



College Counseling

Suggested Timeline for the College Process

Grade 9

- Work hard in classes, become involved in extracurricular activities, discover areas of personal interest
- Keep in mind that freshman year grades DO matter to colleges, and they ARE used in the calculation of the GPA
- Students & Parents may attend the "College Counseling Preview Night" for freshmen and sophomores at Academy (March)
- Possibly take the SAT Subject Test if enrolled in Honors Algebra 2 & Precalculus (early June)
- A small handful of students enrolled in Advanced Biology may opt to take the SAT Subject Test when this is a primary academic interest and/or area of strength (early June)

Grade 10

- PSAT at Columbus Academy (mid-October); review your score report in mid-December
- Continue to work hard in all of your classes and be involved in activities, arts, athletics
- Understanding Financial Aid for College – evening program for parents at Academy or Columbus School for Girls (October)
- Students and Parents attend the "College Counseling Preview Night" at Academy (March)
- Attend the NACAC Columbus College Fair at the Greater Columbus Convention Center (April)
- Academic Planning Conferences for students and parents with College Counselors and Head of Upper School (April)
- Take AP exams, if applicable (May)
- Sign-up for campus college visit day-trip(s) with the College Counseling Office (late May/early June)
- Possibly take the SAT Subject Test if enrolled in Honors Algebra 2 & Precalculus or Advanced Precalculus (early June)
- In rare cases, students enrolled in Advanced Chemistry may opt to take the SAT Subject Test when this is a primary academic interest and/or an area of strength (early June)
- Take a SAT/ACT prep course or prepare on your own via on-line options (summer between Grade 10 and Grade 11)
 - Do not take your first SAT until **next** fall or winter at the very earliest

Grade 11

- College Counseling Junior Class Meetings (first quarter)
- Meet with college representatives visiting Academy during your free periods (Sept. through Nov.)
 - List available with your Naviance password, in the Viking Voice, and posted on College Counseling doors
- Attend the Columbus Suburban College Fair at Otterbein University (September)
- PSAT at Academy (October) – this is the one that "counts" for National Merit selection/honors
- Understanding Financial Aid for College – evening program for parents at Academy or Columbus School for Girls (October)
- SAT or ACT in December or January for the first time, take again in March, April, or May, take SAT Subject Tests in June
- Students and Parents attend "Grade 11 College Night" at Academy (November)
- College Counseling Class (third quarter) and regular meetings with your college counselor
 - Class topics include the basics of the college search process, standardized testing, creating a resume, practice college interviews, writing the college essay, do's and don'ts of college applications, financial aid, requesting teacher recommendations, and more
 - Regular meetings with your college counselor will address a range of topics including individual planning process, creating a student's college list, athletic recruiting, financial aid, and suggestions and ideas for summer activities
- Schedule campus tours (end of Feb) and then visit college campuses over spring break
- Attend the NACAC Columbus College Fair (April)
- Take AP Exams (May)
- Summer: Write your college essay and continue to visit college campuses (June and July)
- Summer: Attend Academy's Common Application Workshops before school begins (early-mid August)

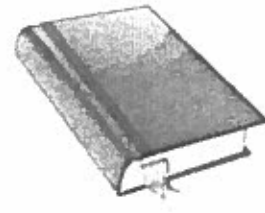
Grade 12

- Meet with college representatives at Academy (Sept. through Nov.)
- College Counseling Senior Class Meetings (first quarter). Work on applications and getting necessary materials to colleges.
- **PARENTS:** Attend Senior Parent College Night at Academy (late August)
- Continue to meet with your college counselor as you prepare your college applications and supplemental materials
- Take the ACT in September and/or the SAT in October
- Understanding Financial Aid for College – evening program for parents at Academy or Columbus School for Girls (October)
- **PARENTS:** file financial aid paperwork via FAFSA and CSS Profile (Oct/Nov. for EA/ED apps, January for Regular apps)
- Choose a college or university by May 1st



Books and Periodicals

Students and Parents are encouraged
to explore these resources



Books:

Fiske Guide to Colleges, Edward Fiske

Colleges That Change Lives, by Loren Pope

College Unranked, Lloyd Thacker

Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges, Frederick E. Rugg

The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College, Jacques Steinberg

Harvard Schmarvard, Jay Mathews

The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values, Bowen & Schulman

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges

Princeton Review's The Best 379 Colleges

The Insider's Guide to the Colleges, Yale Daily News Staff

I'm Going to College, Not You!

A collection of essays edited by Jennifer Delahunty, Dean of Admissions, Kenyon College
Creative Colleges: A Guide for Student Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians and Writers, Elaina Loveland

Periodicals - with good "college admission" sections or education writers:

Inside Higher Ed (author Scott Jaschik is recommended)

The Chronicle of Higher Education (author Eric Hoover is recommended)

The Atlantic Monthly

The New York Times - "The Choice" Blog is archived at
<http://thechoice.blogs.nytimes.com>

The Washington Post (author Jay Mathews is recommended)

US News & World Report (however, be cautious of those rankings!)



Who to follow on Facebook and Twitter?

NACAC, Eric Hoover, John Lawlor, CommonApp, College Board, ACT, Chronicle, DeanJ@UVA Admissions, ACCIS

Plus... various colleges and universities, some athletic conferences, The NCAA

Follow Columbus Academy College Counseling @Vikings2College



Columbus Academy

School Profile 2017-2018

In Quest of the Best

Founded in 1911 as an early pioneer in the country day school model, Columbus Academy is a coeducational day school enrolling 1079 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12. Academy offers a challenging liberal arts, college preparatory program. Located on a 231-acre campus nine miles northeast of Columbus, the school draws a diverse student body of 396 students in grades 9 through 12 from a twenty-five-mile radius in central Ohio. Approximately 23% of the student body receives financial assistance to help with the cost of tuition. Columbus Academy is fully accredited by the Independent School Association of the Central States (ISACS), the Ohio Department of Education, and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS). Our "In Quest of the Best" motto emphasizes developing the entire individual -- intellectually, socially, ethically, artistically and physically.

CLASS OF 2018 - GPA Distribution

95 Total Students*

4.47 - 4.20	14	3.74 - 3.60	16
4.19 - 3.90	20	3.59 - 3.00	18
3.89 - 3.75	20	< 3.00	6

*1 new student not included in GPA Distribution

HONORS COURSES/AP PREPARATION

Columbus Academy offers Advanced Placement Examination preparation in all Honors and many Advanced courses. However, the designation "AP" is not included on the transcript for those respective courses. For a complete list of Course Offerings, please see the US Course Description Guide at: www.columbusacademy.org/Page/Academics/Upper-School

GLOBAL ONLINE ACADEMY (GOA)

Columbus Academy is a member of Global Online Academy (GOA), a consortium of the world's leading independent schools whose mission is to translate into online classrooms the intellectually challenging programs and excellent teaching that are hallmarks of its member schools. For more information, please see www.globalonlineacademy.org.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Minimum Credits)

English	4 credits	Health	.5 credit
Mathematics (through Algebra 2)	3 credits	Ethics and Character	.5 credit
Science	3 credits	Additional Requirements:	
Fine Arts, Music, Performing Arts	1 credit	Public Speaking (Junior Speech)	.25 credits
Language - Same language	3 credits	Community Service	50 hours
(OR 2 of 2 languages)	(4 credits)	Senior Project (May of Gr. 12)	75 hours
History	3 credits		
Physical Education	3 semesters		

GRADING POLICY & CURRICULUM

Columbus Academy does not rank its students. Cumulative GPAs are calculated using all graded courses and only those grades earned at Academy. Our traditional grading scale allows for a 10-point differential within each letter grade.

