: AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

First, determine what you want in a college. Think about your interests and future plans. Although it may not exist, think about what your ideal college would be like. Consider which aspects of college life matter most to you. For example, does location mean more than the chance to create your own major? Is size more important than quality housing?

Begin to generate a list of colleges that meet your needs and aspirations. Pay attention to how selective the schools are. Be sure your list includes schools that vary in how difficult they are to get into. You don't want a list of only long shots or all sure things.

Resources available to help you generate an initial list of colleges:

- College Counselor, parents, teachers, coaches, residency staff.
- Guidebooks available in the College Counseling Office at MHMA and at libraries and bookstores.
- Catalogs and view books, available in the College Counseling Office and from the colleges
- College Web Pages and search sites on the Internet

Do some in-depth investigation to determine whether the colleges on your list are right for you. Visit, if possible. In fact, a visit to almost any college will help you learn what you want in a college. If you can't visit, consult the catalogs carefully, and talk to as many students or alumni of the school as possible. Comparative guidebooks, such as Fiske, Princeton Review, and Insider's Guide, can help you distinguish among schools.

As a general rule, apply to 6 - 8 colleges that vary in selectivity but have the features most important to you. Your final list of schools should include a few long shots, a few that are likely to accept you, and a few that you are very likely to get into. They should **all*** be schools at which you would be comfortable.

* Spend as much time selecting your 6th or 7th choices as your top ones. While they might not be as prestigious, they should have what you are looking for and be places where you have a good chance of being happy. If your top choices are small, liberal arts colleges, it does not make sense to include a large university as a safety choice. If you want a small, liberal arts school, take the time to find one that will qualify as a safe choice.

NOTA BENE (PAY ATTENTION)

‡ There are about 3,400 schools in the U.S., ranging from highly selective to noncompetitive. Almost anyone who wants a college education can get one.

‡ The responsibility for choosing colleges and applying is yours', not your parents' or your College Counselor's.

‡ Don't rule out any college on the basis of cost at the beginning of the process. Financial aid can make a significant difference in relative costs.

‡ There is not just one perfect college for you. There can be several right schools and some wrong ones. You may have to make some compromises.

‡ Pinpoint the range of colleges that meet your needs, where you'll have a chance for admission. Try not to overestimate yourself. Be realistic.

‡ Aim for the best college possible, but remember that prestige does not necessarily mean "best" for you. You might be miserable in a "name" college but thrive in one that is less well-known.

‡ Do not assume that a less selective college is necessarily inferior in quality to a more selective one. The selectivity of an institution depends on the size of its applicant pool, which may be influenced by its geographic location, popularity, and reputation as well as its academic quality.

‡ The thought of going to college, leaving home and friends, can be scary. Don't let this fear keep you from going ahead with your plans. Making decisions about where to apply and where you'll go is scary, but it isn't the end of the world if you make a wrong choice. You can transfer, if necessary.

‡ The process of applying to college is a learning experience. You'll learn about yourself, your family, and financial realities. You'll meet new people and travel to new places. Whatever the final outcome, try to make the most of the process.

- adapted from *The One Hour College Applicant*, by Lois Rochester and Judy Mandell, pp. 12-14.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

ACADEMICS

More than anything else, you go to college for the education you receive in the classroom. The academic atmosphere and variety of courses is important. Colleges offer a wide variety of majors or courses of study. If you know what you want to major in, choose a college with a strong program in that field. If you are unsure of your major, choose a good liberal arts college or university with a variety of options. Try to match your abilities to the college's selectivity so that the college you choose is stimulating, but not overwhelming.

SIZE

Colleges range in size from 150 to 80,000 students. There is a great difference between attending a small college (1,000-2,000) and a very large university (30,000-50,000). Small schools offer you more personal involvement, a community atmosphere, and small classes. Large schools have more resources and allow you to be more anonymous. To consider what is right for you, consider the following:

- Will I feel closed in at a small college, or will I welcome the personal, friendly atmosphere?
- Will I feel lost and overwhelmed at a large institution, or more independent and and free?
- Do I prefer the individual instruction at a small school, or the variety of a larger one?
- Are athletic facilities important? Larger schools may offer more sports, activities, and facilities; small ones mean more chance to play.

COST

Obviously, cost is a major factor. The total cost for a year--including tuition, fees, room and board, books supplies, transportation, and personal expenses--ranges from \$1,000 for a community college to more than \$35,000 for a private institution. **Do not limit your choice of colleges only to those you can afford without assistance, however.** Many expensive private schools have solid financial aid programs, which may cover anywhere from 20% to the full cost. Because it may be able to offer more aid, an expensive school may actually cost you less than a lower priced one. Since financial aid can be uncertain, a good plan is to choose several colleges, including some you can afford and some for which you need aid.

STUDENT BODY TYPE

A student body can be comprised of all men, all women, or both. Dorm privileges, social activities, and extra curricular involvement vary by the type of student body a college has. Note that many colleges have exchange programs whereby a student from one college may take courses at another without added cost.

LOCATION

When considering location, think about the cost and ease of travel, your need for independence versus your desire to be near your family, and the effects of a particular climate. Consider that since colleges like geographic diversity, you may be more attractive to a more distant college. Think about the setting: some people like the social and cultural environment of a city; others prefer an ocean, mountain, or country location.

SAMPLE LETTER TO COLLEGES REQUESTING INFORMATION

Home Address
Home Address
Date

Name of Admission Director, if known
Title - Dean or Director of Admissions
Name of College or University
Address
Address
Dear (Name of Director):

I am a junior at Maur Hill -Mount Academy in Atchison, Kansas, and I am interested in the possibility of applying for admission to the freshman class of 20_ _. I would appreciate your sending me a catalog, an application, and any additional information regarding [study abroad, financial aid, athletics, work-study, theater, art, or music programs, etc. - whatever is appropriate]. [You may also want to request a copy of the student newspaper and/or names of students or recent alums who live in this area.]

Thank you for your attention. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,
(Sign your name)
(Print or type your name)

SOME CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING COLLEGES

(The following are some things you might want to find out for each college you are considering.)

Student Enrollment

Total enrollment
 Number of undergrad students
 Percent of freshman who graduate
 Male/ female ratio
 Percent commuters vs. residents
 Ethnic, racial, cultural, geographic diversity.

Academic Environment

Percent faculty with Ph.D.
 Faculty/student ratio/ Class sizes
 Faculty accessibility
 Faculty teaching loads
 Emphasis on teaching
 Research expectations
 Faculty advising program
 Faculty/student relationship
 Student workload
 Pressure/competition
 Attitude to learning
 Structure for study
 Interest in ideas, world issues
 Career advising
 Percent who go to grad. school
 Job/grad. placement record, facilities

Admissions

Admission requirements
 Percent of applicants admitted
 Average freshman SAT's & ACT's
 Percent freshman in top 10% high school class
 High school GPA's of freshman
 Selectivity
 Guidebook ratings

Curriculum, Standards

Majors offered/ strong departments
 Distribution/degree requirements
 Required freshman courses
 Course breadth/ depth in your areas of interest
 Courses required for major
 Courses available for non-majors
 Introductory/ advanced courses
 Interdisciplinary opportunities
 Tutorials, seminars
 Research opportunities
 Field work possibilities
 Internship availability
 Exchange programs/Study abroad
 Cooperative programs
 Pre-professional programs
 Accreditation
 Honor system
 Grade distribution

College Type & Philosophy

Two-year or four-year
 Church/state/private
 College/University
 Liberal arts/Pre-professional/
 Technical/ Vocational
 Degrees offered
 Traditional/ progressive
 Deeply scholarly/ career oriented
 Comprehensive
 Interterm programs
 Acceleration possibilities

Location, Facilities

Distance from home
 Travel cost/ convenience
 Urban/rural
 Weather
 Nearest city
 Library/ laboratory/ athletic facilities
 Studio/ practice rooms
 Student center
 Recreational opportunities

