

College Counseling Timeline for Juniors Winter/Spring 2019-20



November/December

- Students complete "Junior Survey for Your Counselor."
- After survey is complete, students may have first appointment with their college counselor (Nov-Jan).
- Parent(s) will be contacted following completion of the student meeting to arrange a parent appointment.

January

- College Counseling classes for students.
- Coffee Meetings for parents (topics include Standardized Testing, Planning College Visits and Athletic Recruiting).
- You are probably receiving a great deal of college mail. Examine your mail carefully. Be sure to open any e-mail and complete their on-line form if you are interested in order to remain on a college's mailing list. *If you do not respond, they might assume you are not interested and remove your name from their database.* Many colleges also track whether or not you are opening their e-mails (opening email might help you as demonstrated interest). Do not limit yourself only to those colleges whose names you have heard from Upper School peers. There are many excellent schools that Academy students have not yet "discovered." Don't narrow your options unnecessarily. Be bold and adventurous.

February/March

- Plan to attend the **NACAC Columbus College Fair on Sunday, February 9, 1-4 p.m.** (Columbus Convention Center).
- **College Visits:** Spring Break is an ideal time for college visits. Please call ahead to make appointments at colleges for campus tours, information sessions, admissions interviews (if available*), meetings with professors and/or coaches, and any other appointments that may be of interest. We will be discussing this topic in great detail during the College Counseling class. We will also practice interviewing skills. *Many colleges (mostly medium sized and larger universities) no longer grant individual interviews during your visit, but may later extend an alumni interview in Columbus. Check the policies of colleges you are going to visit.

April/May/June

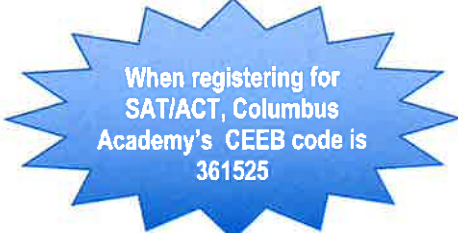
- See your college counselor for one additional meeting in late spring to review your college planning progress.
- **SAT School Day:** The SAT will be offered at Columbus Academy on **Tuesday, April 14th**. CA will register all juniors - accounts will be billed.

Summer

- College Visits: Continue to visit college campuses over the summer months.
- Continue working on your essay for the Common Application. (Review your notes from College Counseling class!)
- August College Application Workshop: In August, before school begins, we will host college application workshops. Plan to attend **one** of these 3-hour sessions to complete your Common Application before the busy school year begins.

STANDARDIZED TESTING:

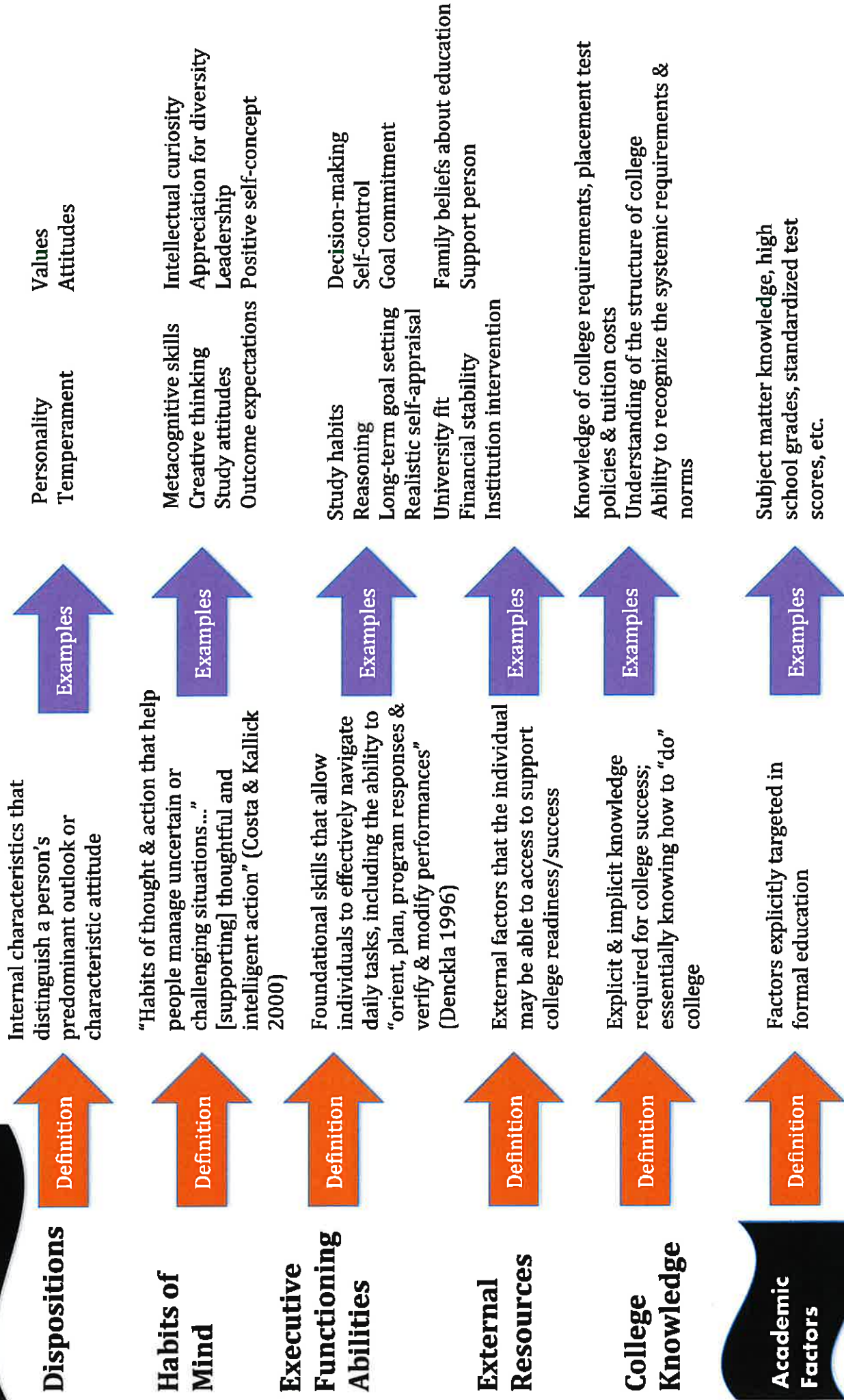
- **SAT/ACT:** Most juniors will take the SAT or the ACT twice in the junior year (and perhaps one more time in Aug/Sept/Oct).
 - **Look ahead at the dates/registration deadlines on College Board (www.collegeboard.org) and ACT (www.act.org) websites. CA CEEB Code is 361525**
 - Suggested 'first testing dates' were reviewed during the Grade 10 Academic Conferences (as a reminder, students in Algebra II should wait until March for their first SAT)
 - Relax the evening before, get a good night's rest, and get up early enough to have breakfast.
 - Arrive at least 30 minutes early to exam site. Go into the exam relaxed and refreshed.
 - Appropriate identification, as described on www.collegeboard.org and www.act.org is a MUST for admission to the test center.
- **SAT Subject Tests:** These tests measure what you have learned in your courses and are sometimes required by only a few colleges (typically with low admit rates). Register for the **May or June** SAT Subject Tests. If you have a preliminary list of schools in which you are interested, you may want to consult their application requirements to see which exams, *if any*, they require (only about 1/4 of CA students take).
- **AP Exams:** May 4-15 at Columbus Academy. (Registration took place in October 2019.)



When registering for
SAT/ACT, Columbus
Academy's CEEB code is
361525

Factors in College Readiness and Success

Non-Academic Factors



National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) sponsors 54 National College Fairs™ in the U.S. that you are invited to attend free of charge. Visit www.nacacnet.org. Events Calendar for the college fair activities.



THINKING ABOUT COLLEGE? THINK OF US.

WWW.NACACNET.ORG • 800/822-6285

If you would like additional copies of this brochure, contact the NACAC national office:

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

1050 N. Highland Street
Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703/686-2222
800/822-6285
Fax: 703/243-0375
www.nacacnet.org

If you need more information about college admission, contact the counselors in your school. They want to help you make good decisions about your future.