Standard college-preparatory courses are unweighted. Ten percent additional weight is added to grades in "Advanced" courses, and fifteen percent additional weight to grades in "Honors" courses.

Advanced courses typically are accelerated versions of the college-preparatory courses. Honors courses are those in which the syllabus is designed predominantly to prepare students for a college-level, external examination. Courses that cover two years' worth of material in one year are also included. Prerequisite criteria must be met for entry to Advanced and Honors courses.

Weighted grade point averages (WGPA) are reported on transcripts and documents sent to colleges and scholarship agencies. The recommended academic schedule is five core academic classes plus electives.

Students are graded on the following scale:

A+	97-100
A	93-96
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62

Below 60 is not a passing mark.

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CLASS OF 2017 COLLEGE ENROLLMENTS & ACCEPTANCES

Typically 100% of Columbus Academy graduates enroll at four-year colleges and universities. Names in *bold italics* indicate colleges to which graduates of the Class of 2017 matriculated.

<i>Agnes Scott College</i>	Harvey Mudd College	<i>University of Richmond</i>
University of Akron	Heidelberg University	<i>Roanoke College</i>
Albion College	High Point University	University of Rochester
<i>Allegheny College</i>	Hiram College	Rollins College
Alma College	Howard University	Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
<i>American University</i>	Univ. of IL., Urbana-Champ.	Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick
<i>Amherst College</i>	<i>Indiana Univ., Bloomington</i>	Saint Louis University
Arizona State University	James Madison University	Saint Mary's College
The University of Arizona	John Carroll University	San Diego State University
Auburn University	<i>Johns Hopkins University</i>	University of San Diego
Ball State University	University of Kansas	University of San Francisco
Baylor University	Kent State University	<i>Santa Clara University</i>
<i>Belmont University</i>	University of Kentucky	Sewanee: The Univ. of the S.
Boston College	Kenyon College	<i>University of South Carolina</i>
Boston University	Lake Forest College	<i>University of Southern Calif.</i>
Bowling Green State Univ.	Lehigh University	Southern Methodist Univ.
<i>Brandeis University</i>	Lewis & Clark College	Spelman College
<i>Brown University</i>	Lipscomb University	St. John's University, Queens
<i>Bucknell University</i>	<i>Loyola Marymount University</i>	<i>Stanford University</i>
Butler University	Loyola University Chicago	<i>Stetson University</i>
<i>University of Calif., Berkeley</i>	Lycoming College	<i>Stevens Institute of Tech.</i>
University of Calif., Irvine	<i>Lynchburg College</i>	SUNY College at Geneseo
<i>University of Calif., LA</i>	Marietta College	<i>Swarthmore College</i>
Canisius College	University of Maryland	Sweet Briar College
Carleton College	University of Massachusetts	<i>Syracuse University</i>
<i>Carnegie Mellon University</i>	Mercyhurst University	The University of Tampa
<i>Case Western Reserve Univ.</i>	<i>Miami University, Oxford</i>	University of Tennessee
<i>The Catholic Univ. of America</i>	<i>University of Miami</i>	Texas Christian University
Chapman University	<i>Michigan State University</i>	<i>Texas Wesleyan University</i>
College of Charleston	University of Michigan	The Univ. of Texas, Austin
<i>University of Chicago</i>	University of Minnesota	<i>The Ohio State University</i>
<i>University of Cincinnati</i>	University of Mississippi	<i>The Ohio State Univ., Newark</i>
City University of NY (CUNY)	<i>Nazareth College</i>	University of Toronto
Clemson University	<i>New York University</i>	Transylvania University
<i>University of Colorado, Bldr.</i>	University of NC, Chapel Hill	<i>Tufts University</i>
Colorado College	University of NC, Wilmington	Tulane University
Colorado State University	North Carolina State Univ.	<i>Ursinus College</i>
University of Connecticut	<i>Northeastern University</i>	Vanderbilt University
<i>Cornell University</i>	<i>Northwestern University</i>	Villanova University
<i>Dartmouth College</i>	<i>University of Notre Dame</i>	<i>Virginia Tech</i>
<i>Davidson College</i>	Oglethorpe University	<i>University of Virginia</i>
University of Dayton	<i>Ohio University</i>	Wake Forest University
<i>Denison University</i>	Ohio Wesleyan University	Washington and Lee Univ.
<i>University of Denver</i>	Oregon State University	<i>Washington Univ., St. Louis</i>
DePauw University	University of Oregon	University of Washington
Drexel University	Pace University, NYC	Wellesley College
University of Dubuque	Pennsylvania State University	Wells College
Duke University	<i>University of Pennsylvania</i>	West Virginia University
Eckerd College	University of Pittsburgh	Whittier College
<i>Elon University</i>	<i>Princeton University</i>	College of William and Mary
Emory University	Providence College	University of WI, Madison
Fordham University	University of Puget Sound	Wittenberg University
Furman University	Purdue University	Wofford College
The George Washington Univ.	University of Redlands	The College of Wooster
<i>Georgetown University</i>	<i>Reed College</i>	<i>Xavier University</i>
Georgia Institute of Tech.	University of Rhode Island	<i>Yale University</i>
Gonzaga University	Rhodes College	Youngstown State University
<i>Harvard University</i>	<i>Rice University</i>	

CLASS OF 2017 STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

ACT Averages	Mid 50%	Mean
Composite	28-33	31
Composite*	30-35	31.5
*taken before Oct 2015		
SAT Reasoning	Mid 50%	Mean
EBRW	670-730	710
Mathematics	680-760	700
SAT 2400	1970-2260	2055
SAT Subject Tests	Mid 50%	Mean
Biology-Ecology	620-720	678
Biology-Molecular	690-740	705
Chemistry	710-740	734
English Literature	490-720	658
Math Level II	660-800	737
Physics	700-800	740
U.S. History	670-740	692
World History	700-780	737

2017 AP EXAMINATION RESULTS

Total Exams	420
Students Taking Exams	190
Number of AP Scholars	105
Scores of 3 or above	381 (91%)
Scores of 4 or above	277 (66%)
Students typically take AP exams in the following subject areas:	
Biology	
Calculus AB and Calculus BC	
Chemistry and Environmental Science	
Chinese and Spanish Language & Culture	
Computer Science	
English Lang & Comp and Lit & Comp	
European, U.S., and World History	
Latin	
Macro and Micro Economics	
Physics I and Physic C: E&M and Mechanics	
Psychology	
Statistics	
U.S. Government & Politics	

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP RESULTS

From our Class of 2017, 28 students (30%) were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation: 14 Commended Students and 14 Semifinalists, seven of whom advanced to become National Merit Scholars.

