

The College Admissions Process

Class of 2017

March 16, 2016

Today's Topics

- Timeline of Events
- Creating a Balanced List
- The Elements of a College Application
- Financial Considerations



Admissions: Good News/Bad News

While the odds for admission into a four-year school are excellent, the competition for very selective colleges, especially those in the Northeast, is more intense than ever.

The Silver Lining?

Students who do their research and are realistic about the process, usually end up very happy with the outcome.



Overview: Application Process

Junior Year

Spring/Summer

- Research
- Meet with counselor
- Campus visits
- Identify teacher(s) for recommendations
- Take SAT/ACT
- Complete Student Self Reflection
- Create a Common App account
- Start college essays

Senior Year

Fall

- Finalize college list
- Retake SAT/ACT
- Secure recommendations
- Complete final draft of college essays
- Submit EA/ED applications

Winter

- Submit financial aid applications
- Apply for local scholarships
- Submit RD applications

Spring

- Receive admissions and financial aid offers
- College visits - Accepted Students Day
- Make a deposit to 1 school by May 1

Looking for “Fit” and Creating a Balanced List

Rather than asking this: *“Which is the best college?”*

Ask this: *“Which is the best college for me?”*

Do research!

Go visit!

Create a Balanced List!

Demonstrate Interest!



Do your research!

Start your research online:

College Board: collegeboard.org

College Navigator: nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator


Colleges that Change Lives: <http://ctcl.org/>




The Campus Visit

Compare location, size, resources, curriculum, activities, diversity, student support, athletics, and any other things that are a priority for you.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/college-admissions/explore-college-options/campus-visit/v/visiting-campus>



Apply Strategically

- Shift focus from a school's overall fit to its Academic Fit
 - Am I in the mix? If so, where? Are there different requirements for the major to which I would be applying?
 - To evaluate, review the admitted student profile (available on most schools' websites or CollegeBoard.org)
 - GPA, class rank, SAT/ACT
 - Helps get sense of chances for admission
 - Might also help gauge potential for scholarships/funding
- 

Create a Balanced List

- Solid Schools
- Financially Feasible Schools
 - Probable Schools
 - Possible Schools
- The Statistical Reach



Demonstrate Interest

- Campus Visits
- Contact with admissions reps at college fairs
- Phone calls/emails



College Application Options

When will you apply?

- Regular Decision
 - Early Action
 - Early Decision
- Rolling Admission
- Open Admission



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Components of a College Application

Your application may include:

- Application form
- High school transcript
- Standardized test scores (SAT/ACT)
- Recommendations
- Activity list or resume
- Personal essay
- Interview
- Audition
- Portfolio
- Writing supplements

College Application Types

How will I apply?

- Common Application
 - Universal College Application
 - SendEDU
 - College website online application
 - Paper
-

High School Transcript

Includes:

- Final Grades for all courses taken at Sturgis
- GPA (unweighted) at the end of junior year
- IB Diploma Candidate

Does not Include:

- SAT/ACT test scores
- Class Rank (which is reported to colleges as decile rank)

Standardized Test Scores

SAT + Essay and/or ACT + Writing

- Taken in Spring of junior year and consider a second time in the fall of senior year.
- Differences in format and content, so explore both tests.
- Take advantage of free SAT prep on Khan Academy.

Do I need SAT Subject Tests?


What if I don't test well? (Fairtest.org)



Letters of Recommendation

- Choose a teacher who knows you well, not necessarily the class where you have the highest grade.
- Only obtain as many as you need.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/college-admissions/applying-to-college/letters-of-recommendation/v/requesting-letters-of-recommendation>



Activity List or Resume


- Start making a list or resume now.
- Quality vs. Quantity
- Do what you enjoy!



The College Essay

Most students will be required to write at least one essay as part of the application process. This should be the student's work, and their "voice" should come through.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/college-admissions/applying-to-college/admissions-essays/v/writing-a-strong-college-admissions-essay>





Financial Considerations

College Finances

- Don't make decisions about where to apply based on the "sticker price." It is unusual for a family to pay the full listed cost. Most colleges offer some sort of merit and/or need-based financial aid.
- Explore Net Price Calculators on college websites.
- The FAFSA will be available much earlier this year - October 1, 2016





Questions?