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STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES in the College Admission Process

Without Association for College Admission Counseling
1050 N. Highland Street
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703/686-2222
800/822-6285
Fax: 703/243-0375
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PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW:

Colleges Must Provide:

- General:**
- The cost of attending an institution, including tuition, books and supplies, housing, and related costs and fees
 - An indication of the net price the individual student (equal to the cost of attending minus anticipated scholarships and grants) through a Net Price Calculator on an institution's Web site
 - Requirements and procedures for withdrawing from an institution, including refund policies
 - Names of associations that accredit, approve or license the institution
 - Special facilities and services for disabled students
 - Student activities and career and placement services offered by the institution (made available on the institution's Web site)
 - Information about student body diversity (including gender, racial, and socioeconomic diversity).
- Students applying to colleges have the right to certain information about colleges and universities, and about how much it costs to go to college. The US government requires that colleges and universities provide prospective students with the following information.**
- Most colleges and universities post the information on their Web sites. In addition, campuses are required to designate at least one staff member as a Customer Service Representative. Colleges are required to direct you to that staff member to answer your questions.**

Academics:

- The academic program of the institution, including degrees, programs of study and facilities
- Prerequisites for the institution program
- A list of faculty and other instructional personnel
- A statement of the institution's transfer of credit policies, including any established criteria used regarding the transfer of credit and a list of institutions with which the institution has an established transfer agreement

Financial Aid:

- The types of financial aid, including federal, state and local government, need-based and non-need based, institutional and private financial aid available to students who enroll at the institution
- The eligibility requirements and procedures for applying for aid, its methods by which a school

- determines eligibility for financial aid; how and when the aid is distributed
 - Terms and conditions of campus employment, if financial aid is delivered through a work-study aid program, and of federal loans
 - The rights and responsibilities of students receiving federal financial aid, including criteria for continued student eligibility and standards for satisfactory academic progress
 - Whether any loan received as part of financial aid package is a sample loan repayment schedule, and the necessity for repaying loans.
- For more information about student financial aid, visit www.scholarship.org*

Outcomes:

- The retention and graduation rates of certificate- or degree-seeking, first-time, undergraduate students, as

- well as graduation rates categorized by gender, race, and federal aid recipient status
- At schools that typically prepare students for transfer as a community college, information about the transfer-out rate.
- Information regarding the placement, in employment or, and types of employment obtained by, graduates of the institution, including the institution's placement rate (placement rates)
- Information regarding the types of graduate and professional education in which graduates of the institution's 4-year degree programs enroll.

Campus Security:

- Procedures and policies for reporting crimes and emergencies on campus, as well as the system of adjudication
- The number and types of crime reported on and around campus
- The school's drug offense policy, as well as descriptions of the school's drug testing programs, including the prevention programs.

- Policy regarding campus sexual assault prevention programs and the procedures to be followed once a sex offense has occurred**
 - Misleading student notification policies and procedures
 - Policies regarding emergency response and evacuation procedures
 - An annual fire safety report
- To learn more about campus crime statistics for different colleges, visit <http://www.collegeboard.org>.*

Vocational Training Programs Only:

- The occupations that the program prepares students to enter
- The on-time graduation rate of students entering the program
- The cost, for completing the program, including costs for tuition and fees, room and board, and other institutional costs typically incurred by students enrolling in the program
- The placement rate for students completing the program
- The median loan debt incurred by students who completed the program



Revised February 2012

STUDENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

in the College Admission Process

All programs of NACAC are based on the *Principles of Good Practice, 3rd Edition*. Rights, statement members credit to the Council on College Admission Practices. Thank you for your participation in the development of this document. If you speak to a NACAC representative, please refer to this document.



When You Apply to Colleges and Universities, You Have

RIGHTS

- Before You Apply:**
- You have the right to receive factual and comprehensive information from colleges and universities about their admission, financial aid, and housing policies, if you consider applying under an early admission plan. You have the right to complete information from the college about its process and policies.
 - You have the right to be free from high-pressure sales tactics.
- When You Are Offered Admission:**
- You have the right to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission and/or financial aid.
 - Colleges that request commitments to offers of admission and/or financial assistance prior to May 1 must clearly offer you the option to wait until May 1 to respond to an offer of admission. They may not come to you this early and your request may not jeopardize your status for admission and/or financial aid.
 - Candidates admitted under early decision programs are a recognized exception to the May 1 deadline.

- If You Are Placed on a Wait/Alternate List:**
- The letter that notifies you of that placement should provide a history that describes the number of students on the wait list, the number offered admission, and the availability of financial aid and housing.
 - Colleges may require neither a deposit nor a written commitment as a condition of remaining on a wait list.
 - Colleges are expected to notify you of the resolution of your wait list status by August 1 at the latest.

When You Apply to Colleges and Universities, You Have

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Before You Apply:**
- You have a responsibility to research, and to understand and comply with the policies and procedures of each college or university you are applying to. You should also be sure you understand the policies of each college or university regarding deposits you may be required to make before you enroll.
- As You Apply:**
- You must complete all material required for application and submit your application on or before the published deadlines. You should be the sole author of your applications.
 - You should seek the assistance of your high school counselor early and throughout the application period. Follow the process recommended by your high school for filing college applications.
 - It is your responsibility to arrange, if appropriate, for visits to and/or interviews at colleges of your choice.
- After You Receive Your Admission Decisions:**
- You must notify each college or university you apply to whether you are accepting or declining the offer. You should make the notification as soon as you have made a final decision as to the college you wish to attend, but no later than May 1. It is understood that May 1 will be the postmark date.
 - You may confirm your intention to enroll and, if required, submit a deposit to only one college or university. The exception to this arises if you are put on a wait list by a college or university and are later admitted to that institution. You may accept the offer and send a deposit; however, you must immediately notify a college or university at which you previously indicated your intention to enroll.
 - If you are accepted under an early decision plan, you must promptly withdraw the applications submitted to other colleges and universities and make no additional applications. If you are an early decision candidate and are seeking financial aid, you need not withdraw other applications until you have received notification about financial aid from the admitting early decision institution.




If you think your rights have been denied, you should contact the college or university immediately to request additional information or the extension of a reply date. In addition, you should ask your counselor to notify the president of the state or regional affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling in your area. If you need further assistance, send a copy of any correspondence you have had with the college or university and a copy of your letter of admission to:

National Association for College Admission Counseling

Suite 400
1050 N. Highland Street
Arlington, VA 22201
Phone: 703/995-2222
800/922-5285
Fax: 703/243-3375
www.nacacnet.org




Definitions of Admission Options in Higher Education

Non-Restrictive Application Plans

Regular Decision
Definition: Students submit an application by a specified date and receive a decision in a clearly stated period of time.
Commitment: Non-binding

Rolling Admission
Definition: Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render admission decisions throughout the admission cycle.
Commitment: Non-binding

Early Action (EA)
Definition: Students apply early and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date.
Commitment: Non-binding

Restrictive Application Plans

Early Decision (ED)
Definition: Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted they definitely will enroll. The application deadline and decision deadline occur early.
Commitment: Binding

Restrictive Early Action (REA)
Definition: Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They may be restricted from applying ED or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm.
Commitment: Non-binding





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 Education's 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



Internet Resources and Links

Students and Parents are encouraged to explore these sites



Career Search (narrowing down a major)

- [College Board's Career Browser](https://collegeboard.roadtripnation.com/) - <https://collegeboard.roadtripnation.com/>
- [MyMajors.com](http://www.mymajors.com)

College Search (finding colleges that meet your criteria)

- [College Board's College Search](https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search) - great place to start your search
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search>
- [Colleges That Change Lives](http://www.ctcl.org/) - based on Loren Pope's popular book - <http://www.ctcl.org/>
- [NICHE](https://niche.com) - opinions of students on colleges (a resource like Yelp) - <https://niche.com>
- [Virtual Campus Tours](http://campustours.com/) - <http://campustours.com/>