Student Life, Housing

Homogeneous/ diverse communities
 Percent students on campus weekends
 Controversial issues on campus
 School spirit
 Social regulations
 Large dorms/ housing clusters/ small houses
 Availability of single, double, multiple rooms
 Housing allocation process
 Dining facilities
 Availability of activities
 Fraternity, sorority
 Clubs/organizations
 Cultural opportunities

Financial Aid

Tuition & fees per year
 Room and board costs
 Books, expenses, travel
 Percent of students receiving aid
 Range of aid awards
 Average aid award, freshman
 Average aid award, upperclassmen
 Loan/job opportunities

THE CAMPUS VISIT AND INTERVIEW

When possible, students should make an effort to visit and have interviews at colleges in which they are interested. No matter how much you think you know about a school, there is no substitute for campus visits to help decide whether the college is a good fit for you. The summer prior to your senior year is a good time to visit colleges, especially late August/ early September when colleges are in session. Maur-Hill Mount Academy allows each senior a limited number of school day absences for the purpose of college visits. Requests for such visits **must** be made in advance through the College Counselor. When scheduling appointments for interviews and campus tours, call the College's Admissions Office well in advance to arrange a convenient date and time. The early fall is particularly busy for you and for the people in admissions, so plan ahead to ensure a worthwhile visit.

A FEW TIPS ABOUT INTERVIEWS

- 1.** Be on time! Most interviews are scheduled for less than an hour, so don't waste your time, or the interviewer's, by being late.
- 2.** Read the catalogue before the interview.
- 3.** Use the interview to find out all you can about what a particular college has to offer. Don't be afraid to ask about the strength of their academic departments, admission standards, cultural resources, study abroad opportunities, etc. The interview is intended to be a learning experience for you as well as for the admissions person.
- 4.** If you would like to meet with a professor or coach, attend a class, have an audition, etc., ask the Admissions Office to arrange it for you when you make your interview appointment. It is generally to your advantage to touch base with people in fields of your particular interests.
- 5.** Be positive in your approach to the interview. Always emphasize what attracted you to the college, what you are interested in and how you hope to contribute to your college community. Be your own best advocate. Talk about your special interests, talents, experiences, and accomplishments. You can show pride in your achievements without being boastful.
- 6.** If there is anything in your academic record which you feel needs explanation or clarification, this is the time to discuss it. If you are concerned about test scores, or a poor grade in a certain subject, don't be afraid to address the issue while you have the chance to talk it over in person. Remember, no one has a perfect record.

SOME QUESTIONS THEY MIGHT ASK YOU

- What do you have to gain from the college experience?
- What three words best describe you?
- What qualities do you look for in a friend? why?
- What is your strongest or weakest quality?
- Why do you think this would be a good college for you?
- What special contributions will you make to the college of your choice?
- Is your academic record an accurate reflection of your ability? Why or why not?
- In what academic areas are you most interested? How do they relate to your future plans?
- What extracurricular activities do you want to participate in at college?
- How do you justify the expense of a college education?
- What work and/ or volunteer experience have you had and what have you learned from it?
- What book that you have read has most influenced your thinking and why? Who is your favorite author?
- What person do you admire most and why?
- What do you think about . . . [a recent news event?]
- If you could go back in time, which historical period would you choose and why?

SOME QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT ASK THEM

Ask questions that cannot be answered in the catalogue. Show that you know something about the college and that you're interested in learning more.

- Given my academic record to date, am I a realistic candidate for admission to your school? What qualities do you look for in a student?
- If your college is my first choice, would you recommend my applying for early decision? (If the college

INTERVIEWS, Continued

has several admission plans -- early decision, early action, early evaluation -- ask for explanation of any term you don't understand.)

- What is this school's greatest asset? What does it need to improve on?
- What are the current student issues on campus?
- What kind of academic support is available at the college?
- Do admission standards vary according to academic program? (It is more difficult to gain entrance to the premedical or engineering programs than to the school of arts and sciences?) How do the requirements differ?
- What career counseling services are offered to students? Are there opportunities to gain work experience while in school? Is there a cooperative education system?
- If the college has a specific religious orientation, how does it

affect the life of the school?

- Is the student body diverse or homogeneous? Is it a comfortable place for a woman? Person of color? International student? Disabled student, homosexual?
- Is on-campus housing guaranteed to all students? If not, what other housing is readily available to students?
- How many students live on campus? Commute? What percentage of students remain on campus on weekends?
- What does your financial aid package normally consist of? If I qualify for aid as a freshman, can I expect to receive a comparable package each year?
- How many students return after their freshman year? How many graduate?
- What cultural resources are there in the immediate area? What does the school provide in terms of transportation, activities and entertainment?

• What is the quality of the athletic, drama, music (whatever your interest) programs? What are the most active extracurricular activities/ organizations?

- If you are applying to a public university in another state, ask about any special requirements for out-of-state applicants, i.e. minimum SAT scores, ACT scores, GPA's.
- Is it possible to double major? To design one's own major?
- What kind of study abroad programs are offered? How many students participate?

Remember to get the full name and title of the person with whom you spoke so you can write a note of thanks.

Courtesy Counts

MORE VISITING AND INTERVIEWING TIPS

You may be able to sign up for a group information session or to schedule an individual interview. Plan on about 45 minutes for a personal interview.

Plan to visit no more than 2-3 colleges in one day, preferably one or two. Visit while college is in session, if possible.

Sample a meal in the cafeteria, go to the library, student center, athletic fields, or whatever else will be of particular interest to you.

Look at the bulletin boards so see what kinds of things are happening on campus. Read the college newspaper.

Try not to be influenced by the weather or the student who leads the tour. Both will change.

Explore living conditions. Do dorms have lounges? Where do students eat? Are quiet places to study available?

For practice, talk with college representatives who visit MH-MA, and/or arrange an interview at a nearby college that you are interested in.

Maintain eye contact, smile, don't chew gum.

After you visit, record your impressions in a notebook before you forget why you felt as you did.

WHAT DO COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN STUDENTS?

This is the question most frequently asked any College Counselor. While answers vary from college to college, the philosophy of most selective colleges may be similar to that expressed by Edward Wall, former Dean of Admissions at Amherst College: “Our ultimate goal is a class that will have an educational impact on itself ~ that is, a class which contains the richest possible variety of talents, interests, accomplishments, backgrounds, career goals, and personalities.”

The following are often important factors in evaluating candidates for selective colleges.*

- Degree of difficulty of the student’s high school course load
- School grades, GPA, class rank
- Standardized test scores (SAT, Subject Tests, ACT, TOEFL, IB, Honors)
- The application essay(s)
- The interview
- The depth of extracurricular involvement and achievement
- The student’s employment and/or volunteer achievement
- Recommendations

*The eight factors listed above are taken from *Playing the Private College Admissions Game* by Richard Moll

Other factors also considered may include the following:

- reputation of the student’s high school
- geographic diversity (It can be to your advantage to venture away from home.)
- student’s relationship to alumnus
- membership in a minority group and/or international student
- intended major or special talent in athletics, music, fine or dramatic arts

Depending on the college, the factors listed may be weighted differently, but each may play a part in the final admission decision. Your attitude toward learning, your interests and enthusiasm, and the care with which you undertake the admission process will have an impact on the college’s decision, so give it your best effort. The College Counselor, faculty, and the staff are all here to help you along the way.

The Ideal Candidate

According to admissions officers at a variety of colleges and universities, the ideal candidate would possess all or most of the following qualities:

- exceeds the admission standards set by the school
- has a love for learning
- demonstrates academic motivation by taking the most challenging courses available
- maintains above average performance in class and on standardized tests
- is a good writer or communicator
- is a leader in the school or community
- participates in activities outside the classroom that contributes positively to the community
- shows a keen interest in the college, its mission or environment, and in becoming involved in campus activities and organizations

~ from the *Unofficial Guide to College Admissions* by Shannon Turlington

YOUR TRANSCRIPT

The most important piece of information about you that a college receives is your transcripts. It serves two purposes to outline your academic history and to enable the college to evaluate your academic prospects. In looking at your transcripts, most colleges will consider the following.