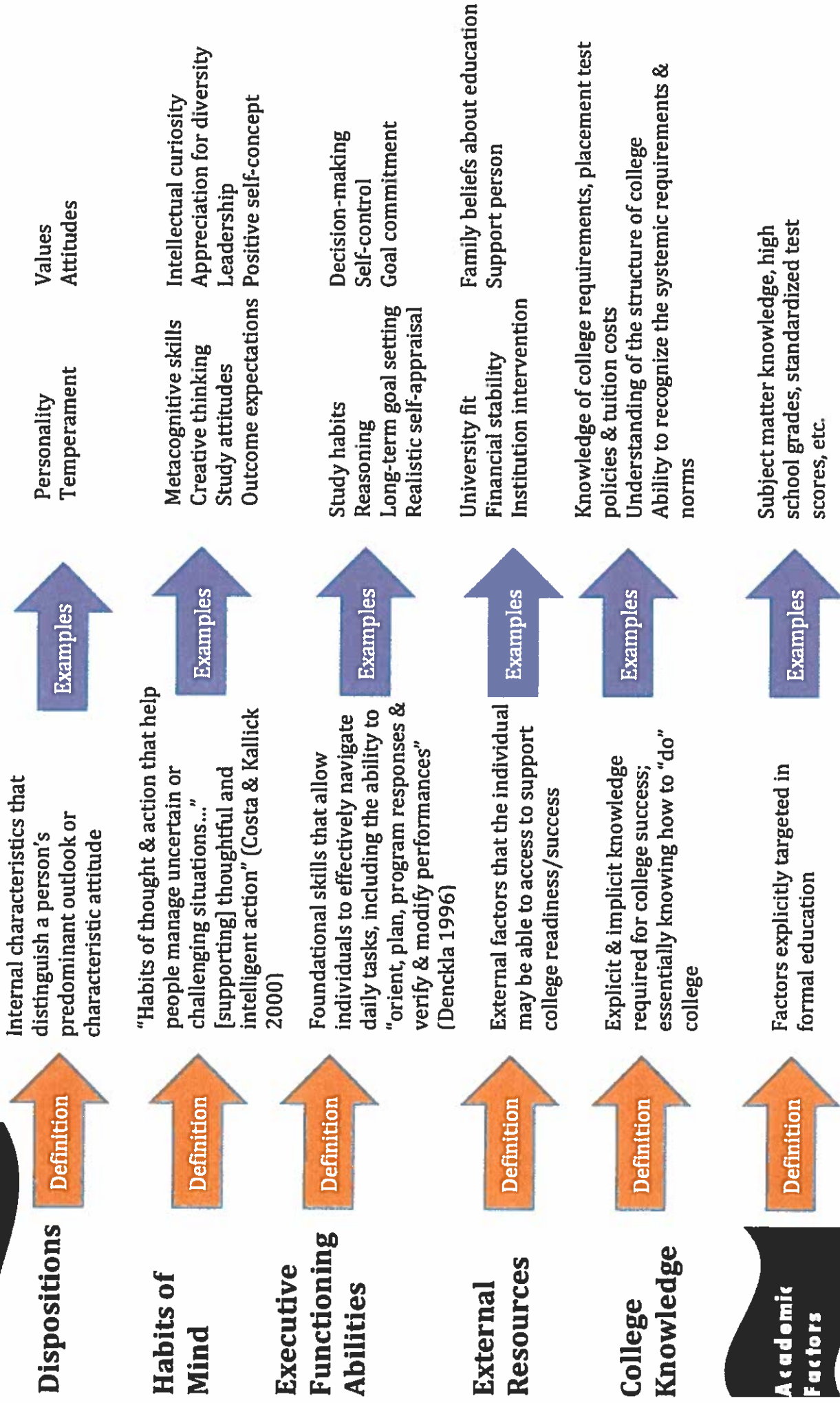


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CEEB/ACT Code: 361525

Factors in College Readiness and Success

Non-Academic Factors





FIND THE COLLEGE THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU

*Start your college search for free
at a NACAC National College Fair.*

THE PATH TO YOUR PERFECT COLLEGE BEGINS WITH COLLEGE FAIRS!

Free and open to the public, NACAC fairs connect you to hundreds of colleges and universities in one location.

Join us at a 2018 National College Fair in your area:

COLUMBUS

April 21
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Greater Columbus
Convention Center

CLEVELAND

April 22
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Huntington Convention
Center of Cleveland

REGISTER FREE AT WWW.NACACFAIRS.ORG/NCF

*to receive fair details, avoid lines onsite, and share your
contact information with your choice schools.*

NACAC 
**National
College Fairs**

NACAC National College Fairs are a program of the
National Association for College Admission Counseling.



Faring Well at College Fairs and National College Fairs FAQs

[National Association for College Admission Counseling](#)

As you walk through the big double doors, the noise is overwhelming. People cluster around what seems like hundreds of tables, filling out cards, leafing through brochures, and competing for the attention of nicely dressed admission representatives. This could be it, you think. You could find your dream college in this very room.

College fairs are an exciting chance to talk to the people in the know. Admission representatives from a variety of colleges are all gathered in one place, just waiting to answer your questions. But it's easy to get caught up in the crowds and confusion. Soon you're criss-crossing the room (or many rooms), stopping at any booth that catches your eye or seems popular. When that happens, you end up with lots of pretty brochures, but not a lot of clear impressions about which colleges you may be interested in. Making the most of a college fair means planning your strategy before you enter those double doors.

Making a list and checking it--well, you know

"Treat a college fair like a buffet dinner," advises Susan Hallenbeck, director of undergraduate admission at Saint Leo University (FL). "There will be more there than you can possibly take in, but then again, not everything is to your taste."

Experienced buffet diners know that it's best to scope out their choices before they start filling their plate. Savvy students can do the equivalent by looking over a list of college fair participants before the fair. Choose the colleges you most want to find out more about. If you have time, research these colleges by reading information in your guidance office or by checking out guidebooks or Web sites.

"Know what you want to find out at the fair," says Paul Marthers, director of admission at Oberlin College (OH). Write up a short list of questions to ask admission representatives. To compare several schools, plan on asking the same questions at each table.

The questions you ask should be unique to your interests and not easily found in standard college materials. "The college fair is a good time to talk person-to-person with the representative of that school," says Janet Helfers, guidance counselor at Mariemont High School (OH). "Your job is to think of good questions."

So cross out the questions like, "How many people are in the freshman class?" Instead, ask what the two or three most popular majors are (that can give you a good idea of the main interests of the majority of the students). If you have a particular major in mind, don't ask "How good is major X?" No college representative will tell you that a program is bad. Instead, ask how many students take that major; what research faculty members are involved in (and the opportunities for undergraduates to participate in it); or what courses you would take your first year in a particular major. Students who are undecided should ask about what services and support are available to help them explore various majors.