Specific Types of Colleges

- [Art Schools](http://www.artschools.com/) - <http://www.artschools.com/>
- [Canadian Colleges](http://www.studyincanada.com/english/index.asp) - <http://www.studyincanada.com/english/index.asp>
- [Christian Colleges](http://www.christiancolleges.com/) - <http://www.christiancolleges.com/>
 - [Catholic Colleges](http://www.catholiccollegesonline.org/) - <http://www.catholiccollegesonline.org/>
- [Hillel](http://www.hillel.org/college-guide/search) - <http://www.hillel.org/college-guide/search>
- [NACAC Guide to International University Admission](https://www.nacacnet.org/news-publications/publications/international-admission/) - <https://www.nacacnet.org/news-publications/publications/international-admission/>
- [Outdoorsy Colleges](https://www.outsideonline.com/1851781/outside-university-top-40) - (ranked by Outside Magazine)
<https://www.outsideonline.com/1851781/outside-university-top-40>
- [SAT Optional Colleges](http://www.fairtest.org) - <http://www.fairtest.org>
- [Thurgood Marshall College Fund](http://www.tmcf.org/) - <http://www.tmcf.org/>
- [Women's Colleges](http://womenscolleges.org/) - <http://womenscolleges.org/>

Athletics (NCAA Info)

- [National Collegiate Athletic Association \(NCAA\)](http://www.ncaa.org/) - <http://www.ncaa.org/>
- [NCAA Eligibility Center](https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/) - (formerly called the Clearinghouse)
<https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/>

SAT/ACT Resources

- [BWS Educational Consulting \(Brian Stewart\)](http://www.bwseducationconsulting.com/about.php) -
<http://www.bwseducationconsulting.com/about.php>
- [Revolution Prep](http://www.revolutionprep.com) - <http://www.revolutionprep.com>
- [College Board](http://satresourcecenter.collegeboard.org/test-preparation) - <http://satresourcecenter.collegeboard.org/test-preparation>
- [Princeton Review](http://www.review.com) - <http://www.review.com>
- [Kaplan](http://www.kaplan.com) - <http://www.kaplan.com>
- [Compass Prep](http://www.compassprep.com/compass-guide/) - <http://www.compassprep.com/compass-guide/>



Financial Aid 101

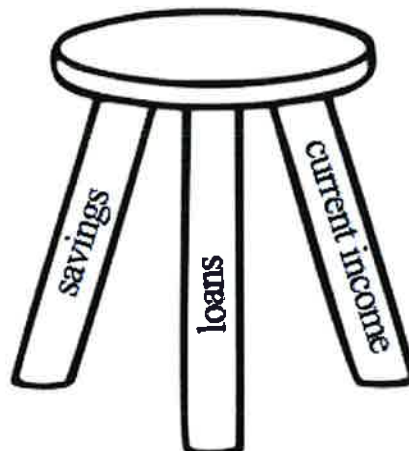


- Talk about your budget **early** in the process
- **Plan to attend our Financial Aid Program in October**
- Explore the “Net Price Calculator” on a university website (under financial aid) – *know what it will cost your family*
- Get an idea of your Estimated Family Contribution (E.F.C.) by consulting the calculator section of www.finaid.org
- Government and Colleges agree – it is the parents responsibility to pay for college
- Students complete college applications, parents complete the FAFSA *and* the CSS Profile (required by some)
- Deadlines for Financial Aid are non-negotiable



Philosophy of Need-based Financial Aid

- Primary responsibility for postsecondary educational expenses rests with the student and his/her family
- Families with like circumstances will be treated in a similar manner
- Family contribution assumes a “three-legged stool” concept



Financial Aid 101

What is financial aid? Financial aid is money that can help you pay for college. Some aid needs to be paid back or earned, and some aid is a gift. Here are the most important things you should know about financial aid.

4 QUICK FACTS ON FINANCIAL AID

1 MORE THAN \$185 BILLION IN AID IS AVAILABLE

There are four main sources:

- Federal government (largest source)
- State governments
- Colleges and universities
- Private organizations

2 THE FAFSA IS THE PLACE TO START—AND IT'S FREE

To qualify for many types of aid, you'll need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This gives you access to these types of aid:

- **Grants and scholarships:** money you don't have to pay back
- **Work-study jobs:** paid, part-time work that's generally on campus
- **Loans:** money you need to pay back, usually after you graduate

3 THE FAFSA IS CONVENIENT

Complete the form online at fafsa.gov or download paper forms there. You can import your family's tax information directly from the IRS website. Begin filling out your FAFSA on **October 1**. Be sure to also opt in to the College Board Opportunity Scholarships at cb.org/opportunity for a chance at the Complete the FAFSA scholarship worth \$1,000.

4 MORE AID IS OUT THERE

Once you've completed the FAFSA, you should apply for these types of aid:

- Financial aid at the colleges to which you are applying
- Private scholarships for which you're eligible

Once you identify a college that's a good fit for you, you should investigate your financial aid options. Each college has its own financial aid policies—guidelines for deciding who qualifies for aid, what type of aid is available, and similar questions.

To be sure you understand what's available, check to see if the answers to these questions appear on the college's website or in their print materials. If not, schedule a phone meeting or an interview with a member of the financial aid staff if you're going to be visiting the college.

QUESTIONS FOR FINANCIAL AID OFFICERS:

- What's the average total cost—including tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, travel, and other personal expenses—for the first year?
- How much have your costs increased over the last three years?
- Does financial need have an effect on admission decisions?
- What's the priority deadline to apply for financial aid, and when am I notified about financial aid award decisions?
- How is financial aid affected if I apply under an early decision or early action program?
- Does the college offer need-based and merit-based financial aid?
- Are there scholarships available that aren't based on financial need, and do I need to complete a separate application for them?
- Does the college require me to fill out the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®?
- If the financial aid package the college offers isn't enough, are there any conditions under which it can be reconsidered, such as changes in my enrollment status or my family's financial situation (or that of a family member)?
- How does the aid package change from year to year?
- What are the terms of the programs included in the aid package?
- What are the academic requirements or other conditions for the renewal of financial aid, including scholarships?
- When can I expect to receive bills from the college?

What to Do When Your Financial Aid Award Isn't Enough

Colleges want to provide financial aid to their students, but they don't always have enough funds to meet the full need of every student. That means a school may not award you enough financial aid to cover all your college expenses. Or maybe your family's financial situation has changed, and you now need more aid than the college awarded you. If you're in either of these situations, follow these steps.

1 Contact the Financial Aid Office

Call or email the financial aid office. If someone there can't answer your question in a phone call or email, make an appointment to meet with a financial aid officer, if possible.

Talking with a financial aid officer can help you learn how you can make up the difference between what you need and what the college awarded you. Financial aid officers want to help you attend their college, so they'll work with you to find the right solution.

You can start by asking questions like the following:

- What are my options for receiving more aid?
- How can I find scholarships to help pay for college?
- Can I talk to someone at the college about finding part-time work?
- Do you have any advice about getting a private loan?

2 File an Appeal

If there's a significant change in your family's finances—such as a drop in income or unexpected medical expenses—you can submit an appeal asking the financial aid office to review your award. Call the office to find out what the college's standard appeals process is so you can follow it. Be ready to provide proof of the change in your circumstances, such as bank statements, pay stubs, or medical bills. But remember, it will take you time to prepare the appeal, and it will take the college time to act on it.

If your appeal isn't successful, you may want to consider applying for a private loan or explore other ways to pay for college.

3 Don't Be Shy About Asking for Help

No matter what your situation, don't be shy about contacting the financial aid office. Financial aid officers are there to answer your questions.

Visit bigfuture.org for more information.



2019-2020 Test Dates

When registering for ACT/SAT, Columbus Academy's CEEB Code is 361525
Note: registration will take 30-45 minutes

SAT Register at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register>

| <u>SAT Date</u> | <u>Registration Deadline</u> |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| August 24, 2019 | July 26, 2109 |
| October 5, 2019 | Sept 6, 2109 |
| November 2, 2019 | Oct 3, 2109 |
| December 7, 2019 | Nov 8, 2109 |
| March 14, 2020 | Feb 14, 2020 |
| May 2, 2020 | Apr 3, 2020 |
| June 6, 2020 | May 8, 2020 |

ACT Register at <http://www.actstudent.org>

| <u>ACT Date</u> | <u>Registration Deadline</u> |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Sept 14, 2019 | Aug 16, 2019 |
| Oct 26, 2019 | Sept 20, 2019 |
| Dec 14, 2019 | Nov 8, 2019 |
| Feb 8, 2020 | Jan 10, 2020 |
| April 4, 2020 | Feb 28, 2020 |
| June 13, 2020 | May 8, 2020 |
| July 18, 2020 | June 19, 2020 |

In-school Test Dates

- SAT School Day (Gr 11) Tues, Apr 14, 2020
 - CA Registers students
- AP Exams (Gr 9-12) May 4 - May 15, 2020
 - Students registered in class in October, 2019

For the latest and most detailed information about standardized testing, we suggest you access this excellent online resource:
<https://www.compassprep.com/compass-guide/>

COMPASS
EDUCATION GROUP

PRACTICE TESTS TUTORING ABOUT RESOURCES LOGIN CONTACT

We are proud to offer *The Compass Guide to College Admission Testing* as a free download for all students.

