



### **Early Admissions Options**

Many college applicants wonder if they should apply to a college as an early decision applicant. Let's begin by discussing the types of early admissions options.

**Early Action:** Early action allows a student to submit an application earlier than the normal deadline, usually in November. Decisions are rendered and students are notified of the college's decision by mid-December. This admission is **non-binding**. If the student is admitted, they do not have to express their intent to enroll until May 1, the national reply date used by most colleges.

**Restricted Early Action:** This program is available at a few schools. They have the same rules and deadlines as early action (*above*) but have one significant difference. Whereas the early action program (*above*) allows multiple early applications to early action schools, restricted early action allows applicants to apply to as many colleges as they want under regular admission, but requires that student not apply to any other college under any type of early action, early decision, or early notification program. This admission is **non-binding**. If a student is admitted, they do not have to express their intent to enroll until May 1, the national reply date used by most colleges.

**Early Decision:** These programs follow the same routine, but the agreement is **binding**. That is, if a student is admitted to a school under early decision agreement, the applicant must attend that school. Students must **withdraw** all other applications (including those at UC's) when they receive their admittance to an early decision school.

**Early Decision II:** This is primarily used with small liberal arts colleges. This procedure has much in common the early decision as explained above, however, the deadlines are much later, often simultaneous with, (or a few weeks earlier than), the regular decision deadlines. Students are held to attending the school if they are admitted because the agreement is **binding**.

**Rolling Admission:** Under rolling admission, students can apply at any time between when the application becomes available for the desired term of entry and some deadline (either late spring, the summer, or right around the beginning of classes). They receive a decision within a few weeks of applying. The student's chance of admission is greater the earlier they apply. This admission is **non-binding**. If the student is admitted, they do not have to express their intent to enroll until May 1, the national reply date used by most colleges.



## *Fremont High School Guidance Department 2018-19*

### ***Some Common Questions Regarding Early Applications***

#### **Is it easier to get in if I apply early decision?**

The advantage of submitting an early decision application might be slight or substantial, depending on the college. Read the statistics on early versus regular decision carefully for schools of interest. The commonly held belief is that early decision improves your chances for admission because you are signing a binding contract to attend the school if you are accepted. While admission officers like to know you will enroll at their school if you are accepted, they still will not accept a student early decision that would not have gotten in if he/she applied during the regular decision timeline. For a qualified, organized student who is absolutely sure they want to attend a particular college, early decision may be a slight difference-maker. But applying early decision will not sway an admissions officer into accepting an unqualified applicant.

#### **Is it easier to get in if I apply early action?**

Unless you are absolutely sure of your qualifications and are intent on knowing all of your college options as soon as possible, there does not appear to have any real benefit to applying early action. Because early action does not carry with it the promise that you will attend the school there is very little incentive for a college to accept you early action. If in any way you are border line for the admission panel, it is in their best interest to wait for two more months and base your candidacy on the complete transcript. Your application will be accepted or rejected by your credentials, not by applying early action.

#### **If I am not admitted under the early program, what happens to my application?**

You can be admitted, denied, or deferred to the regular decision pool. Some colleges deny most students who aren't accepted under their early plan. Some colleges defer most or all students not admitted under their early plan and at some institutions, a deferral is barely better than a denial. Few are accepted after a deferral. The applicants are merely granted a few more months of waiting with their hopes up. Finally, if you are admitted early decision, you must attend the school if admitted. This means you must inform all the other schools to which you applied and withdraw your applications. If you reject your acceptance and try to go to another college, you will find that you have been blacklisted and your only option will be a community college. Once accepted under early decision, the only real way to change your mind is to attend the college for a semester and then transfer.

#### **Should I apply early decision?**

##### ***Yes, Yes, Yes, If:***

- You have found a college that excites you far more than the others you have visited and researched to exhaustion. Moreover, the college is within your reach.
- Your academic record is impeccable. You can't imagine that your grades will improve in the first semester of your senior year. You have also taken all of our college entrance testing, and the results seem to be in line with that this college expects.

##### ***No, No, No, If:***

- You really like the college but have some hesitation about being so far away from home or other pertinent factors. You are also wondering if you need more time to think this through.
- You are unsure about what you will need to pay for college and you really need to see what more than one college will be offering you, since you know you will have to apply for financial aid.
- If your 7<sup>th</sup> semester grades (first semester senior year graders) may improve your GPA.