Other things you can ask about: extracurricular activities, what kinds of students the college is looking for, what percentage of students receive financial aid, and other concerns unique to your interests and situation.

Mapping out a strategy

Before you leave for the fair, make sure you have the following supplies: a small notebook with your list of colleges and questions you want to ask; a pen or pencil; and a backpack or tote-bag to hold all of the college information you'll be collecting.

Students with access to computers may wish to print up a few sheets of self-stick address labels. Include your name, address, phone number, e-mail address, high school, year of graduation, intended major(s), and any extracurricular activities you're interested in. At the fair, slap the address labels on the college information cards to save you time in filling out the same information over and over at each college's table.

The real strategizing begins when you arrive at the fair. Look for a map of where each college is located. If it's a relatively small fair, all the tables may be in one large room, like a school gym. At big fairs, like NACAC's [National College Fairs](#), hundreds of colleges may be spread over many rooms and even in different buildings.

Especially at the larger fairs, it's important to map out your route. Note where each college is located and plan the most efficient way to visit the colleges on your list. (For example, you want to make sure to visit all the colleges of interest to you in one room before moving to the next.) Also, make sure to check out the schedule of information sessions: many fairs have sessions on the search process, applications, financial aid, and other issues run by experts in the field. These sessions are a great place to ask general questions about the college admission process.

Your notebook and pen are great tools for keeping all those conversations straight. After you leave a table, jot down your impressions of the college and the answers the admission representatives gave you. Try to do this before you visit the next table, while your impressions are still fresh.

Teaming up

Depending on the time of day of the fair, both students and parents may be encouraged to attend. If a family member attends the fair with you, talk about your plan ahead of time. You may decide to split up--perhaps a parent can attend the financial aid seminar so you can visit more colleges. Another option is staying together for part or all of time. You may find that your parents or siblings ask different questions than you do. Also, it can be helpful to get a second opinion on your impressions of particular colleges.

Browsing

Planning ahead ensures that you get to visit the colleges that most interest you. But also make sure to leave time for browsing.

"Be adventurous! Don't just focus on 'name' schools," says Hallenbeck. "You may find that a school you've never heard of offers the exact major, extracurricular program, etc., that you're seeking."

Following up

By the time the fair is over, you'll have a bag filled with information about colleges--and a possible case of information overload. Don't succumb to the temptation of just piling all those brochures in some obscure corner of your bedroom. If you're feeling overwhelmed, take a day or two away from the college search. Then get out all of those brochures, along with the notes you took while at the fair, and read through them. You may find that some colleges aren't as interesting as you first thought. Others only look better the more you research them. For those colleges, follow up by filling out the information cards in the brochures or by starting to schedule college visits.

techcrunch.com

Engineering vs. Liberal Arts: Who's Right—Bill or Steve?

Contributor



When students asked what subjects they should major in to become a tech entrepreneur, I used to say engineering, mathematics, and science—because an education in these fields is the prerequisite for innovation, and because engineers make the best entrepreneurs.

That was several years ago.

I realized how much my views have changed when the *The New York Times* asked me to write a piece for its “Room for Debate” forum this week. The paper wanted me to comment on the divergence of opinion between Bill Gates and Steve Jobs. In a [speech](#) before the National Governors Association on Feb 28, Gates had argued that we need to spend our limited education budget on disciplines that produce the most jobs. He implied that we should reduce our investment in the liberal arts because liberal-arts degrees don’t correlate well with job creation. Three days later, at the unveiling of the iPad 2, Steve Jobs said: “It’s in Apple’s DNA that technology alone is not enough—it’s technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the result that makes our heart sing, and nowhere is that more true than in these post-PC devices”.

Because I am a professor at the Pratt School of Engineering at Duke University, and given all the [positive things I say](#) about U.S. engineering education, *The Times* assumed that I would side with Bill Gates; that I would write a piece that endorsed his views. But, even though I believe that engineering is one of the most important professions, I have learned that the liberal arts are equally important. It takes artists, musicians, and psychologists working side by side with engineers to build products as elegant as the iPad. And anyone—with education in any field—can achieve success in Silicon Valley.

[Here is what I wrote](#) for *The Times*.

It's commonly believed that engineers dominate Silicon Valley and that there is a correlation between the capacity for innovation and an education in mathematics and the sciences. Both assumptions are false.

My research team at Duke and Harvard [surveyed](#) 652 U.S.-born chief executive officers and heads of product engineering at 502 technology companies. We found that they tended to be highly educated: 92 percent held bachelor's degrees, and 47 percent held higher degrees. But only 37 percent held degrees in engineering or computer technology, and just two percent held them in mathematics. The rest have degrees in fields as diverse as business, accounting, finance, health care, and arts and the humanities.

Gaining a degree made a big difference in the sales and employment of the company that a founder started. But the field that the degree was in and the school that it was obtained from were not a significant factor.

Over the past year, I have interviewed the founders of more than 200 Silicon Valley start-ups. The most common traits I have observed are a passion to change the world and the confidence to defy the odds and succeed.

It is the same in business. In the two companies I founded, I was involved in hiring more than 1000 workers over the years. I never observed a correlation between the school of graduation or field of study, on one hand, and success in the workplace, on the other. What make people successful are their motivation, drive, and ability to learn from mistakes, and how hard they work.

And then there is the matter of design. Steve Jobs taught the world that good engineering is important but that what matters the most is good design. You can teach artists how to use software and graphics tools, but it's much harder to turn engineers into artists.

Our society needs liberal-arts majors as much as it does engineers and scientists.

But I need to acknowledge the difficult reality: that employment prospects are dim for liberal-arts majors. Graduates from top engineering schools such as Duke are always in high demand. But PhDs in English from even the most prestigious universities, such as UC-Berkeley, [can't get jobs](#). The data I presented above were on the background of tech-company founders—those who made the transition into entrepreneurship. Most don't. And, as you can note from Bill Gates' speech, there is a bias against

liberal arts and humanities.

Angelika Blendstrup is an author and a lecturer who holds a PhD in Bilingual Bicultural Education from Stanford. She says that her liberal-arts background is “great for writing papers or PhDs, but it would be better to have studied engineering and have a choice of jobs”.

Charles River Venture Partner emeritus, Ted Dintersmith, on the other hand, received a PhD in Engineering from Stanford. But he also studied liberal arts. Ted says “It doesn’t have to be either/or—I double-majored in Physics and English, and never regretted combining two such different disciplines”.

So there is no black and white here. We need musicians, artists, and psychologists, as much as we need bio-medical engineers, computer programmers, and scientists.