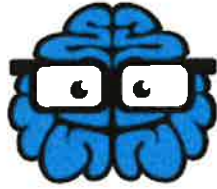
An essential resource for students, parents, and counselors, full of valuable information on the ACT, SAT, PSAT, Subject Tests, APs, and more. Updated several times annually and trusted by thousands of college counselors worldwide.

Download Compass Guide

"I want every family to receive this terrific resource."
Sharon Cuseo
Harvard-Westlake School, Los Angeles

2019 | 2020

November 2019

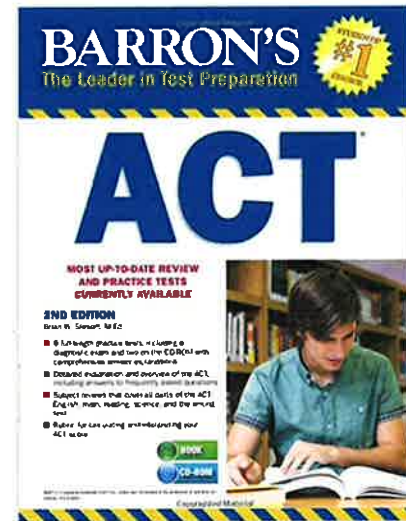


BWS EDUCATION
CONSULTING
a boutique educational experience

Dear Columbus Academy Parents,

Brian Stewart, President of BWS Education Consulting, is delighted to personally teach test preparation classes exclusively available to Columbus Academy students. Brian is the best-selling author of *Barron's ACT*, *Barron's Strategies and Practice for the PSAT/NMSQT*, *Barron's Reading Workbook for the New SAT*, *Barron's PSAT/NMSQT 1520*, and a co-author of *Barron's SAT* and *Barron's PSAT/NMSQT*.

The students of BWS Education have scored as high as perfects on both the ACT and the SAT, and have improved their scores by as many as 12 points on the ACT composite and 330 points on the SAT composite. You can find comprehensive information about our tutoring and group class programs, including testimonials, at:



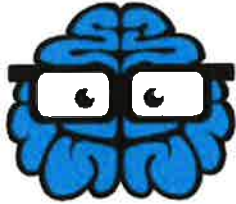
www.BWSEducationConsulting.com.

Please use the attached registration form to sign up for this workshop, conveniently held at Columbus Academy:

- **ACT/SAT Workshop—Sunday, January 26th, 1-5 PM; Friday, February 28th, 9 AM – 1 PM; and Sunday, April 5th, 1-5 PM.**—the classes are conveniently scheduled around winter Parent-Teacher Conferences. The class will focus on the ACT and SAT. This class will go at a steady pace, and is intended for students who would like to test in the spring. (Price: \$315)

If you are interested in doing individual tutoring for test prep, academic subjects, or the college essay/interview, please register on our website.

Please email tutor@bwseducationconsulting.com or call 614.353.4725 if you have any questions about what class or program would be the best fit for your child.



BWS EDUCATION CONSULTING

a boutique educational experience

Student's Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Emergency Contact Name/Number: _____

Past Test Results: _____

- Winter/Spring Session 2019:** Sunday, January 26, 1-5 PM; Friday, February 28, 9 AM – 1 PM; and Sunday, April 5, 1-5 PM. **\$315.**

- Pay with Check.** *Please make checks payable to "BWS Education Consulting."*

- Pay with Credit Card.** *We only accept MasterCard, Visa and Discover. (Not American Express)
We are a PCI Compliant company.*

Credit Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date Signed: _____

Mail Payment and Registration Form to:

**BWS Education Consulting
2296 Satterbury Court
Dublin, OH 43016**

***You will receive E-mail Confirmation that your payment and registration have been received.
Please see www.bwseducationconsulting.com/policies.php for class policies.***



SAT® & ACT™ TUTORING

Small Group Courses: Tailored instruction with a max of 8 students offering a variety of course schedules leading up to every test date

MOST POPULAR

12hrs

\$499

* \$399 w/ membership

5 Full-Length Practice Tests

Want an overview of the SAT® or ACT™ in a short amount of time? Our 12hr program outlines test-taking strategies and helps students get practice with the format of SAT®/ACT™ tests. Recommended for those who are tight on time.

24hrs

\$799

* \$699 w/ membership

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Daniel Carr

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daniel.carr@revolutionprep.com



Types of Applications

- Early Decision
- Early Action
- Restrictive Early Action
- Rolling Admission
- Regular Decision
- Priority, Presidential, Leadership, V.I.P.
 - These are commonly referred to as "fast apps" or "snap apps"
 - We discourage these because it is harder to track "materials sent"
 - Fee Waiver can be transferred over to use on the Common Application



Early Decision (ED)

- Deadline - November 1st or 15th
- Early Reply - usually by December 20th
- Binding Agreement
 - If admitted, student must withdraw all other applications
 - If admitted, student must make an enrollment deposit
- Great plan if student is 100% sure it is his/her first choice
- Same formula used to compute your financial aid package, but you forfeit the ability to *compare* financial aid offers from other schools
- Your financial aid package will be an estimate
- Student will be accepted, deferred, or denied
 - Deferred students are evaluated again in the spring with other applicants
- Some schools offer an **ED II** option with a later deadline





Early Action



Early Action (EA)

- Application Deadlines are typically Oct 15 or Nov 1
- Notification from College – usually by January 30th
- No commitment from student required until May 1st
- Student may continue to apply to other colleges
- State universities that have EA admit the bulk of students during this time
- As with ED, applicant may be accepted, deferred, or denied

Ex: The Ohio State University and Georgetown have EA, *not* ED

Ex: University of Chicago, Villanova University, Union College, and The College of Wooster have both ED *and* EA

Restrictive Early Action (REA)

- Same as above except:
- Student may *not* apply early (ED or EA) to any other colleges, with few exceptions

Examples: Stanford, Yale, Harvard



Two Traditional Application Plans

Rolling Admission

- Student usually receives a reply within 6-8 weeks
- Colleges using this plan will continue to admit qualified students until they have filled their freshman class.
- Apply in September/October, not December!
Examples: University of Pittsburgh, Ohio University, University of AZ
- Qualified, but late applicants will be wait-listed or admitted to branch campuses when all slots for freshmen admissions have been filled

Regular Decision

- Set deadline is established – usually January 1 or February 1
- All applications reviewed relative to one another after the deadline



Campus Visit Checklist

- Wear appropriate clothing - think dress code (ish)
 - No baseball hats, no flip flops, no gum chewing, cell phone away/off
- Take a campus tour
 - Pay attention to bulletin boards in academic buildings
 - Ask your student tour guide questions (see reverse)
- Attend an info session or interview conducted by an admission officer
- Get business cards of people you meet for future contact
- Pick up brochures (on your major, career office, study abroad, etc.)
- Sit in on a class that interests you (schedule in advance through admissions)
- Talk to a professor in your chosen major OR connect with an Academy alum
- Talk to coaches of sports in which you might participate
- Pick up a student newspaper – take note of issues important to student body
- Talk to a student or counselor in the career center
- Eat in one of the cafeterias or food courts
- Wander around the campus by yourself before or after the tour – go off the beaten path/tour route – walk around the community surrounding campus
- Stop into the student center or recreation facility
- Ask students (tour guides or others you encounter) what they love about the college and what they wish they could change
- Browse in the college bookstore
- Make sure you see a FRESHMAN dorm (and ask to see a bathroom!)
- Listen to the college's radio station on your way out of town
- Imagine yourself attending this college for four years

Questions to Ask on a College Tour



Academic

- Do professors teach most freshmen courses or do graduate students do much of the teaching?
- What is the attitude of most professors towards students?
 - Friendly? Accessible? Willing to give extra help?
- How hard do you have to work to be successful?
- How is access to advisors for mentoring and assistance?
- What help/advising is available for students who are “undecided” to choose a major?
- How difficult is it to change majors? How easy/hard is it to double major?
- Is the learning environment cooperative or competitive?
- Tell me about the career center and internships. What help is offered?
- What percentage of graduates got jobs last year? What percentage went to grad school?