Colleges use your transcript to see if you meet their minimal requirements. Most colleges specify that applicants must have completed a specific number of years of study in certain courses, for example, 4 years of English, 4 of math, 3 years of laboratory science, social science, and foreign language, and courses in the arts and electives. These are only minimum requirements, however; at many colleges, you will be compared with high school students who are likely to be enrolled in English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language courses each year. And remember, colleges look for a balance of courses across the academic disciplines.

Colleges look to see if your overall program of study is challenging. Did you take Honors, Advanced Placement courses when possible? Did you take more than the required number of classes during any term? Did you pursue independent study opportunities if a course you wanted was unavailable? The more rigorous the program of study, the more impressive, assuming you are capable of doing the work.

They look to see how well you have done. What is your grade-point average? Moreover, they look for trends in general performance. Has your grade point average gone up, down, or stayed fairly constant though high school? They also look to determine your areas of strength and weakness. In which areas have you taken Honors or International Baccalaureate courses? Do you have a special area of interest (e.g. drama, dance)?

They look at the standardized test scores reported with the transcript. (Many colleges require, however, that you provide them with official score reports from the College Board, and ACT. In particular, they look for discrepancies between these scores and your grades. For example, if you have high scores on the verbal section of the SAT and on the Writing SAT II or the ACT, but low grades in English, they may wonder why you have failed to work up to your potential.

Note: We at MH-MA also put extracurricular activities, honors, and awards with your transcript to provide colleges with more information about you.

SOME REMINDERS ABOUT COURSES TO TAKE AT MAUR HILL -MOUNT ACADEMY:

1. Continue with math, science, and foreign language to the 4th year, if possible. If you are interested in pursuing science in college, you should take both math and science courses and SAT II's in both math and science at the end of your junior year.
2. In your senior year, continue to balance your curriculum with solid courses. Admission officers often look for solid "meat and potatoes" courses in English, math and science, foreign language, and history. When possible, you can also fill in with electives in areas of particular interest.
3. Maintain strong effort throughout the senior year. Often colleges review winter term grades before making final decisions. And the letters of admission you receive in April are conditional on your maintaining a level of academic performance similar to that of previous terms.
4. Don't drop a course prematurely. If you can improve a sagging grade, you will demonstrate confidence and the determination to overcome disappointments, as well as academic ability.

Testing • Testing • Testing • Testing • Testing • Testing • Testing

Your performance on standardized tests is one of many parts of your record which will be reviewed during the application process. The emphasis on test scores varies from college to college, and some schools have eliminated their standardized test requirements altogether. It is your responsibility to know which test each college requires and to have the scores reported to the colleges directly from the testing service. Each time you take an ACT, SAT I or SAT II, you should take advantage of the opportunity to send your scores to four colleges for free. Although your scores will appear with your MH-MA transcript, some colleges do not consider these scores to be official. They may require that ACT, SAT, SAT II, or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) reports be sent directly from ETS to each college you are applying to. **MH-MA cannot do this for you.**

SAT I

Standard test requirements usually include the SAT I (Scholastic Assessment Test) and two or three SAT II's (Achievement Tests). Juniors are advised to take the SAT in May and one or more SAT II's in June. We advise all seniors to take both the SAT I and SAT II again in the fall of the senior year. Students should be aware that many selective colleges may either require or prefer that applicants take the SAT II Writing Test.

NB: While it was the norm to take the SAT I in November and the SAT II in December, there is also an October test date for students who want to advance the process, especially those considering Early Decision applications, those who want to take a test twice, or those wishing to take more than 3 SAT II's.

ACT

The ACT is a more subject based standardized test with sections on science and social studies as well as English and math. It is more commonly used in the South, West, and Mid-West, but is growing in popularity in the East. Some colleges may still require the Writing SAT II, however.

SAT II (Achievements)

Even if the colleges to which you plan to apply do not require SAT II's, you should take them in any areas in which you may do well. A higher SAT II score can help offset a lower SAT I score. Also, if there is any chance that you may apply to a college that does require one or more SAT II's, you should take them. It may be too late when you apply, and your application will not be considered without them.

TOEFL

Any student for whom English is not a native language must plan to take the TOEFL. The TOEFL is given year-round (rather than on specific testing dates) by computer at various testing sites. International students must make arrangements in the ESL office to take the TOEFL at a local testing site. Students who take the TOEFL must report their scores to the Guidance Office in order for them to appear on their college transcripts.

Please note testing calendar for the upcoming year on p. 13.

Registration

Registration forms are available in the Guidance Office or from the College Counselor. Fill out forms carefully. Don't forget the registration deadlines; if you are late, you pay a penalty. It is possible to register by phone or on-line at www.act.org and www.collegeboard.com.

Timing

Students should be aware of the test requirements of each college they are interested in well in advance of test registration deadlines. It can take several weeks to receive test scores. Most colleges will not consider a student until all required information, including test scores, is there.

Score Choice

Until recently, students could elect to have SAT II scores held until they saw how they did. But ETS has discontinued that option. Nonetheless, colleges will usually consider only the two highest SAT scores and the three highest SAT II scores.

Those who take the ACT more than once can choose which set of scores to send.

MH - MA's SCHOOL CODE IS 170145

TESTING SCHEDULES FOR 2008-2009

ACT TEST DATES 2008-09

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Regular Registration Postmark Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration Postmark Deadline</u>
Oct. 25, 2008	Sept. 19, 2008	Oct. 3, 2008
Dec. 13, 2008	Nov. 7, 2008	Nov. 20, 2008
Feb. 7, 2009	Jan. 6, 2009	Jan. 16, 2009
Apr. 4, 2009	Feb. 27, 2009	Mar. 13, 2009
June 13, 2009	May 8, 2009	May 22, 2009

**There is an additional fee for late registration. For a substantial fee, it may also be possible to take the test as a walk-in candidate, space permitting.

The ACT is given at MH-MA during the school year only. The SAT is given at MH-MA only on selective dates, check your registration bulletin for those dates.

SAT TEST DATES 2008-09

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Regular Registration Postmark Deadline</u>	<u>Late Registration Postmark Deadline</u>
Oct. 4, 2008	Sept. 8, 2008	Sept. 12, 2008
Nov. 1, 2008	Sept. 30, 2008	Oct. 9, 2008
Dec. 6, 2008	Nov. 4, 2008	Nov. 14, 2008
Jan. 24, 2009	Dec. 24, 2008	Jan. 2, 2009
Mar. 14, 2009	Feb. 12, 2009	Feb. 21, 2009
May 2, 2009	March 31, 2009	April 9, 2009
June 6, 2009	May 5, 2009	May 14, 2009

PSAT

Preliminary Scholastic
Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
(PSAT)
Test Dates

October 15, 2008 or
October 18, 2008

The PSAT will be
given at MH-MA on
Wednesday
October 15, 2008

TOEFL TESTING

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required of all non-native speakers of English. Since 2005-06 the TOEFL has been given in the United States as an internet-based test. In the Atchison area, the TOEFL is given at several locations. Students who need to take the TOEFL should see Mrs. Fowler and review your handbook for dates when the test is available to take.

For more information,
see <http://www.ets.org/toefl>

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION

The process of filling out your college applications may seem long and tedious, but the care with which you approach this task will undoubtedly influence the Admission Committee's final decision. Because the quality of your application is a direct reflection of you, it is crucial that you use this opportunity to help the college know you better. Remember that a strong application can be the pivotal factor in gaining admission to a selective college. Careless mistakes or sloppiness can hurt your chances considerably. **PROOFREAD.**

Furthermore, the responsibility of putting together an application, reporting scores, writing essays, and meeting deadlines are indications of your readiness to deal with the independence offered at college.

SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

1. Do your own work! You are the person responsible for completing the application, and it is your work that the college is interested in.