My advice to my students—and to my own children—is to study what interests them the most; to excel in fields in which they have the most passion and ability; to change the world in their own way and on their own terms. Once they master their domain, they can find the path to entrepreneurship. They can then come up with creative ways of solving the problems that they have encountered, and apply their ideas to other fields where their knowledge adds value. Maybe they can team up with the hard-core engineers who develop the clunky, inelegant, over-engineered products that Bill is famous for; maybe work with Steve to create the next iPhone or iPad.

You can [read more views](#) and witness the lively debate on the *New York Times* web site.

Editor’s note: [Vivek Wadhwa](#) is an entrepreneur turned academic. He is a Visiting Scholar at UC-Berkeley, Senior Research Associate at Harvard Law School, Director of Research at the Center for Entrepreneurship and Research Commercialization at Duke University, and Distinguished Visiting Scholar at The Halle Institute for Global Learning at Emory University. You can follow him on Twitter at [@wadhwa](#) and find his research at www.wadhwa.com.

2013-2014 EDITION

COLLEGES THAT CHANGES LIVES

40 SCHOOLS THAT WILL
CHANGE THE WAY YOU
THINK ABOUT COLLEGES

LOREN POPE
Author of *LOOKING BEYOND THE IVY LEAGUE*

REVISED BY
HILARY MASELL OSWALD



Getting Beyond the Hype (or Why You Can Relax and Enjoy Your College Search)

Let's begin by agreeing that college should change your life. It's a catchy idea (and not a bad book title), so hang on to it for a minute and contemplate: What does it mean to find a college that changes your life?

The answer depends on you, but for all college-bound teens, the idea of a transformative college experience is an invitation to be bold. Don't fall for Ivy worship. Don't listen to the blather about "best" schools whipped up by the rankings game. Don't let your older friends' descriptions of frat parties and football games define what college should be for you.

Be bold. Set your expectations high.

It won't be easy. The national conversation about higher education is obsessed with outcomes: What do you *get* for your four (or five or six) years in college? A little piece of paper that says you did what the college told you to do? A bigger paycheck? An entrée into grad school? A photo op with the college president?

This question makes sense in light of how expensive a college degree is. But it misses an essential point: College isn't just about the end result. It's also about the means, the process, the path you take to earn your degree, whom you meet, and who inspires and mentors you. If the path is right for you, you'll get the piece of paper, the bigger paycheck, the acceptance to grad school, the

photo op with the president, and more—you'll be a sharper, wiser, and better-prepared adult.

To find a life-changing college, you must pay attention to how a college educates its undergraduates. Scratch the surface of the Ivies, their clones, and most large universities, and you'll be surprised at what you find. Undergraduates are generally ignored. There are few rewards for teaching, so professors do little of it. If they do, you'll see them only behind a lectern. At a large state university, your adviser won't know much about you, except that you need to register for Biology 102 next semester. If you can't get a course, even if it's necessary for other classes you must take, you'll just have to wait until the next time it's offered. There's little chance anyone will advocate for you, and when the time comes to find a professor to guide you toward your next steps—graduate school, a job, a year as part of a volunteer corps—you'll have a hard time finding anyone who knows you well enough to give advice or write a letter of recommendation on your behalf.

Dr. William Deresiewicz, a writer and former Yale professor of English, wrote in *The American Scholar* in 2008, "There are due dates and attendance requirements at places like Yale, but no one takes them very seriously. Extensions are available for the asking; threats to deduct credit for missed classes are rarely, if ever, carried out. In other words, students at places like Yale get an endless string of second chances."

The Ivies inculcate feelings of security and entitlement. "Getting through the gate is very difficult, but once you're in, there's almost nothing you can do to get kicked out," Dr. Deresiewicz writes. Students conflate their success (or supposed success) with their worth and value, so failure is terrifying.

Therein lies the rub: "[I]f you're afraid to fail, you're afraid to take risks, which begins to explain the final and most damning disadvantage of an elite education: that it is profoundly anti-intellectual. This will seem counterintuitive. Aren't kids at elite schools the smartest ones around, at least in the narrow academic sense? Don't they work harder than anyone else—indeed, harder than any previous generation? They are. They do. But being an

intellectual is not the same as being smart. Being an intellectual means more than doing your homework."

Dr. Deresiewicz's coup de grâce is a condemnation of professors at Ivies and their ilk: "Throughout much of the 20th century, with the growth of the humanistic ideal in American colleges, students might have encountered the big questions in the classrooms of professors possessed of a strong sense of pedagogic mission. Teachers like that still exist in this country, but the increasingly dire exigencies of academic professionalization have made them all but extinct at elite universities."

The former professor is not the only one to bemoan the quality of education at big-name schools. Every so often, an administrator at an Ivy or a flagship public university publicly confesses his or her institution's sins: We aren't paying attention to undergraduates; we are graduating people who aren't any sharper or inspired than they were when they arrived here; we've sacrificed learning at the altar of research.

Then these contrite administrators point to liberal arts colleges and say, "We need to be more like them." The Ivies and large universities are great places to go to graduate school (after all, their focus is on grad students!), but for the very best undergraduate education, seek out a small liberal arts college.

Here's why. The colleges in this book have one primary mission: educate the undergraduate. Each appeals to a slightly different type of teenager, but they all share a mission to raise students' trajectories and develop thinkers, leaders, and moral citizens.

The little-known truth is that these colleges have been on the cutting edge of higher education for decades. Many of them have outperformed most of the rankings sweethearts in the percentages of graduates who become America's scientists and scholars. Their students have won Fulbrights, Rhodeses, Goldwaters, Watsons, and other prestigious postgraduate scholarships far out of proportion to their sizes and selectivity. And their graduates get accepted to medical, dental, law, and graduate schools at rates that far outpace the national averages.

These colleges not only equip their students to live full lives,

but they also work their magic on a wide range of students. The list includes colleges for the venturesome, the do-it-yourselfers, those who need structure or nurture or both, the late bloomers, the naïfs, and those who need a second chance.

Every one of these catalytic places will push and stretch you beyond what you think possible; they'll let you slip and slide and they'll help you find your footing, but they won't let you hide from your potential or yourself.

Almost all of them accept more than half of their applicants, and they attract strikingly different kinds of kids. Their programs range from the choose-your-own-adventure challenges of Marlboro and New College to the prescribed, no-electives approach of the Great Books curriculum at St. John's.

Their power is in how they teach. The focus is on the student, not the faculty; he is heavily involved in his education. There are no passive ears; students and faculty work so closely together, they even coauthor publications. Teaching is an act of love. Students and professors develop a mentor relationship in class, and professors become students' hiking companions, intramural teammates, dinner hosts, and friends. Learning is collaborative rather than competitive; values are central; community matters. These colleges are places of great coherence, where the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

It is these circumstances that develop leaders, people who can land on their feet, who are bold and imaginative, and who can see the big picture.

These colleges are places where people will listen to you. Not because all of your ideas are brilliant. (They're not.) Not because people are pandering to you. (They're not.) People—professors, peers, administrators—will listen to you because it's an essential part of learning. So many institutions of higher education in this country expect you only to listen—as you sit in a class of hundreds of students. But doesn't it make you wonder how students in these classes test their own ideas?