Social

- What do students do on the weekends? Do many of them go home or do most stay?
- What is the environment like regarding drinking and drug use?
- How important are fraternities and sororities on campus? Does social life depend on them?
- What kind of entertainment has come to campus recently?
 - Concerts? Theater? Orchestras? Dance Troupes? Lectures?
- Are groups in the college community involved in what’s going on in the outside world – politics, international relations, and/or community service?
- How’s the campus food? Any recommendations about picking a dorm?

The Surrounding Area

- For non-urban schools, find out what the surrounding community is like.
 - How are relations between residents of the town and students?
 - Colleges may refer to this as the ‘town-gown’ relationship
 - Is there a shuttle between campus and town? Do students go into town?
 - What is the largest/closest/most accessible urban area?
- For urban schools:
 - How safe is the neighborhood? Is housing available near campus?
 - Is adequate parking available on campus? Can freshmen have cars?

General Questions

- What kinds of help are available – academic, personal, psychological?
- How are personal problems handled? What if I don’t get along with my freshman roommate?
- Are there lots of rules and regulations for freshmen?
- How safe is the campus?
 - You may ask for statistics on campus crime if you are concerned. Campuses are mandated to provide this information, both in writing and on the university website
- What do students like most about this college? Why did you (tour guide) choose this school?
- What’s the greatest weakness/challenge of this college? What would you change if you could?

For more information from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), visit: <http://nsse.indiana.edu>
“Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning.”

<http://nsse.indiana.edu/html/about.cfm>



Summer Opportunities

Internships | Enrichment | Camps | Research



Not sure what to do this summer? Here are some ideas!
Summer is a great time to explore an area of interest, travel somewhere new, spend time on a college campus or volunteer within your community.

COLUMBUS ACADEMY PROGRAMS

- Internship Program: launching this year, complete a summer internship with one of our organization partners | columbusacademy.org/internships
- Columbus Academy Applied Science (CAAPS) Program: research lab experience through our partnership with Ohio State University College of Engineering | columbusacademy.org/internships

PROGRAMS ACADEMY STUDENTS RECOMMEND

- Rose Hulman Institute of Technology: Operation Catapult | bit.ly/RH_OperationCatapult
- Georgetown University: Summer High School Programs | bit.ly/GU_Summer
- University of Iowa: Secondary Student Training Program | bit.ly/UI_SSTP
- U.S. Naval Academy: Summer Seminar | bit.ly/USNA_SummerSeminar
- Middlebury Interactive Languages: Summer Language Academy | bit.ly/MIL_LanguageAcademy
- Nationwide Children's Hospital: Mechanisms of Human Health and Disease | bit.ly/NCH_MechanismsHumanHealth

SELECTIVE PROGRAMS

- AFS Intercultural Programs: Project Change | bit.ly/AFS_ProjectChange
- Telluride Association: Summer Program | bit.ly/TA_SummerProgram
- Yale University: Young Global Scholars | bit.ly/YU_YoungGlobalScholars
- The Experiment in International Living: Experiment Leadership Institute | bit.ly/ExperimentLeadership
- Michigan State University: High School Honors Science, Math and Engineering Program | bit.ly/MSU_HSHSP

SPECIAL INTEREST PROGRAMS

- Ohio State University: Stone Lab | bit.ly/OSU_StoneLab
- Center for Architecture and Design: Camp Architecture | bit.ly/CAD_CampArchitecture
- Ohio Business Week | bit.ly/OHBusinessWeek
- Kenyon College: Young Writers Workshop | bit.ly/KC_YoungWriters
- Ohio State University: MD Camp | bit.ly/OSU_MDCamp

This is not a comprehensive list of summer programs available to high school students...these are just a few suggestions. For more suggestions, visit columbusacademy.org/internships

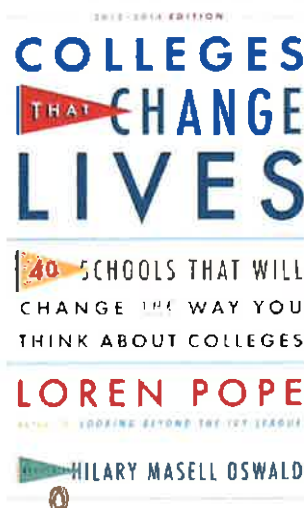
Going to a program on a college's campus does not increase your chance of acceptance later. Working an internship or part-time job, volunteering, attending sports/arts camps and travel are also great options!

Jennifer Conti | Director of Internships

ContiJ@columbusacademy.org | 614-509-2230 | columbusacademy.org/internships

Recommended Articles

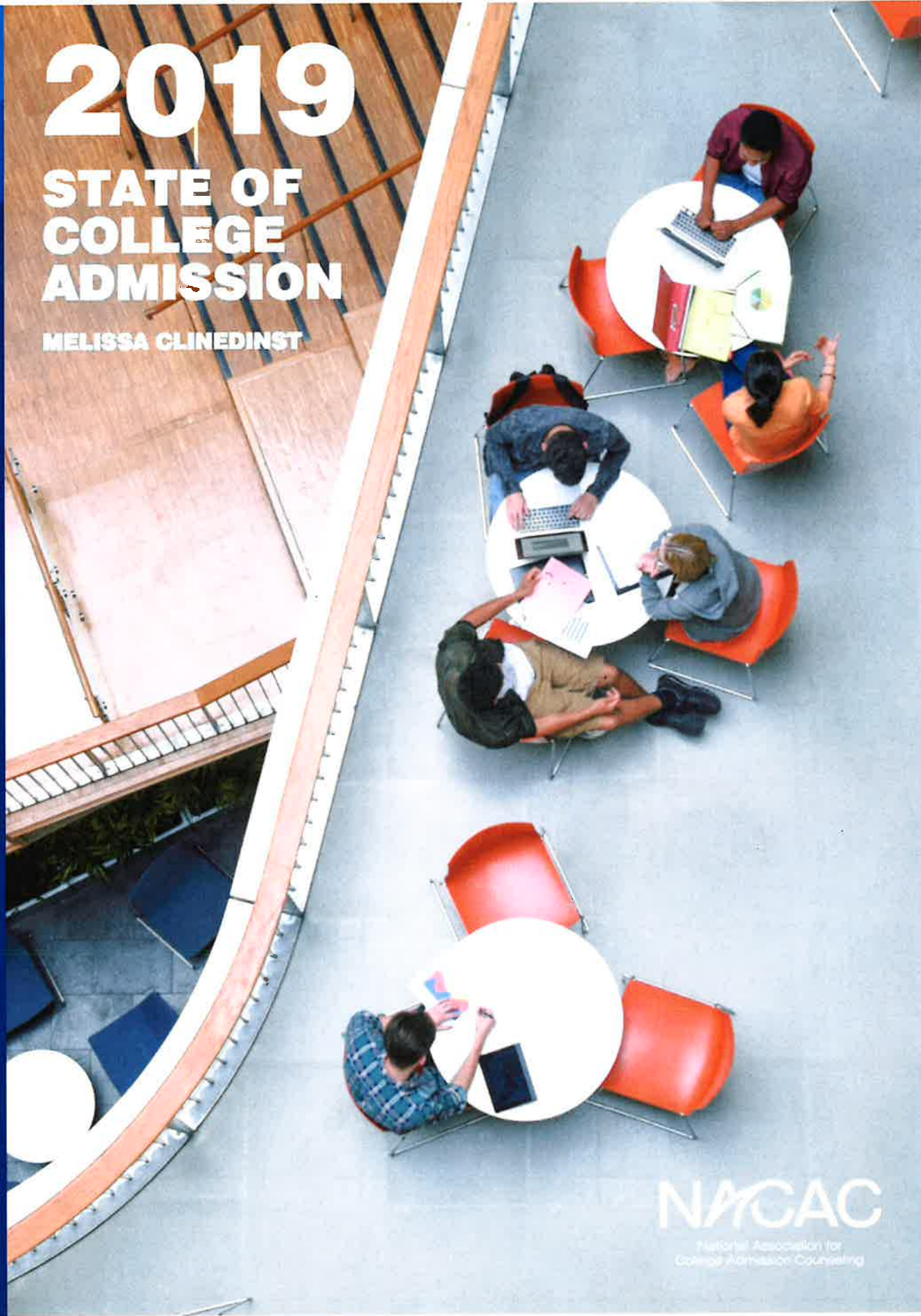
- ***2019 State of College Admission***, National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC).
- ***What Colleges Want in an Applicant***, *The New York Times* Education Life, 11/1/2017.
- ***Getting Beyond the Hype*** (or Why You Can Relax and Enjoy Your College Search), excerpt from the 2013-2014 Edition of:



2019

STATE OF COLLEGE ADMISSION

MELISSA CLINEDINST



NACAC

National Association for
College Admission Counseling

Executive Summary

Highlights from the *2019 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 2019 report also includes information about applications from international and transfer students.