2. Be neat, accurate, meticulous. Do a rough draft on a separate sheet of paper (or a copy of the application) so you can correct any mistakes before writing on the application itself.

**Keep a copy of every application, including your essays, in the event that your application is misplaced or lost in the mail.

3. Practice writing one or two different essays while you have time over the summer. For sample essay topics, use the Common Application or one of the "Questions They Might Ask You" (p.9, Campus Visit and Interview)

4. Be creative, and be honest. Students with special talents or interests should consider submitting additional materials-such as samples of art work, poetry or prose, tapes of musical performances-along with the application. Don't be afraid to distinguish yourself from the crowd. (Be careful about using humor, however. What strikes you as funny may not amuse an Admissions Officer.)

5. Know the difference between early decision, early action, early evaluation, regular decision, and rolling admissions. Plan your strategy accordingly. Even if you decide to apply early decision, you should have other applications prepared and ready to send.

6. Only use the Common Application if the college you are applying to is listed on it. If so, you can use the Common App, or you can use the college's own application, whichever will show you in a more favorable light. If in doubt, ask the college which they prefer.

Also...

Send applications as early as possible. Your application will get more careful attention. If an application comes in two parts, send Part I immediately so that a file can be started for you.

If you apply electronically, it is a good idea to download the application and send a paper copy also.

If you plan to apply for financial aid, find out if your college choices have need-blind admissions policies (your financial status has no bearing on whether you are accepted) or if your application for aid may affect admissions decisions.

Be honest, thorough, and realistic. Don't try to disguise yourself to fit the college.

Feel free to be "undecided" about your major. If you decide to declare a major, be sure it is consistent with your grades, scores, essay.

If your application does not require an essay, send a brief cover letter explaining why you are applying to that college.

If you do not receive acknowledgement after several weeks, call the Admissions Office to be sure your application is there and complete. Often, you can check your application status online. The MH-MA Guidance Office maintains a record of when transcripts are sent.

Only apply to colleges you would willingly attend.

IMPROVING YOUR CHANCES

According to admissions officers, you can do several things to improve your chances for admission even if you don't feel that your academic record is quite up to snuff. Some steps you'll have to take early--before your senior year begins. Others you can complete before you send in the application...

Work hard in your classes and show improvement in your grades in your junior and senior years.

Challenge yourself your senior year by taking AP and honors courses. Continue taking advanced foreign language, math, and science courses during your last year in high school, even if they aren't required for graduation.

Schedule an interview with an admissions officer, even if it's not required. Use this opportunity to discuss any questionable spots on your record and to emphasize why you are a good candidate for admission.

Visit the campus more than once, if possible. Talk with admissions officers each time you visit, so they can get to know you and see how interested you are in the school.

Make a significant contribution in your extracurricular activities, such as becoming a team captain, producing a great yearbook, or starting a club.

Highlight your academic talents, special interests, or talents-athletic, artistic, or musical-in your application. If the admissions office encourages it, consider submitting class essays, independent research, samples of your artwork, tapes of performances, or creative writing excerpts.**

If you have a special interest or talent, contact the appropriate department or club at the college-team coach, debate club, editor of the school newspaper... The people you meet may be so impressed with you that they'll contact the admissions office to emphasize what a good addition you'd make to the campus.

List unusual activities on your application, such as winning a chess championship, completing an internship at a computer company, living for three months in a foreign country, training seeing eye dogs, or tagging along with an archaeological expedition. Anything that helps you stand out from the crowd of applicants may be worth mentioning.

In a recent study of Admissions Practices from the College Board, former V.P. Gretchen Rigol concludes that colleges are becoming more selective, and that there has been an increase in their academic standards. This document... (confirms) the overall importance of traditional academic indicators and increasing importance of essays and certain personal qualities, such as leadership and community activities.... Essays are required by more institutions than just a few years ago.

Inform the admissions officer of special circumstances that may explain a weak spot in your application...if you come from a single-parent, low-income family, that could explain why you spent your free time after school working rather than participating in extracurricular activities.

Write a thoughtful, original essay (see p.16). You can also inquire about submitting extra writing samples with your application, especially in-class samples with teachers' comments. If an essay isn't required, consider submitting a personal statement anyway.

Get to know your guidance counselor. This is good advice anyway, but it can come in handy if your application is borderline. An admissions officer may call your guidance counselor to ask about you, and if your counselor knows you well, then he or she can help the admissions officer make a tough decision. Also, a counselor who knows you can write a more detailed letter of recommendation.

Provide additional letters of recommendation from your teachers, your boss, a religious advisor (for colleges with strong religious affiliation), a club sponsor, or a mentor.**

**Before sending anything that goes beyond what the application requests--such as additional recommendations, writing samples, or tapes--call the admission office and ask if such materials will be appreciated and considered.

from The Unofficial Guide to College Admission
by Shannon Turlington

THE APPLICATION ESSAY

The essay you write as part of your application will be used by the colleges to judge-

- the depth of your understanding of intellectual or social issues
- the quality and freshness of your mind
- your writing style, technical correctness, fluency, etc.

It is your personal statement which can make you come alive for them. It allows you to reveal your intelligence, talents, sense of humor, intellectual curiosity, enthusiasm, maturity, creativity, expressiveness, sincerity, and writing ability. It can be used by a college to confirm their decision if your other credentials are clear, and in close cases, a good (or a poor) essay can make the difference. Faculty admissions readers often pay close attention to essays. The care and attention you give the essay expresses to them how interested you are and how much you care about their college.

ESSAY WRITING TIPS

1. "If you ask what they're looking for, you're already on the wrong track." They want to know what you have to say, who you are. Write something that only you could write.**
2. It may help to make lists of your aspirations, accomplishments, shortcomings, and the things you value. You should not include this information in the essay if it already appears elsewhere in the application, but it may help you find a thesis. To focus your essay, develop a one-sentence thesis from this information.
3. Write a draft. Set it aside and read it at least 24 hours later, looking for cliches, vagueness, triteness, dullness, grammatical errors, and misspellings. Is your essay focussed on your theme, or does it ramble? Does the introduction grab the reader?
4. Rewrite your essay. Ask someone whose opinion you

respect to read it and give you his/her candid impressions, but do not let this person rewrite your essay. See if they can tell you what they think you are trying to say. Ask the reader how you come across as a person, whether there are any confusing areas, where you may need more details, if any parts are boring, and what sections they liked best.

5. Rewrite your essay and check again for spelling and grammatical errors, awkward phrasing, inaccurate usage, unnecessary words. Read your essay aloud to locate anything that is rough or may not sound right.
6. Type your essay, unless the college requires that it be handwritten. Proofread it. Make a xerox copy, mail it, and relax. You have done well.

Essay Format: not less than 2/3 page long or more than 3 pages; neat; readable; written or typed by you.

**from Harry Bauld, *On Writing the College Application Essay* (Barnes and Noble, 1987)

SOME ESSAY DO'S AND DON'TS FROM A COLLEGE ADMISSION OFFICER

DO

- answer the question and demonstrate how well you think as well as how well you write
- be concise, specific, personal, and honest
- use wit and imagination
- use nouns and verbs, use adjectives and adverbs judiciously (avoid the thesaurus syndrome)
- proofread and ask someone else to proofread
- be able to say, "this sounds like me!"

DON'T

- be cynical, trite, pretentious, or maudlin
- make the essay a second resume by repeating what is included in other parts of the application
- try to be funny if that isn't you
- select topics that bore (the social problem of the year), irritate, or suggest that you don't see the world beyond high school
- make careless errors

"A good essay should get to the core of the person. It should expose something about the writer. Students try too hard to impress with \$100 words. We certainly want proof that the student can use the tools of language to express his or her thoughts. But when it is most effective, the essay will help us get to the heart of the person." --

Carol Wheatly, The College of Wooster

MORE EXPERT ADVISE ON ESSAY WRITING

Essay readers want writers who will speak to them directly from personal experience.... The best approach is to write about something you care about, not something you think a college expects you to care about.