It's a powerful thing to present your idea to an expert and hear,

"Yes, you're on to something!" or "No, I don't think you've got much to stand on. Let's talk about a different route." That's the stuff of life. And when you must get your own job, you won't last long if the only thing you know how to do is present someone else's ideas.

So let these schools inspire you. Dare to imagine your college years as a billion interactions that draw out your talents, ignite new passions, challenge your assumptions, nurture your hopes, and teach you how to own your place at the table when you're done.

WHY YOU CAN (AND SHOULD) IGNORE THE RANKINGS

Imagine that someone asked you to rate NFL, NBA, NHL, and MLB teams on one scale. Are the Colts better than the Yankees? How would you convert triples to fourth-down conversions or break-aways to free throws?

You couldn't—no one could. Yet when publications rank colleges and universities, they're essentially engaging in this kind of absurdity. How can anyone measure what happens in a small philosophy class in Hoboken against what happens in a large Biology 101 lecture in Portland? And where does the individual student's growth come into play?

No matter the absurdity, publications make these comparisons all the time, based on criteria dreamed up by their editors, many of whom never talk to an administrator, professor, or student before crowning champions and runners-up. Statisticians measure mostly input factors—incoming students' SAT scores and class ranks, selectivity, professors' salaries—many of which are totally irrelevant to education. They know nothing about what happens to young minds and souls in the four years of college. Judging the quality of a college by the grades and scores of the freshmen it admits is like judging the quality of a hospital by the health of the patients it admits. What happens during the stay is what counts.

Rankings have fallen over the edge of misleading into the sea of

ridiculousness. You can find out which are the best “jock schools” and which are “dodgeball targets,” places characterized by “reefer madness” or “palatial dorms.” Every year, the media report on the biggest party school. (Doesn’t it make you wonder exactly how that’s determined? Is someone measuring students’ average blood-alcohol levels on a series of Saturday nights?)

So why do we pay attention? Rankings proliferated in the absence of clear research about the effects and value of higher education. Statistics like SAT scores and professors’ salaries are much easier to quantify than life-changing classes or personal epiphanies. And college is expensive: We want the best outcome, the best return on our investment, and the rankings make it seem so easy. But they jinx college choices year after year because they don’t—they can’t—tell you what’s best for you.

You have better options for evaluating the power of a particular college’s teaching, though not all colleges participate. One is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, pronounced “Ness,” like the Loch Ness monster). Each year, NSSE randomly surveys freshmen and seniors at four-year colleges across the country to find out how often they participate in activities that research has shown are linked to learning, such as studying, continuing class discussions outside class, receiving prompt feedback from professors, and using opportunities for collaboration with faculty. It also assesses how well the college uses its resources to get students engaged in these activities. NSSE allows schools to compare their results with those of similar colleges, so schools know how they are faring.

The other tool is the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), a three-part test that asks students to answer realistic problems that require them to assess the value and importance of various pieces of information. Researchers evaluate students’ written responses to the problems and “assess their abilities to think critically, reason analytically, solve problems and communicate clearly and cogently,” the CLA says. The assessment measures students’ growth over time and compares results across schools.

NSSE and CLA don’t release their reports to the public, but if

your prospective colleges participate—and many in this book do—you can ask to see the results. They’re far better measures of a college’s efficacy than the rankings.

WHY SELECTIVITY IS JUST SMOKE AND MIRRORS

Thanks to ranking systems that give high marks to schools for refusing admission to the majority of applicants, we’ve been taught that selectivity equals value or prestige or rigor. That’s bunk.

But lots of people—and colleges—buy it. When colleges report their acceptance rates, they calculate those rates based on all of the students who sent in *any part* of the application. That calculation makes their prospective pool bigger and their resulting acceptance rate lower: If you have a pool of one hundred applications and you accept twenty of them, you’re more selective than if you have a pool of fifty applicants and you accept twenty of them.

This method is misleading because students don’t always complete their applications. Here’s an example: Emma uses the Common App to apply to six colleges. She sees that Awesome College allows her to apply for free, so she checks Awesome College’s box because she figures, “Why not?” But Awesome College has a supplement, which Emma doesn’t finish because she wasn’t very interested in Awesome College in the first place, and she’s tired of writing essays about which character from her favorite book is most like her.

But Awesome College still counts Emma as an applicant, even though there’s no way she could have actually gotten in because she didn’t finish her application. See the problem?

So for this book, every college has recalculated its acceptance rates based on its pool of completed applications. In each chapter, you’ll also find admitted students’ average high-school GPAs on a 4.0 scale and the standardized test scores for the middle 50 percent of accepted students. (The reported SAT ranges are math and critical reading scores combined and don’t include writing.) Those

numbers give you a much better understanding of your chances of admission *if you actually finish your application.*

Better still, admissions officers at these colleges won't toss out your application if you have lower-than-desired test scores or you don't fit their academic profile perfectly. They're eager to know you and figure out if you'll succeed at their college, and they're willing to take chances on students who show potential and curiosity. And as of 2011, thirteen of them are test optional, which means that they don't require standardized test scores for admission: Agnes Scott, Clark, Denison, Earlham, Goucher, Guilford, Juniata, Knox, Lawrence, Marlboro, McDaniel, St. John's, and Ursinus. (Home-schooled students still might have to submit scores; check with the colleges that interest you.)

These schools' philosophy is countercultural, and the implications are huge: Your SAT score, your class rank, and your GPA do not determine your fate! That's good news for teenagers who haven't hit their academic strides, and it's also important news for those who have. In interviews with more than a thousand students at these colleges, I found both types of students. The late bloomers said that with patient guidance and gentle nudges from faculty members, they discovered their own talents and passion for learning. And students who were academic rock stars in high school gushed that these schools taught them how to think and take smart risks.

In short, you don't have to be one of the jittery millions of students anxiously fattening résumés to impress some high-status school that won't do nearly as much for you as the catalytic college that really wants you.

WHY A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION IS ESSENTIAL

"Liberal arts" has nothing to do with a college's political bent or its sculpture program. It refers to an educational philosophy that embraces the value and importance of studying core academic subjects, typically comprising the humanities (literature; history, fine

arts, languages, religion, and philosophy) and the sciences (natural sciences, math, and social sciences).

The ancient Greeks dreamed up the idea of liberal learning. Sons of wealthy families studied such things as logic and astronomy, not trades, as the lower classes did. The Greeks saw this education as essential to society: These young men would grow up to debate laws in the assembly, hold sway over their communities, lead their fellow citizens during wartime, and influence ideas of beauty and goodness. Their education was a cultural inheritance expected to cultivate their intellect and their virtue. "Liberal" refers to these young men's freedom, political and economic, to get such an elite education.

Liberal arts colleges today depend on the same philosophy: Citizens ought to be educated in ideas and ways of knowing that aren't tied to doing one particular job. And even though the liberal arts tradition is more than 2,500 years old, it's more practical today than ever.