College Applications

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

- **Growth in Application Volume Continues:** Between the Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 admission cycles, the number of applications from first-time freshmen increased 6 percent and international student applications increased by 7 percent. Transfer applications were up 2 percent overall, but public colleges experienced an average 1.7 percent decline in transfer applications while private colleges had a 4.7 percent increase.

- **Colleges Accept Two-Thirds of First-Time Freshmen Applicants, on Average:**

The percentage of applicants offered admission at four-year colleges and universities in the United States—referred to as the average selectivity rate—was 66.7 percent for Fall 2017. The national average acceptance rate has increased from a low of 63.9 percent in Fall 2012.

- **Average Yield Rate for First-Time Freshmen Holds Steady After Long Decline:**

The average yield rate for Fall 2017 was nearly identical to Fall 2016 (33.7 percent and 33.6 percent, respectively). Over the past decade the average yield rate has steadily declined from 48 percent in Fall 2007.

- **Transfer Acceptance Rate Slightly Lower than Freshmen Rate; Yield Much Higher:**

Among institutions that enroll transfer students, average selectivity for Fall 2018 was 61 percent, compared to 66 percent for first-time freshmen. However, more than half (52 percent) of transfer applicants who were admitted ultimately enrolled, compared to only 27 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 Fall 2018 admit rate for this population (52 percent) was lower than the rate for both transfer and first-time freshmen students. The average yield rate for international students was 29 percent.

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.

- **Top Recruitment Strategies:** Colleges employ a broad range of strategies when recruiting high school students. Sending email, maintaining institutional websites, and hosting campus visits were the primary means by which colleges recruited first-time freshmen for the Fall 2018 admission cycle. Four other factors—high school visits, direct mail, and outreach to both parents and high school counselors—were each rated as considerably important by at least 50 percent of colleges.

- **Early Decision and Early Action Activity Increases:** Between Fall 2017 and Fall 2018, colleges reported an average increase of 11 percent in the number of Early Decision applicants and 10 percent in ED admits. The number of Early Action applications increased by 10 percent and the number of students accepted through EA increased by 9 percent.
- **Wait List Activity Increases; Likelihood of Wait List Acceptance Remains Low:** For the Fall 2018 admission cycle, 43 percent of institutions reported using a wait list. From Fall 2017 to Fall 2018, the number of students offered a place on an admission wait list increased by 18 percent, on average. Institutions accepted an average of 20 percent of all students who chose to remain on wait lists.
- **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 overall high school GPA, grades in college preparatory courses, strength of curriculum, and admission test scores. Among the next most important factors were the essay, a student's demonstrated interest, counselor and teacher recommendations, class rank, and extracurricular activities.
- **Student Background Information:** Nearly one-third of colleges rated first-generation status as at least moderately important in first-time freshmen admission decisions. About one-quarter of colleges considered high school attended, race/ethnicity, and state or county of residence as either moderately or considerably important.
- **Student-to-Counselor Ratio:** According to US Department of Education data, in 2016–17 each public school counselor (including elementary and secondary) was responsible for 455 students, on average.
- **College Counseling Staff in Secondary Schools:** For the 2018–19 academic year, 29 percent of public schools reported employing at least one counselor (full- or part-time) whose exclusive responsibility was to provide college counseling, compared to 48 percent of private schools.
- **Time Available for College Counseling in Secondary Schools:** Some differences exist between the duties and activities of counselors employed at public schools versus those who work at private schools. On average, public school counselors spent 19 percent of their time on postsecondary counseling in 2018–19, while their private school counterparts spent 31 percent of their time on college counseling.

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.

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.

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2017

| Factor | N | Considerable Importance | Moderate Importance | Limited Importance | No Importance |
|----------------------------------|-----|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Grades in All Courses | 220 | 74.5 | 15.0 | 5.5 | 5.0 |
| Grades in College Prep Courses | 220 | 73.2 | 16.8 | 5.9 | 4.1 |
| Strength of Curriculum | 219 | 62.1 | 21.9 | 8.7 | 7.3 |
| Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT) | 221 | 45.7 | 37.1 | 12.2 | 5.0 |
| Essay or Writing Sample | 220 | 23.2 | 33.2 | 24.1 | 19.5 |
| Student's Demonstrated Interest | 218 | 16.1 | 23.9 | 28.0 | 32.1 |
| Counselor Recommendation | 218 | 15.1 | 40.4 | 26.6 | 17.9 |
| Teacher Recommendation | 219 | 14.2 | 40.2 | 26.5 | 19.2 |
| Class Rank | 220 | 9.1 | 29.1 | 34.1 | 27.7 |
| Extracurricular Activities | 219 | 6.4 | 42.9 | 32.0 | 18.7 |
| Portfolio | 219 | 6.4 | 11.9 | 26.9 | 54.8 |
| Subject Test Scores (AP, IB) | 219 | 5.5 | 18.3 | 35.2 | 41.1 |
| Interview | 219 | 5.5 | 16.4 | 28.3 | 49.8 |
| Work | 217 | 4.1 | 28.6 | 36.9 | 30.4 |
| State Graduation Exam Scores | 218 | 2.3 | 8.7 | 18.8 | 70.2 |
| SAT II Scores | 216 | 1.9 | 5.6 | 14.8 | 77.8 |

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2018–19.

by strength of curriculum, admission test scores, and grades in all courses (overall GPA). However, for the past three admission cycles (2016, 2017, and 2018), the percentage of colleges rating grades in all courses as considerably important has matched or surpassed grades in college prep courses.

Class rank has become much less important over the past decade. For each admission cycle from Fall 2016 to Fall 2018, only 9 percent of colleges rated class rank as considerably important, compared to 23 percent in 2007.

Factors in Admission by Institutional Characteristics for First-Time Freshmen, Fall 2018

The top four admission decision factors for first-time freshmen are consistent across all types of institutions. However, institutional characteristics determined the relative level of importance assigned to some admission factors.

Institutional Control

- Private colleges placed relatively more importance on the essay/writing sample, the interview,

counselor and teacher recommendations, demonstrated interest, extracurricular activities, and work.

- Public colleges valued admission test scores more highly than private institutions.

Enrollment Size

- Smaller colleges gave comparatively more weight to the interview, teacher and counselor recommendations, and demonstrated interest.
- Larger colleges tended to place more value on admission test scores.

What Colleges Want in an Applicant (*Everything*)

The admissions process is a maddening mishmash of competing objectives, and an attempt to measure the unmeasurable: you. No, it isn't fair, and likely never will be.

By ERIC HOOVER NOV. 1, 2017

The admissions process is out of whack. Just ask the heartbroken applicant, rejected by her dream school. Ask high school counselors, who complain that colleges don't reward promising students for their creativity, determination or service to others. Even the gatekeepers at some famous institutions acknowledge, quietly, that the selection system is broken.

Ask five people how to fix it, though, and they'll give five different answers. Sure, you might think colleges put too much stock in the SAT, but your neighbor's kid with the near-perfect score thinks it should matter a lot. More than half of Americans say colleges shouldn't give children of alumni a leg up, according to a recent Gallup poll; yet nearly half say parental connections should be at least a "minor factor."