Process for Writing Good Essays

1. Copy down the questions you will be asked to write about before you start your essay. This will give you time to walk around with them in your head.
2. Be open to the tiny mental sparks that will provide the specific details you are after, details that will bring your essay to life. Get some index cards for this walk-around phase, and jot down ideas as they come to you.
3. When it comes to choosing which essay to write, the cards will lead you to the ones that evoke the richest material.
4. Write in your own voice.
5. Be careful about openers. Your reader plans to spend three and a half minutes with this essay. Lead into it quickly and cleanly. Less is usually more.
6. Assume your first draft will be a (very) rough draft. Rewrite

7. Show your draft to a sympathetic (literate) friend, parent, or teacher for feedback. Take their criticism gratefully and get back to work. But be careful about enlisting too many critics (and viewpoints).
8. Get going on the project far enough ahead so you can put it aside for a day or so to gain perspective and have more time to rewrite. Learning to mess around with a draft is when you will really learn how to write.
9. Be very careful about grammar and spelling. In addition to showing who you are as a person, your essay will show who you are as a writer and thinker.
10. For all the pressure you feel, try to have fun with this. It's your chance to say your piece.

-Bill Mayher, *The College Admissions Mystique*

When faced with essay questions like "Tell us about yourself," make a list of the personal characteristics that you'd like to convey, pick the most important one, and then choose a specific event in your life that most effectively communicates that characteristic.

ON CHOOSING AN ESSAY TOPIC:

The writing style, tone, and general subject matter of many college essays may be nearly identical. The essay topics are slightly different, but they often draw the same cliched moral lessons, whether they are about winning the big game, dealing with the death of a relative or traveling to a foreign country...

To avoid doing likewise, take your time picking a topic, and really think it through. Think about your special talents or skills, the accomplishments of which you are most proud, your favorite things to do outside of class, the best or worst day of your life, your most memorable or embarrassing experience, events that have changed you, difficult decisions, interesting people you have known. Eliminate topics that don't seem original, aren't important to you, or don't reflect your personality.

"Not everyone has had great triumphs or tragedies in their life... Don't make the mistakes of thinking you have to write about some earth-shaking event. Often a poignant, detailed essay about an ordinary event can be more powerful and more illuminating of the personality behind the writer.... Simply tell an interesting story"

THE INTRODUCTION:

The most important part of your essays is the introduction. **The opening is where you have to catch the admission officer's attention and hook him or her into carefully reading the rest of the essay...** Start with a surprise or mystery ... raise an intriguing question or dilemma ... use memorable, specific descriptions [and] forget long winded introduction-launch unto

ON REVISING ESSAYS:

"Look for ways to add more detail, cut repetition and awkward phrasing, show instead of tell and connect ideas in a smooth flow. Delete everything that doesn't relate to your main theme."

More Don'ts: You don't have to write standard 5-paragraph essays don't gush, don't use stock phrases, don't make spelling or grammatical errors, don't use a thesaurus or Burdett's quotations, don't use a distant, academic tone .

"No matter how technically correct your essay is [and it must be] it's your creative intelligence that the college is trying to measure. ...your unique way of putting ideas and events together, learning from literature and your life of the mind .
"It doesn't matter what your topic is. All the colleges want to know the same thing. What does this 17 year old think? What has she learned about herself and the world given the opportunities she has had in life? What kinds of learning attitudes and intellectual curiosity does he have? The answer to these questions can come from any topic.

Note: Use a font big enough for the admissions staff to read easily. Shorten the essay-not spaces between the line- to fit it into the required space.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations from the School, your teacher, coaches or employers are an important component of your application. The College Counselor will write an official school recommendation for every senior. Many colleges also require one or more teachers recommendations. Whether or not the colleges you are applying to requires them, it is strongly advised that you request at least two references. In addition to one from the College Counselor, to accompany each application. One should be from a teacher who knows you well, preferably an English teacher or the teacher of a class in which you did your best work.

FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Ask for recommendation from at least one teacher who will discuss you as a student in your area of interest or strength . To choose a teacher, think about your performance in each class, your level of challenge, struggle, mastery in that class, and which teachers know you as a student .
2. Never give anyone a recommendation form without asking him/her first. Always be considerate and give the person at least 2-4 weeks notice before the recommendations due.
3. If she/he agrees to write a letter on your behalf, give the person a stamped business-sized envelope addressed to the college admissions office. You should also provide them with information about yourself; the more they know the better a job they can do for you. Be sure to complete the top of the form before giving it to the teacher.
4. Waive your legal right to see the recommendation. Chances are it will be a positive assessment of your strengths, and it will have more credibility if you have not seen it .
5. You can also ask for a recommendation from a non-school employer, supervisor or a teacher who will emphasize your personals strengths, such as dependability or creativity. Connections and /or coaches do not get you into college, however. It is vital that you understand that although recommendations will help to support your application to colleges, no one else can get you in. Your record will be judged on its own merit, not whether your uncle went to collage X. If you are the child of an alumnus, you have an advantage ONLY if your record meets the standard of the college anyway.

* A special word to athletes about coaches: although a coach may recommend you to the Admission Committee the final decision rests with the Committee. Certainly it is to your advantage to work with coaches and to seek their support, but don't be misled by promises of acceptance that may not materialize.

Thank each person who has taken the time to write a recommendation for you.

COLLEGE INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET

There are many sources of information about colleges on the Internet. Most colleges have their own web pages, there are sites devoted to searching for colleges, and many groups provide specialized information. Most of the following analyses are from College Choice and Admissions:

The Best Resources to Help You Get In. This is not a complete list

General College Admissions Resources

***All About College- [http:// www.allaboutcollege.com](http://www.allaboutcollege.com)**

All about college includes links to colleges and universities around the world. Other categories covered include graduate schools, college, chat, free stuff, financial aid, test preparation student travel, job searching study abroad.

***American Colleges & Universities [http:// globalcomputing.com/university.htm](http://globalcomputing.com/university.htm)**

The site has link to the home pages of most American colleges and universities, in alphabetical order.

***American Universities <http://www.class.ufl.edu/CLAS/american-universities.html>**

Here are links to the home page for US colleges, listed alphabetically

***American Council on Education [http:// www.ACENET.edu](http://www.ACENET.edu)**

This site of the American Council on Education provides a variety of information on educational issues.

***College and University Admissions – [http:// colleg-eapps.about.com](http://colleg-eapps.about.com)**

Information on essays, financial aid, testing, interview and study abroad

***College Advice- [http:// www.collegeadviceUSA.com](http://www.collegeadviceUSA.com)**

This site features advice by Joyce Slayton Mitchell, author of the Winning the Heart of the College Admissions Dean, Students parents, counselor, can email questions.

***College Board- [http:// www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)**

This web site, maintained by the College Board and the Educational Testing Service, has information for students, parents, counselor, faculty. Resources include college selection , admission, financial aid, and the SAT (SAT prep & registration) See also www.ets.org

***College Confidential- [http:// www.collegeconfidential.com](http://www.collegeconfidential.com)**

Here you can find a wealth of information on such topics as college selection, college admissions , discussion forums , college life, financial aid.

***College is Possible – [http:// www.collegeispossible.org](http://www.collegeispossible.org)**

This website of the American Council on Education includes preparing for college, choosing colleges, and paying for college.

***College Xpress- [http:// www.collegexpress.com](http://www.collegexpress.com)**

This site is divided into college search, scholarship search, and loan search sections.

***College & University Homepage – <http://www.universities.com>**

This site focuses on distance learning , but also has some information on campuses, programs, and searching for college.

***College.Com –<http://www.colleges.com>**

This site has information on college admissions, financial aid, careers, travel and SAT's

***Common Applications - [http://www. commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)**

This site allows you to download an electronic Common Application that you can use to apply to any of the 200 + colleges that use the common applications.