Liberal learning teaches students to investigate and understand the world: microorganisms and macroeconomics, the essence of a poem and the validity of political rhetoric, theories of chemical reactions and reactions to artistic expression. It builds nimble minds and creates independent thinkers.

It also builds the skills employers say they want. In 2009, as the economy sank into a recession, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) commissioned a survey of 302 private-sector employers to ask what they valued in employees. When asked where colleges should place the most emphasis,

- 89 percent said effective oral and written communication;
- 81 percent said critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills;
- 79 percent said knowledge and skills applied to real-world settings;
- 75 percent said connections between choices or actions and ethical decisions;
- 71 percent said teamwork and the ability to collaborate;
- 70 percent said the ability to innovate and be creative.

They might as well have written the marketing material for liberal learning.

If the first decade of the new millennium taught us anything, it's that the world is a wild, raucous place where almost anything can happen. And in such a place, nobody can tell you precisely how your career will go. Nobody can give you the facts you need to do your job ten years from now because nobody knows what your job will be ten years from now. A liberal education gives you skills you will always need to be an adaptive learner, an effective communicator, and a sharp-idea generator.

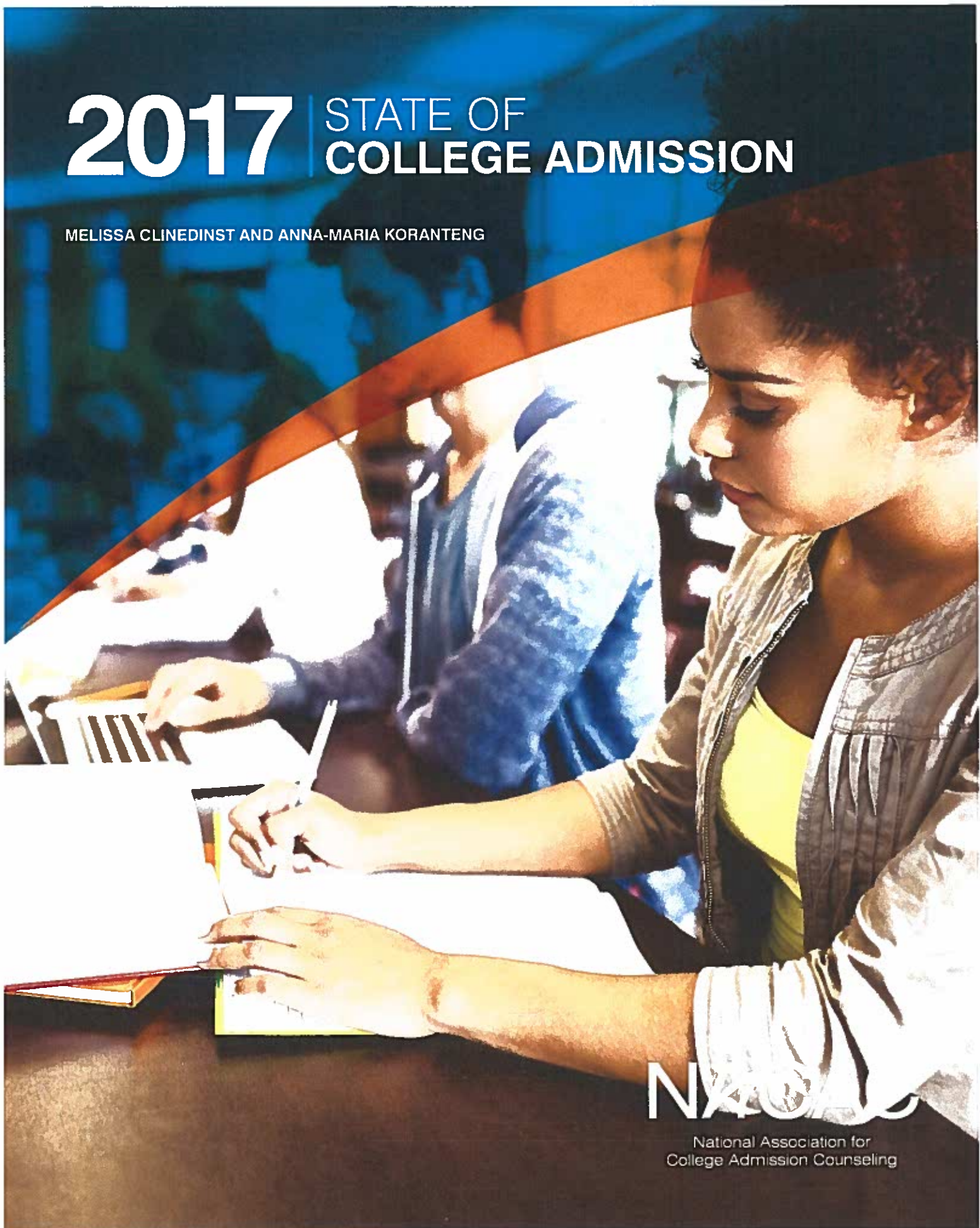
And then there are the personal benefits of liberal learning in the information age. Our digital idolatry has cost us focus. It has turned communication into fleeting 140-character messages and status updates of little consequence. It has diminished our need and ability to contemplate. It has unraveled the definition of community and allowed us to define friendships by clicks of a mouse. Of course, you can be a liberal arts student and love technology. None of these schools calls you to be a Luddite. But the richness and depth of your learning will enhance the things that this era of ubiquitous information and social media might cost us: patience, intimacy, an appreciation of nuance, a desire for truth, a sharp eye, and a tender heart.

It sounds lofty, but a liberal education doesn't just prepare you for work. It prepares you for life and all the things life comprises. It teaches you how to tell the truth from the slop. It equips you to vote, make good choices, influence your community, raise your kids, take smart risks, and keep learning long after the days when you're reading books simply because a professor put them on a syllabus.

Emerson wrote, "What will you have?" quoth God. 'Pay for it and take it.'" These are places eager and eminently able, if you are willing to pay with hard work, to empower you to take it all—and carry it with you the rest of your life.

2017 | STATE OF COLLEGE ADMISSION

MELISSA CLINEDINST AND ANNA-MARIA KORANTENG



NACAC

National Association for
College Admission Counseling

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlights from the 2017 *State of College Admission* report include findings related to the transition from high school to postsecondary education in the United States, gathered primarily through NACAC's annual Admission Trends Survey and Counseling Trends Survey. The 2016 report also includes information about the recruitment and admission process for transfer and international students.

College Applications

The increase in the number of colleges to which each student applies continues a near perfectly upward trend, which is reflected in college reports of increased application volume.