The debate about who gets into the nation's competitive colleges, and why, keeps boiling over. The Justice Department has confirmed that it's looking into a complaint, filed in 2015 by a coalition of 64 Asian-American associations, charging discrimination against high-achieving Asian-American college applicants. Also, students for Fair Admissions, which opposes affirmative action policies, has filed discrimination lawsuits against Harvard, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Texas at Austin.

Although the Supreme Court affirmed last year that admissions officers may consider an applicant's race among other factors, polls show that a majority of Americans disagree with that decision. Critics of affirmative action see plenty of room for future legal challenges.

Whatever happens, age-old questions about fairness in admissions will surely endure. For one thing, the nation can't come to terms with a tricky five-letter word: merit. Michael Young, a British sociologist, coined the pejorative term "meritocracy" over a half-century ago to describe a future in which standardized intelligence tests would crown a new elite. Yet as Rebecca Zwick explains in her new book "Who Gets In?" the meaning has shifted. The word "merit," she writes, has come to mean "academic excellence, narrowly defined" as grades and test scores.

But that's just one way to think of an applicant's worthiness. Dr. Zwick, professor emeritus at the University of California at Santa Barbara, has long been a researcher at the Educational Testing Service, which develops and administers the SAT. She disputes the notion that testing prowess — or any other attribute, for that matter — entitles a student to a spot at his chosen college. "There is, in fact, no absolute definition of merit," she writes.

That brings us to you, the anxious applicant, the frazzled parent, the confused citizen, all wondering what colleges want. It's worth taking a deep breath and noting that only 13 percent of four-year colleges accept fewer than half of their applicants. That said, colleges where seats are scarce stir up the nation's emotions. Each year, the world-famous institutions reject thousands and thousands of students who could thrive there.

Yes, rejection stings. But say these words aloud: The admissions process isn't fair. Like it or not, colleges aren't looking to reel in the greatest number of straight-A students who've taken seven or more Advanced Placement courses. A rejection isn't really about you; it's about a maddening mishmash of competing objectives.

Just as parents give teenagers a set of chores, colleges hand their admissions leaders a list of things to accomplish. When they fail, they often get fired.

"We don't live in a cloud — the reality is, there's a bottom line," said Angel B. Pérez, vice president for enrollment and student success at Trinity College, in Hartford. "We're an institution, but we're also a business."

On many campuses, financial concerns affect decisions about whom to admit. A recent report by the National Association for College Admission Counseling found that about half of institutions said an applicant's "ability to pay" was of at least "some importance" in admissions decisions. Among other targets is geographic diversity, which is now seen as an indicator of institutional strength and popularity. (Some presidents have been known to gripe if the freshman class doesn't represent all 50 states.) A campus might also need a particular number of engineering majors or goalies.

Indeed, a college could accept 33 percent of all applicants, but that doesn't mean each applicant has a one-in-three chance. Success depends on what a student brings to the table.

Generally, nothing carries more weight in admissions than grades (plus strength of the high school curriculum) and ACT/SAT scores. With limited time and resources, those metrics offer a relatively quick way to predict who will succeed. But the measures have drawbacks. Grade inflation has complicated the task of evaluating achievements, and so has the variance in high school grading policies. Standardized test scores correlate with family income; white and Asian-American students fare better than black and Hispanic students do. Also, when colleges talk about predicting “success,” they usually mean first-year grades — a limited definition.

And so, many colleges rely on “holistic” evaluations, allowing colleges to contextualize applicants’ academic records and to identify disadvantaged students who might lack the sparkling credentials of their affluent peers. Did they attend low-performing high schools or well-resourced ones? Did they participate in extracurricular activities? Do they have leadership experience?

What colleges look for sends a powerful message about what matters, not just to admissions officers but in life, and students often respond accordingly.

Dr. Pérez, a first-generation college student who grew up in a low-income family, recently revamped Trinity’s process to better identify promising students, particularly the disadvantaged. While reading applications, its admissions officers now look for evidence of 13 characteristics — including curiosity, empathy, openness to change and ability to overcome adversity — that researchers associate with successful students. These are also qualities that the liberal-arts college values, inside and outside the classroom.

Trinity’s officers can check as many qualities as apply using a drop-down box labeled “Predictors of Success.” They must note where they saw evidence of each quality in the application. “It can’t be just a hint,” Dr. Pérez said. He recalls a teacher recommendation describing how an applicant had taken a stand on a controversial social issue in class, even though other students vocally disagreed with him. Impressed, Dr. Pérez checked the box for “Comfort in Minority of 1,” a sign, perhaps, that the student would contribute to campus dialogues. Also on the drop-down: “Delayed Gratification” and “Risk Taking.”

While Trinity still values conventional measures, the new model has expanded the staff’s understanding of merit. “We’re trying to give students more credit for these characteristics, especially those who’ve had some challenges,” Dr. Pérez said. The new approach, along with the college’s recent decision to stop requiring ACT/SAT scores, has helped it diversify its classes. Low-income and first-generation students represent 15 percent of this fall’s freshman class, up from 8 percent three years ago.

“I’m trying to increase the tools we have, and get beyond a system that is absolutely antiquated,” Dr. Pérez said. “As the country becomes more diverse, as we learn more about the correlation between standardized test scores and wealth, we have to be a lot more creative in predicting for success in college.”

What most colleges ask for from applicants doesn’t reveal much about the many skills and talents a student might possess. But what if colleges asked for more?

The admissions process at Olin College of Engineering includes a live audition. After completing a traditional application, selected students visit the campus, in Needham, Mass., for an intense two-day tryout. In addition to sitting for interviews, they work in small groups to complete a tabletop design challenge, such as building a tower that can hold a specific weight. On the second day, they are given another task, like designing a campus building. This time, evaluators observe each student, noting how well they communicate with others and adapt on the fly.

The experience is meant to help prospective students understand Olin’s collaborative culture, while giving the college a better glimpse of each applicant before finalizing acceptance. “It’s hard to nail down a student’s mind-set from the traditional elements of the application,” said Emily Roper-Doten, the dean of admission and financial aid. “This allows us to see them in motion, in an educational moment.”

A desire to see what students can do with their hands inspired a recent change at one of the world’s most renowned campuses. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (motto: “Mens et manus,” Latin for “Mind and hand”) now gives applicants the option of submitting a Maker Portfolio to show their “technical creativity.”

Applicants can send images, a short video and a PDF that shed light on a project they’ve undertaken — clothing they’ve made, apps they’ve designed, cakes they’ve baked, furniture they’ve built, chain mail they’ve woven. M.I.T. also asks students to explain what the project meant to them, as well as how much help they got. A panel of faculty members and alumni reviews the portfolios.

Last year, about 5 percent of applicants submitted a Makers Portfolio. “It gives us a fuller picture of the student,” said Stuart Schmill, dean of admissions and student financial services. “Without this, some applicants might not be able to fully get across how good a fit they are for us.”

M.I.T.’s experiment has sparked discussions among admissions deans, some of whom say they plan to offer similar opportunities for applicants to send evidence of project-based learning. They describe the Makers Portfolio as an intriguing glimpse of how a college might better align its process with its culture and values. The catch: Reviewing all those portfolios takes time, something admissions offices lack. Even a small college like Olin, which welcomed fewer than 100 new students this fall, must scramble to pull off its elaborate evaluations. Larger campuses couldn’t even consider such an approach.

Thorough review has become more challenging over the last decade, with waves of applicants overwhelming big-name colleges, victims of their own popularity. The University of California at Los Angeles received more than 100,000 applications for about 6,000 spots this fall. Stanford got 44,000 for just over 1,700 spots, and M.I.T. juggled more than 20,000 for 1,450 seats.

Most colleges are considering more incremental ways to enhance evaluations. The Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success, with more than 130 prominent campuses as members, recently established an application platform with a feature called a virtual college locker, a private space where students can upload materials, such as videos and written work, that they could later add to their applications. Among its stated goals: to make admissions more personal.

So far, most of its members aren't asking applicants to send anything different than before. But that could change. A handful of colleges are planning experiments using alternative ways to measure student potential. One hopes to enable applicants to demonstrate their "emotional intelligence," or E.Q., to showcase their ability to work with others, according to Annie Reznik, the coalition's executive director. Another seeks a way for prospective students to display their "fire" for learning.

"We want better inputs," said Jeremiah Quinlan, dean of undergraduate admissions and financial aid at Yale. "The inputs we have predict success academically. Now, we have the ability to get to know a student better, from a different type of submission."