***Educational On- Line – [http:// www.edonline.com](http://www.edonline.com)**

This website contains information on careers, college selection, and financial aid , plus a listing of Historically Black Colleges and Universities and links to African-American related sites.

***Fishnet /The college Guide –<http://www.mycolleg-guide.org>**

The college guide includes links to a search mechanism admissions questions and answer, financial aid information common application, and articles about college.

***GoCollege –<http://www.gocollege.com>**

The basic site has sections on finding colleges, applying, financial aid ,distance learning and testing.

***America's Best Colleges –<http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/eduhome.htm>**

The magazine's website features their annual ranking colleges. There are also college profiles, articles and pictures as well as information on admissions, financial aid, careers, graduate schools. Comparison charts allow user to compare up to four colleges, based 34 factors.

***Peterson's The College Channel –[http:// www.petersons.com/ugrad](http://www.petersons.com/ugrad)**

Peterson's website provides information on subjects covered by Peterson's guidebook: undergraduate colleges, testing aids, essay writing, financial aid, summer programs, art colleges, essay college prep, study abroad, careers, as well as providing colleges search capability.

***Prepare Your Child for College- <http://www.ed.gov>**

This U.S. Dept of Education web site has information on finding and paying for college, financial aid, international education. See also www.ed.gov/thinkcollege for general information.

***XAP.com-<http://www.xap.com>**

This Xap company site provides information on college selection and application, career planning, campus tours, testing career planning and financial aid.

College Information on the Internet, continued

***College Net-<http://www.collegenet.com>**

This website focuses on links to information about searching for colleges, applying and financial aid. There is a database of schools to search using several variables, and students can apply online more than 500 colleges

***College View – <http://www.collegeview.com>**

College View is a multimedia college search program with information on 3,800 two and four years institution. Searches of the database are supported, college starts are provided and there is information about financial aid, virtual tours and applying.

***College Choice Walking Tour- <http://www.collegiat-echoice.com>**

This site lists more than 350 videos, available for \$15 each, made by independent college advisors taking tours and asking question at various campuses. The videos are designed to be informal , honest and cheaper than on campus visits. There is also information on visiting essay writing, SAT's applying, etc

***Campus Tours-<http://www.campustours.com>**

In addition to providing virtual campus tours, College Tours also provides live web came, campus maps, link to various sites for students and colleges videos.

***Community College-[http:// www.meli.dist.maricopa.edu/cc/index.html](http://www.meli.dist.maricopa.edu/cc/index.html)**

You can search this index of community college web site alphabetically, geographically or by key words .

***Freeality Internet Search-<http://www.freeality.com/colleges.htm>**

Included are links to many college and financial aid sites.

***Historically Black College & Universities –<http://www.sdbo.com>**

A list of HBCU's (historically black colleges and universities) is only a part of the San Diego Black Pages, which has link to each of the institutions and to may other resources of African American students.

***AJCUnet-<http://www.ajcunet.edu>**

This website provides information and links to the 28 memebers of the U.S Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universitie

***Ivy Leage-<http://www.miskatonic.net/university/ivy.html>**

Provides links to Ivy League Colleges and universities

***National Association of Colleges Admissions Counselors <http://www.nacac.com/faris.html>**

This is the site for high school college counselors and college admission personnel. Included here are list of college fair which NACAC sponsors around the country.

National Center of Educational Service(NCES)

Site provides statstic on enrollment, cost, graduation rates, campus security accreditation and more

***Yahoo! College Search-<http://gerutures.yahoo.com/college/search.html>**

General information about colleges and search process

***Your Virtual Interview –[http:// www.bergens.org/AAST/Projects/CollegePrep/interview.html](http://www.bergens.org/AAST/Projects/CollegePrep/interview.html)**

This site gives sample questions and answer to help you prepare for college interviews

Standardized Test

***ACT assessment –<http://www.act.org>**

***SATI and II , PSAT, AP-<http://www.collegeboard.com>**

***TOEFL- [http:// www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org)**

The ACT, SAT and TOEFL sites provide, dates, costs, location, registration information and sample questions.

***Kaplan-[http:// www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com)**

Kaplan's web site offer advice on the admissions process, choosing close school's, the application, financial aid, and continuing education, as well as their speciality: test preparation

***Princeton Review-<http://www.review.com>**

The Princeton Review's site enable you to conduct college searches, as well as getting information on applying, financial aid, careers, graduate school, and test preparation book and courses.

***Admissions tests.org -<http://www.memex-press.com/cc>**

This test preparation site provides information on textbooks, computers, financial aid and other resources. College Life

***AAUP –<http://www.aaup.org/Com-a/Censure.htm>**

This site list colleges censured by the AAUP (America Association of University Professor) for having unsatisfactory protections in place to safeguard academic freedom and tenure

***CampusSafety.Org –<http://campussafety.org>**

Information on security on American college campuses

***College Bound-<http://www.collegebound.net>**

College Bound magazine's site has options pertinent to college selection, admissions, scholarships, sports and college life.

***College finances-<http://www.guidestar.org>**

This site provides financial snapshots of many colleges and universities

***Crime statistics-<http://ope.ed.gov/security>**

This site lists crimes reported at more than 6000 colleges

***Study Abroad Directory –<http://www.studyabroad.com>**

This site provides links to study abroad programs in many countries, for a year, semester, intercession or summer.

***Real world University-<http://www.rwuniversity.com>**

This site provides a variety of information for college students

Internet Resources for International Students Planning to Study in the US

- The American Association of Intensive English Programs (AAIEP)-<http://www.aaiep.org>. This web site will help you with choosing an English language or orientation program if you need to improve your English speaking skills before starting your studies at an American college.

- EduPASS – <http://www.edpass.org>

This complete guide to studying in the US provides information on just about every subject that will concern you, including admissions, learning English, getting a visa, paying for college, traveling to the US, cultural differences and more.

- ESL Help Center –<http://www.eslcafe.com>

If you need help with English, this is the site to come to. You can ask questions of actual ESL teachers 24 hours a day. This resource is particularly useful for getting help with vocabulary, grammar, idioms, slang and the TOEFL

- Study in the USA- <http://www.studyusa.com>

This guide provides information on featured American colleges and universities tailored especially to international students and written in a variety of languages. You can also choose an intensive English program or contact various admissions offices through this site, ask questions about study in the US, use the search mechanism and find a resources guide on visa, applying, etc. Information is given in several languages.

- International education Financial Aid-<http://www.iefaf.org>

Although international students are not eligible for any US financial aid, this site provides a database of grants, scholarship and loan programs available to foreign students for study in the US. There are links to ESL and travel information.

A few words about early application

Many colleges have programs through which students can apply to college early in the senior year and find out whether or not they are admitted earlier than the traditional notification dates. (See Glossary on the following page for definitions of early action versus early decision programs.)

Note that not all colleges have early programs, some colleges are only early action or only early decision, and some colleges have two early programs, one of which is later in the senior year.

Check the information you get from the colleges where you are applying, or check their web sites to be sure you understand which programs each college has.

Some Advantages of applying ED/EA

- A well-qualified student may be more likely to get in, especially since you are demonstrating interest in the college. (This is more true of early decision than of early action.) It is also important to note that a reach college is a reach any time you apply. Any benefit of applying early is not likely to occur in schools where you are a likely prospect.

- Students who apply and are accepted are finished with the college process much earlier in the senior year.

- Students who are deferred or rejected receive that feedback early enough to fine-tune their applications and list of colleges.

Some Disadvantages of applying ED/EA

- Students applying early will have to rely on junior year teachers, course work, and testing; however, colleges may want to see senior year work.

- Early Decision is binding; many students change their minds during the courses of the senior year.

- Students applying for financial aid lose the opportunity to compare financial aid packages. (Although a college will release a student from a binding ED contract for financial reasons, you must say yes or no to the package without seeing what you might have gotten from another college and without being able to tell your first choice college that you have received more aid from another school.)

If you can say “I know I want to apply early decision, but I don’t know where,” you are not ready to apply early.