- Growth in Application Volume Continues:** Between the Fall 2015 and Fall 2016 admission cycles, the number of applications from first-time freshmen increased 7 percent; applications from prospective transfer students increased by 1 percent; and international student applications increased by 13 percent, on average.
- Colleges Accept Nearly Two-Thirds of First-Time Freshmen Applicants, on Average; National Average Acceptance Rate Rebounds:** The percentage of applicants offered admission at four-year colleges and universities in the United States—referred to as the average selectivity rate—was 66.1 percent for Fall 2015. The national average acceptance rate edged up from 64.7 percent in Fall 2013, after reaching a low of 63.9 percent in Fall 2012.
- Decline in Average Yield Rate for First-Time Freshmen:** The average yield rate for Fall 2015 (35.1 percent) decreased slightly from 36.2 percent in Fall 2014.
- Transfer Acceptance Rate Slightly Lower than Freshmen Rate; Yield Much Higher:** Among institutions that enroll transfer students, average selectivity for Fall 2016 was 62 percent, compared to 66 percent for first-time freshmen. However, almost two-thirds (65 percent) of transfer applicants who were admitted ultimately enrolled, compared to only 28 percent of freshman admits.
- International Student Acceptance Rate is Low; Yield Slightly Higher than First-Time Freshmen:** At institutions that enroll first-time international students, the admit rate for this population (55 percent) is lower than both transfer and first-time freshmen students. The average yield rate for international students is 32 percent.
- Beyond the High School Graduate:** More than two-thirds of Admission Trends Survey respondents indicated that transfer students are considerably important to meeting overall recruitment goals, and almost 40 percent rated international students as considerably important.
- Top Recruitment Strategies:** Email and institutional websites are the primary means by which colleges recruit first-time freshmen, transfer students, and international students. However, colleges employ a broader range of strategies when recruiting domestic high school students. Four other factors were each rated as considerably important by more than 50 percent of colleges—hosting campus visits, connecting with high school counselors, visiting high school, and sending direct mail.
- Early Decision (ED) and Early Action (EA) Activity Increases:** Between Fall 2015 and Fall 2016, colleges reported an average increase of 5 percent in the number of Early Decision applicants and 6 percent in ED admits. The number of Early Action applications increased by 15 percent and the number of students accepted through EA increased by 16 percent.
- Wait List Activity Increases; Likelihood of Wait List Acceptance Remains Low:** For the Fall 2016 admission cycle, 39 percent of institutions reported using a wait list. Institutions

Recruitment and Yield Strategies

College admission offices use a variety of strategies to recruit prospective students, particularly those who would be likely to attend if admitted. Colleges are broadening their recruitment efforts to bring in more transfer and international students.

accepted an average of 23 percent of all students who chose to remain on wait lists. From Fall 2015 to Fall 2016, the number of students offered a place on an admission wait list increased by 11 percent, on average, and the number admitted increased by 31 percent.

Factors in Admission Decisions

The factors that admission officers use to evaluate applications from first-time freshmen have remained largely consistent over the past 20 years. Students' academic achievements—which include grades, strength of curriculum, and admission test scores—constitute the most important factors in the admission decision. Admission decision factors for first-time international students are similar to those for domestic students, but the transfer admission decision process differs in significant ways.

- **Admission Offices Identify Grades, High School Curriculum, and Test Scores as Top Factors for First-Time Freshmen:** The top factors in the admission decision were: grades in college preparatory courses, overall high school GPA, admission test scores, and strength of curriculum. Among the next most important factors were the essay, a student's demonstrated interest, counselor and teacher recommendations, extracurricular activities, and class rank.
- **Top Factor for International Students is English Proficiency Exam Scores:** After English proficiency, the factors for admission decisions with

international applicants are remarkably similar to those for domestic students, with one notable exception. A greater proportion of colleges rated the essay/writing sample as considerably important for international applicants, likely because of the additional confirmation of English skills that the essay provides.

- **For Transfer Admission Decisions, Grades Matter Most:** The only transfer admission decision factors rated considerably important by a substantial proportion of colleges were overall GPA at the student's prior postsecondary institution and average grades in transferrable courses.

College Counseling in Secondary Schools

Access to college information and counseling in school is a significant benefit to students in the college application process. For many students, particularly those in public schools, college counseling is limited at best. Counselors are few in number, often have large student caseloads, and have additional constraints on the amount of time they can dedicate to college counseling.

- **Student-to-Counselor Ratio:** According to US Department of Education data, in 2014–15 each public school counselor (including elementary and secondary) was responsible for 482 students, on average. NACAC survey data indicated an average high school student-to-counselor ratio, including part-time staff, of 281-to-1, on average.

- **College Counseling Staff:** In 2016, 28 percent of public schools reported employing at least one counselor (full- or part-time) whose exclusive responsibility was to provide college counseling, compared to 49 percent of private schools.
- **College Counseling Activities:** Some differences exist between the duties and activities of counselors employed at public schools versus those who work at private schools, data show.
 - On average, public school counselors spent 20 percent of their time on postsecondary counseling in 2016, while their private school counterparts spent 31 percent of their time on college counseling.
 - The proportion of students who had individual meetings with counselors increased at each grade level—29 percent in ninth grade, 36 percent in 10th grade, 62 percent in 11th grade, and 81 percent in the senior year of high school.
 - Only one-quarter (25 percent) of all counselors reported being an integral part of this process, and 30 percent had some involvement. Counselors at private schools were more likely to report being integral to the curriculum development process (36 percent) in comparison to those at public schools (24 percent).

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2016

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
Grades in College Prep Courses	216	76.9%	12.5%	9.3%	1.4%
Grades in All Courses	218	77.1	13.8	6.4	2.8
Strength of Curriculum	218	51.8	35.3	7.3	5.5
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	219	54.3	27.9	13.7	4.1
Essay or Writing Sample	217	18.9	35.9	22.1	23.0
Counselor Recommendation	213	14.6	46.0	25.8	13.6
Student's Demonstrated Interest	212	13.7	25.5	32.1	28.8
Teacher Recommendation	211	10.9	46.4	28.0	14.7
Class Rank	217	9.2	24.0	34.6	32.3
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	216	6.9	30.6	30.6	31.9
Portfolio	210	6.2	5.7	27.6	60.5
Extracurricular Activities	214	7.9	36.0	36.9	19.2
SAT II Scores	212	2.4	6.1	21.2	70.3
Interview	213	4.7	17.4	31.9	46.0
State Graduation Exam Scores	210	1.9	7.6	21.9	68.6
Work	211	2.8	15.6	47.4	34.1

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016

scores as considerably important, followed by grades in college prep courses and grades in all courses (66 percent each), and strength of curriculum (47 percent).

- The moderately important decision factors also were similar to those for domestic students, with a few exceptions worth noting. Nineteen percent of colleges rated the essay/writing sample as considerably important for domestic students, compared to 23 percent for international students. For

international students, the essay can serve as another indicator of English proficiency in addition to offering information about student experiences and academic interests.

- A national certificate signifying graduation or school attendance was also an important factor for international students, rated as considerably important by 28 percent of institutions and as moderately important by an additional 24 percent.

Factors in the Admission Decision: Transfer Students, 2016 (see Table 9)

- The factors considered in transfer admission decisions are notably different than those for first-time domestic and international students. The only two factors that are rated as considerably important by a majority of colleges were overall GPA at prior postsecondary institutions (81 percent) and average grades in transferable courses (75 percent).