Like many deans, Mr. Quinlan has grown wary of polished personal essays in which applicants describe their achievements. "They feel like they have to show off, because we're so selective," he said, "and it's completely understandable." Technology, he believes, can help colleges get to know the student beneath the surface of a résumé, to gain a better sense of their passions, the kind of community member the applicant might be.

Last year, Yale allowed students using the coalition's application to submit a document, image, audio file or video in response to a prompt (they also had to reflect, in 250 words or less, on their submission). When Justin Aubin heard about that option last fall, he thought, "Cool!"

Mr. Aubin, from Oak Lawn, Ill., was then a high school senior hoping to attend Yale. The following prompt caught his eye: "A community to which you belong and the footprint you have left." He submitted a short video documenting his Eagle Scout project, for which he oversaw the construction of a monument honoring veterans. Even a well-written essay, he figured, couldn't capture his experience as well as four minutes of footage, shot by his older brother.

The content of the video impressed Yale's admissions committee. "People sat up in their chairs," Mr. Quinlan said. "You could see how he handled his leadership role, and we felt like we got a good sense of him in a way that we didn't get from recommendations."

Mr. Aubin is now a freshman at Yale.

Did the video tip the scales? "That was a difference-maker," Mr. Quinlan said.

Even as colleges consider innovation, it's worth asking which fixtures of the admissions process, if any, they are willing to discard. Some prevalent practices seem to stand in the way of meaningful change.

Giving an advantage to the sons and daughters of alumni is one such practice. Some colleges admit legacies (and the children of potential donors) at a much greater rate than non-legacies. Legacies make up nearly a third of Harvard's current freshman class, The Harvard Crimson has reported. Princeton's class of 2021 is 13 percent legacy, according to the university's website.

While a handful of prominent institutions, including the University of Georgia and Texas A&M University, stopped considering legacy status more than a decade ago, most colleges seem unlikely to remove that variable from the admissions equation anytime soon. "I don't think an applicant's legacy status is a crazy thing to look at, especially in the financial climate some colleges are in," said Rick Clark, director of undergraduate admission at Georgia Tech, where nearly a fifth of freshmen are legacies. "Colleges have to think about their longevity."

The benefits of legacies go beyond maintaining good will with alumni who might open their wallets, Mr. Clark said. In his experience, they tend to be enthusiastic students who help foster community on campus, the kind of relationships that help other students feel at home and succeed. "Multigenerational ties to a place add value, creating this passionate, magnetic source of energy," he said.

The key, Mr. Clark believes, is not to lower standards, or to enroll so many legacies that other priorities, such as increasing racial and socioeconomic diversity, suffer as a result. "Those two goals aren't mutually exclusive," he said.

Other measurements used by selective colleges have nothing to do with a student's accomplishments or attributes — and everything to do with a college's agenda.

About one in five institutions allot "considerable importance" to "demonstrated interest," the degree to which applicants convey their desire to enroll if accepted, according to a survey by the National Association for College Admission Counseling. The strongest expression of demonstrated interest is applying for binding early decision, a policy that favors affluent students who don't need to compare financial aid offers and one that some colleges use to fill half their seats.

Beyond that, technology has made it easier to track the number of times an applicant engages with a college (by visiting the campus, contacting an admissions officer, responding to an email). This valuable information helps officers gauge who's most likely to enroll, which can influence who gets admitted in the first place. A higher "yield," the percentage of accepted students who actually enroll, is widely seen as a measure of status.

The problem is that savvy students who know colleges are watching them can tilt the odds in their favor, said Nancy Leopold, executive director of CollegeTracks, a Maryland nonprofit group that helps low-income and first-generation students get into college: "Demonstrated interest is biased against kids who don't know the game exists, or who don't have the time or money to play it."

What do colleges really cherish? The answer is influenced greatly by the entities they seek to impress. U.S. News & World Report and other college guides, not to mention bond-rating agencies, rely heavily on conventional admissions metrics like ACT/SAT scores and acceptance rates to evaluate institutions. A college president might wish to attract more creative thinkers, but accomplishing that goal won't help his college's ranking.

Generally, colleges are risk-averse. Rocking the boat with a newfangled admissions process could hurt their reputations. "The challenge for many admissions offices is to make a change, but not so much change or innovation that you're risking the position you're in," said Ms. Roper-Doten of Olin. Asking students to do more could scare off would-be applicants.

"Colleges seek validation," said Lloyd Thacker, executive director of the Education Conservancy, a nonprofit group that has sought to reform college admissions. "Without a real external incentive for colleges to care about broadening their understanding of what makes an applicant promising, they don't seem likely to change the definition on their own."

A recent campaign called "Turning the Tide," a project of Harvard's Graduate School of Education, is urging admissions deans to rethink the qualities they consider in applicants. In a report signed by representatives of about 200 campuses, colleges are asked to promote ethical character and service to others through the admissions process.

Although some deans say they have no business assessing the character of still-maturing teenagers, the push has prompted a handful of institutions to tweak their applications. The University of North Carolina now emphasizes contributions to others when asking about extracurricular activities. M.I.T. added an essay question asking students to describe how they've helped people.

Richard Weissbourd, a senior lecturer at Harvard, who leads the initiative, recommends that colleges define service in ways that might resonate with disadvantaged students. "Many students don't have opportunities to do community service," he said. "They're taking care of their siblings, or they're working part-time jobs to help their families. Colleges need to say, 'That matters to us.'"

In the end, increasing racial and socioeconomic diversity in higher education is a matter of will. A college can prioritize it or not, said Shaun R. Harper, a professor at the University of Southern California's Rossier School of Education who studies race and student success.

In September, Dr. Harper gave a keynote speech at the annual conference of the National Association for College Admission Counseling, in Boston. He urged his audience to think hard about racial inequality and "things you perhaps inadvertently and unknowingly do to support it."

He cited as examples high school counselors who discourage promising minority students from applying to highly selective colleges; college leaders who say they "just can't find enough" qualified black applicants even as their athletics coaches comb the nation for black students who excel at sports; admissions officers who recruit at the same high schools year after year, overlooking those full of underrepresented minorities.

As Dr. Harper spoke, many listeners applauded; a few scowled. He concluded his remarks by criticizing the lack of racial diversity among admissions deans themselves. He received a standing ovation.

In a subsequent interview, Dr. Harper elaborated on his concerns. "When the demographics of the profession have not changed, particularly at the senior level," he said, "I don't know that we can expect a major change, especially in terms of diversifying the class."

Although Dr. Harper believes colleges rely too heavily on ACT/SAT scores, he says that the major barriers arise well before the application process even begins. Colleges, he said, must do more in terms of outreach to encourage underrepresented students to apply.

Dr. Pérez, at Trinity, has similar concerns. Although he is convinced that the selection process can be successfully revamped, he doesn't think that will solve the No. 1 problem he sees in admissions. "The problem is money," he said. "If I had more funding, my class would be more diverse. The conversation we're not having in this country is: How do we fund colleges and universities?"

However the admissions process might evolve, it surely will continue to serve the interests of colleges first and foremost. Even if someone invents a better, more equitable way to gauge applicants' potential, a college's many wants and needs wouldn't change. Deans would still seek to balance their classes by enrolling a diverse mix of majors from many states and countries. Colleges would still need enough oboe players and theater-arts majors.

"What compels institutions to change is deep discontent," said Marie Bigham, director of college counseling at Isidore Newman School, in New Orleans. "If they're only making changes on the margins, it indicates that they're mostly content with the way things are."

That leads to a big question in an age of widening social inequality. How unhappy are the wealthiest colleges, really, with the status quo? Some of the nation's most selective institutions enroll more students from the top 1 percent of the income ladder than from the bottom 60 percent. Is that simply because of lack of preparation in the K-12 system? Flaws within the selection process? Or is it evidence, as Dr. Harper suggests, of a systemic lack of will to change those numbers?

Jon Boeckenstedt, associate vice president for enrollment management and marketing at DePaul University, says that it is the high-profile colleges that have the power to redefine the admissions process.

"Unless and until something changes at the top, nothing else is going to change," he said. "That's because, at a lot of colleges, people will go to their graves trying to imitate the Ivy League."

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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 “reifer 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.