GLOSSARY

The following is a list of terms and abbreviations commonly connected with college applications, although some terms may vary from college to college. Check specific college catalogs or websites for more detailed information.

Advanced Placement Program (AP)

A College Board program that provides high schools with course description and examinations in college subjects. High schools implement the courses and administer the exam to interested students who may then be eligible for advanced placement, college credit, or both on the basis of satisfactory grades.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA)

College subscribing to this agreement do not require applicants they admit to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1st. The purpose of the agreement is to give applicants time to hear from all the colleges to which they applied before having to commit to any one.

Deferred Admission

The practice of permitting students to postpone enrollment for a year after being accepted at a college.

Early Action (EA)

Under an Early Action program you apply early and are notified in about a month whether you have been accepted, the decision is not binding. You may apply to other schools and decide by May 1st where to enroll.

Early Decision (ED)

Early Decision plans are an option for application who are sure of the admitted students must withdraw application submitted to other colleges. College they want to attend and are likely to be accepted by that college. ED applicants are notified of the college decisions much earlier than usual, offer by December of the senior year.

An early decision application is a commitment on the part of the student to attend that college. An admitted students must withdraw application submitted to other colleges.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The IB Diploma Programme is a comprehensive and challenging pre-university course that demands the best from both motivated students and teachers. This sophisticated two-year curriculum covers a wide range of academic subjects and has stood the test of time for over half a million students in 119 countries since 1968. IB Diploma Programme graduates are welcomed by the world's leading universities.

Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT)

A shorter version of the SAT administered by high schools in October. The PSAT/NMSQT gives students a chance to practice the SAT and serves as a qualifying test for scholarships awarded by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Rolling Admissions

An admissions procedure whereby the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as the application, school record and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT)

The College Boards test of verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities. Given at test center at certain dates throughout the year, SAT's are required by most colleges and sponsors of financial aid programs.

SAT II (Achievement Tests)

College Board test in specific subjects that are used by colleges not only to help with decision about admissions, but also in course placement. The Writing SAT II test is often recommended if not required.

Student Search Service

A college board program designed to provide students with a chance to learn about college with programs and characteristics they want and to help colleges identify potential applicants by supplying participating colleges with names of students who have the academic and personal characteristics the college specifies. Student information is gathered through the Student Descriptive Questionnaire and the biographical section of the PSAT/NMSQT.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOFEL)

This test helps international students demonstrate whether their English language proficiency is at the level required for study in US colleges and universities. Most colleges require international applicants to take the test, and they set minimum scores which students must meet in order to be considered.

FINANCIAL AID

The cost of the college education can be staggering, and the expenses are certainly overwhelming to most families. For many students, financial aid will be necessary if they are to pursue a college education. Although it would be impossible to review all the sources of state, Federal, and private aid here, some basic facts about financial aid are summarized below. Note that changes are constantly being made, and information that was pertinent a few years ago may not be now.

Financial aid is awarded on the basis of financial need, as determined by the College Scholarship Service (CSS) and the college itself.

You may have several forms to complete. Everyone applying for aid must complete the Free Application for Federal Students Aid (FAFSA), which is necessary to receive any federal government aid. Some colleges also require that the "Profile" forms be completed; they use the information on these forms to dispense their own institutional aid. Forms are available at MH-MA in December and must be completed by the date required by the colleges to which you are applying. Many colleges also have their own applications for aid which you submit directly to the college, and some states have forms. No aid will be granted unless all required forms are complete and submitted on time.

It is especially important to submit aid forms on time because colleges have finite amounts of money. If you are late, they may not have funds for you, no matter how deserving you are

The best sources of information on financial aid are the Financial Aid offices at the colleges to which you are applying. Because every school's resources and policies regarding aid are different, you should go straight to the source for accurate and complete information on scholarship, loans, grants, work study opportunities, and alternative payment plans. Don't hesitate to ask the college for an explanation of their financial aid policies. You have every right to honest, accurate information.

Financial aid packages usually consists of grants loans and work study. These packages will vary according to the college and its individual resources.

Ideally, applying for financial aid should not affect your chances for admission. However, recent economic conditions and budgetary constraints have forced many colleges to alter their financial aid policies, and to consider financial need in making some admission decisions. If you intend to apply for financial aid, it is a good idea to schedule a meeting with a Financial Aid officer in addition to your college interview so that you can find out more about the college's financial aid policies and ask any specific questions pertaining to your personal financial aid circumstances.

Information on Federal Loan programs, such as Guaranteed Students Loans (Stafford Loans) or Parent Loans of Undergraduate Students (PLUS) is available, at your local bank, savings and loan or credit union, at many libraries and on the Internet.

Some colleges offer special merit or academic scholarships awarded on the basis of outstanding academic scholarship or a particular talent, rather than on need. Make sure you understand the terms of a merit scholarship before accepting one.

Do not assume that you will not qualify for aid. Every family's situation is unique, and it is hard to predict, what if any aid you qualify for. If the cost of a college would prevent you from enrolling there, because of the financial hardship it would place on your family, or because of your family's lack of resources, then you should apply for aid.

**Question to ask about your Aid package:

- Are there strings attached? (maintaining a certain GPA, taking a minimum number of credits)
- Could my aid package change after the first year?
- Is the aid package based on all costs — including travel, books, or only billed expenses (tuition, room, board, fees)
- How much will I be expected to borrow?
- What happens if my family's financial circumstances change?
- If I win a scholarship from an outside organization, will that change my aid award?
- My parents need to spread payments for college out over a longer period of time. How can they do that?
- I've been given a job in my aid package. How do I get a job on campus, and how many hours will I need to work?
- Are there scholarships and loans programs at your school that I may qualify for?
- Do you have the answer to such questions in a more detailed written form?

FINANCIAL AID TERMINOLOGY

College Scholarship Services (CSS)
A service of the College Board which assists colleges, the Federal government, state scholarship programs, and other institutions in distributing students financial aid funds equitably. By measuring a family's financial resources and analyzing its ability to contribute to meeting college costs, CSS offers a standardized method to determine need.

Family Financial Statement (FFS)
A Financial information collection document of the American College Testing Programs Financial Aid services used by parents of the dependent students or independent students to supply information about their income, assets, expenses and liabilities. The ACT program (p.20) uses this information to estimate how much a family is able to contribute to student college expenses.

Free Application for Federal Students Aid (FAFSA)
The FAFSA is the application required to apply for Federal

Pell grants, Federal Stafford loans, and Federal campus based programs (work-study, loans, grants). In some states and at some colleges it may also be sufficient to apply for state and institutional aid.

Grants-Grants or scholarships are outright gifts that need to be repaid. Many colleges award a combination of Federal grants, such as Pell Grants or Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (SEOG), state grants and college grants.

Loans-Loans are money to be repaid often with a lower interest rate. The Stafford loan is the federal loan program for students, who may also qualify for Perkins loans. Parents may qualify for PLUS loans, through the Federal Family Education Loan Programs (FFELP) or Federal Direct Students Loan Program. Families can also apply for private loans, available from most states', colleges, banks and organizations such as the College Board and the Education Resources Institute (TERI).

Profile-The financial Aid Profile Services (PROFILE) is offered by CSS and is required by some colleges, universities and scholarship programs in order to award their private funds. Applying for aid with the Profile Services is a two-step process. First you complete a one-page registration form and mail it to CSS. Second, you complete a more detailed, customized form which CSS will send you. CSS processes that form and send the information to the college you have listed on your Registration form. There is a charge for the profile services. Those colleges which require the Profile are listed on the Profile Registration form, or you can find out from the college itself.

Work Study
Part time jobs on campus are part of many students' financial aid packages (usually along with grants and loans). Through the College Work Study Program, students receive jobs on campus or in nonprofit agencies, generally at the minimum wage.

