

STEP-BY-STEP HOW TO APPLY TO COLLEGE GUIDE
TULLAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT
2017-18

Seniors, your THS Counselors are here to help you with your college decisions. There are lots of questions we ask to help you narrow down your college choice. How large a college do you want to attend? Do you want to live at home or in the dorm? Which colleges offer your proposed major? Ultimately when it comes time to apply, the job falls to you. Below is a list of steps to follow when applying to college. Let me caution you that these steps are a general list, as some colleges require more to apply and others less. **READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED BY COLLEGE ADMISSIONS DEPARTMENTS; USE THEIR WEBSITE OR CALL THEM WITH QUESTIONS. THEY ARE THE EXPERTS ON THEIR ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS.**

***Narrow down your choices:** There are thousands of colleges to choose from. The first step is narrowing down your choices. Ask yourself, “Do I want a technical college or a university? Will I commute or live on campus? Can I afford this college if I am accepted? Do I have the grades and test scores to apply to this college?” Once you have limited your college choices by your list of preferences and the colleges entrance requirements, you should further narrow your list by visiting the colleges to see if they feel like a good fit. Limit your list to at least 2 and more than 5 colleges.

***Apply:** You’ve narrowed your list of colleges; now you have to apply. Generally, the application is found on the college/university’s Admissions web page. Look for the “Undergraduate”, “Prospective Student” or “Freshmen” link. The requirements and process vary from college to college. Follow the application directions and keep notes of the steps required and deadlines to submit the required information or documents. Applying to multiple colleges is confusing, so keep good records. NEVER call the college by the wrong name in your admissions application.

Most colleges require you to complete their online application, pay an application fee, submit ACT or SAT scores, and submit an official high school transcript. The online application and application fee you will complete at home with the assistance of your parents. ACT and SAT scores can be requested at the time you take the exam. If you did not request your scores be sent to your colleges at the time you tested, you will need to request an official transcript from CollegeBoard.com for SAT scores or ACTstudent.com for ACT scores to be sent to the college. SHS is limited by College Board and ACT from sending test scores taken outside of the regular school day to colleges. You have two options for sending a transcript. You can (1) complete a paper copy transcript request form available on the counseling website or (2) visit myschoolfees.org and request a transcript. There is a \$3 per copy cost for an official transcript ordered.

***Submit supplemental materials:** In addition to these commonly requested application requirements, some colleges will ask students to write an essay or submit letters of recommendation. Many of these requests are electronic and students will enter in a counselor’s or teacher’s email address to request a recommendation letter. The automated

email is sent to the teacher or counselor with instructions on how to complete the request. Make sure you ask your teachers and counselors in advance of sending them a request for a recommendation letter.

SHS Counselors will need a resume from each student who wants us to write a personal reference.. You may want to give teachers or others similar information when requesting they write a letter of recommendation. Colleges want letters of recommendation that don't just list facts about a students, but instead tell a student's story and make the reader want to get to know more about the student.

***Be Patient:** Colleges communicate by email, so make sure you provide an email address you are sure to check. You may be asked to set-up an account with the college/university admissions website so that you can log in and check the status of your application. Be sure you read each communication received from the college so you don't miss out on an opportunity or deadline. Note all dates of acceptance that a college has posted, so you will know when to expect to hear back on an application. Once you are accepted you will continue to receive information from the college concerning scholarships, housing, meal plans, orientation...

Accepted/Denied/Wait Listed: Whatever the decision you receive, there is a best fit for you. Please feel free to speak to your counselor about your college search and application process. We love to talk about your future and help you realize your goals.