SOME MYTHS REGARDING FINANCIAL AID

- "My parents can't afford to help me, so I can't go to college." Many students receive student aid. To assume aid is not available is to close a door to educational opportunities unnecessarily.
- "If you own a home, you cannot get financial aid." Home equity may not be considered at all; even if it is, the existence of home equity rarely excludes a student from receiving aid.
- "A computer makes the financial aid decision." While computers assist aid personnel, decisions are made by people who try to understand as much as possible about each individual situation.
- "First year students should not work." Research has shown that students who work part-time do better academically than those who don't, and they are more likely to stay in college.
- "I shouldn't apply to an expensive school because my family can't afford the cost." The most expensive colleges often have the most aid. Students should apply to colleges that meet their academic needs, apply for aid, and then decide if the amount of aid offered makes that college affordable.
- "Loans are not financial aid." Most student loans are subsidized, so that students are not charged interest while they are in college, and even after graduation, interest rates are lower than those of other consumer loans.
- "I need high grades to get financial aid." Most aid is awarded on the basis of financial need. Grades are most important in college admission decisions, but at many colleges admitted students with demonstrated need receive aid.
- "Financial aid is not available to middle-income families." Not necessarily. A substantial amount of aid is available. Some middle income families demonstrate high levels of need, while others don't. Each family is different; apply and see what happens.
- "Lots of scholarship money goes unawarded because people don't apply." Colleges maximize the use of their resources, and many private scholarship funds are deluged with applications. But you should still apply, and apply early.

Financial Aid: Begin by Getting Organized

Start keeping record of the following:

- The college to which you are applying
- Forms that need to be completed
- Dates these forms are due
- Who (students, parents, other) is going to complete them
- Where forms should be mailed
- Communication from the colleges
- College policies and financing options

Keep copies of all forms.

Start a list of questions.

Keep track of deadline and priority dates so you don't risk losing out on needed funds because you missed a deadline.

Be aware that while colleges must ask for personal financial information, this information will be held in strict confidence. Failure to answer questions thoroughly and honestly will jeopardize receiving funds.

FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET

The FAFSA and PROFILE (forms you complete to get money for college) both have sources on the Web that can help you to fill out the forms and answer questions .

PROFILE [http:// www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

FAFSA [http:// www.fafasa.ed.gov](http://www.fafasa.ed.gov)

School codes are available at <http://www.ed.gov>

- Comprehensive site reputed to be great source for all kind of financial aid information:

Financial Aid information Page: <http://www.finaid.org>

Also see <http://www.ed.gov/finaid.html>

More helpful sites

Yahoo Financial Aid Search (link to many further sites)	http://www.yahoo.com/education/financial_aid/
Government Student Financial Assistance	http://www.studentaid.ed.gov
National Assn.Student Financial Aid Administrator	http://www.nasfaa.org
Financial Aid.com(scholarship, loans, talk with pros)	http://www.FinancialAid.com
National Financial Service Administration	http://www.nfsn.com/Educatio.htm
Scholarship Search and Financial Aid Resource	http://www.brokescholar.com
US News Financial Aid Information	http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/dollars/dshome.htm
Fast WEB Scholarship Sources	http://www.fastweb.com
MOLIS(Minority On-Line Inform Service)	http://www.molis.com
Scholarship, loans, financing college	http://www.scholaraid.com
Scholarship Resources Network	http://www.srnexpress.com
FreSch!	http://www.freschinfo.com
Financial Aid calculation and general info	
http://collegeboard.org – (search for financial aid calculators, for links to calculate family contribution, saving, students loans, debts and repayments)	

Loans:

<http://www.sallimae.com>

(this site also provides information about paying for college: cost , financial aid eligibility, the FAFSA, Federal loan Program , finding loan programs , and a tutorial on money management)

[http:// www.estudentloan.com](http://www.estudentloan.com) (compare loans, search scholarship, learn about aid)

<http://www.teri.org> (The Education Resource Ints.)

<http://www.amsa.com> (American Student Assistance Organization)

<http://www.nelliernae.org>

TCID:

YEAR-OFF PROGRAMS

“Year off” or “gap year” programs are designed for high school graduates taking time off before college to recharge, work, travel, study or participate in internship, community service, or even academic programs in new settings. The idea is to give students more time to transition than summer vacation provides and to have a meaningful experience during this year of discovery. Taking the year off and better adjusted when starting college after a year off. Students may want to apply to colleges and then defer their enrollment. Most colleges are open to deferment, especially when the student is able to present a well-planned and thought-out interim-year program. Following are some organizations with year off opportunities. In addition to specific organizations, there are professionals whose job is to guide students through a planned year of varied activities.

- AFS Intercultural Programs provide intercultural learning opportunities abroad to promote a more just and peaceful world through international student exchange www.afs.org
- Americorps participants address community need in education, public safety, human services and the environment. They receive a stipend health insurance and a financial award for further education www.americorps.org
- AFSC is committed to social justice, peace and service; it maintains an extensive web-based listing of volunteer, internship and job opportunities www.afsc.org
- Audubon Expedition Institute is a traveling graduate and undergraduate school encouraging inspired compassionate environmental leaders and activists www.getothebus.org
- Association of Voluntary Service Organization (AVSO) headquartered in Brussels, Belgium emphasizes voluntary service in Europe and other parts of the world. www.avso.org
- The Center for Interim Programs provides structured alternatives to formal education by matching clients interests with over 2,500 internship, volunteer positions and cultural study programs worldwide www.interimprograms.com
- City Year an AmeriCorps program, is a national service organization for youth to participate in a year of full-time community service, leadership development and civic engagement in cities around the country www.cityyear.org
- Dynamy Internship Year is a 1 year internship program based in Worcester, MA, for students between high school and college www.dynamy.org
- The Experiment in International Living promotes intercultural learning through such cultural immersion programs as home stays, educational group travel, study abroad and language training au pair www.experiment.org
- Global Quest International Semester Programs includes 12 week semester programs in Thailand and other developing countries for students between high school and college www.gquest.org
- Global Programs offer international opportunities to study and teach abroad www.globalprograms.com
- Go Abroad provides study abroad language school internship and international volunteer positions. www.goabroad.com
- Inst. For Village Studies provides learning exploration service experience in developing nations www.villagestudies.org
- Interlocken has half and full year programs combining travel, volunteer, internship opportunities www.interlocken.org
- Interping, Inc is a year off program of internship, travel and work run by Jake Horne at Interpoints@snet.net
- National Outdoors Leadership school (NOLS) offers wilderness outdoor skill and leadership courses in 8 countries. The web site includes course information, minimum impact techniques, wilderness first aid and research. www.noals.edu
- Outward Bound programs offer adventure/ outdoors education programs in the US, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean www.OutwardBound.org
- School for Field Studies, Environmental Field Studies Abroad provides information on environmental field studies programs in Australia, Canada, Kenya, Costa Rica, Mexico and the British West Indies www.fieldstudies.org
- Seam Master Programs has 40 or 80 days credit earning semester programs of academics, seamanship and personal growth for high school graduates and college students. www.semester.com
- Student Conservation Association (SCA) offer volunteer, internship and job opportunities in the outdoors, with environmental and conservation issues. Program opportunities last a month, a season or upto a year www.sca-inc.org
- Study Abroad.com has online listing for hundred of language and study abroad programs world wide, as well as financial aid information www.studyabroad.com
- Study Overseas.com has advice and info on overseas programs
- Taking Time Off is a book advocating taking time off before or during college. The taking Time off.com web site has information on job internship language schools, travel adventure programs and volunteer opportunities
- Time Out Associates service works with high school graduates college students and college graduates to plan summer semester of fully year experience, timeoutassociates.com
- Volunteer for Peace (VFP) is an international service organization with a searchable database of short term intercultural service adventures in 70 countries www.vfp.org
- Where There Be Dragons offer students learning opportunities through small group expedition to 8 Asian and 3 Latin American countries. [WhereThereBe Dragons.com](http://WhereThereBeDragons.com)
- Youth for Understanding International Exchange is a nonprofit educational organization offering opportunities for young people to spend a summer, semester or year with a host family in another culture www.yfu.org

TCID: