



College Admissions and Career Guidance

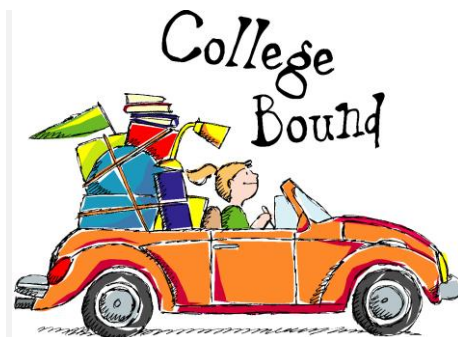
From the desk of Marie Assir, Head of College Admissions and Career Guidance

Dear Parents and Students,

High school is a great time for students to explore their options and learn about themselves, their likes and dislikes. Internships, classes, clubs, summer programs, volunteer work and sports can all help in the self-discovery process. Students are not expected to leave high school knowing exactly what they want to do, but this is a chance to start narrowing down any interests. People never know what they like – or how good they are at something – until they give it a try.

As parents, our role is vital in the discussions that we have with our children around careers and college. Each student should feel that they have the starring role in this important decision. Students need the support of their parents and assistance carefully doled out in the perfect recipe of love, understanding and patience - mixed in with a dash of interference and control. It is a delicate balance to encourage independence while simultaneously guiding and advising.

The college application process is most effective when the "team" - the student, parent and school work together toward a shared goal. Please check out the IC website - college counseling page for useful information including the college application [handbook](#).



Upcoming Events

May 17

Columbia/Dartmouth/
Georgetown/Northwestern/
Vanderbilt at IC

6-8 PM

Irani Auditorium



Seniors reflect and advise on applying to university

Tatiana Houhou – Class of 2018 – Lebanese Program
NYU Abu Dhabi with full scholarship



The college application process is a self-development process, a truly transformative one, a process that urges one to reconsider their options, question their

interests, or maybe even redefine their priorities.

Start early and make the most out of the high school experience. Try new things every day and develop your interests fully. Take part in student life, but also take personal initiative outside school. Again, develop your interests, and take part in the activities you are genuinely interested in so that you can thrive!

Trust me, practice makes perfect and that is the case as well with SAT. Practice every day for months before the exam. Sit for practice tests every day, and you will notice the pattern used in the posed questions, and hence you will hopefully crack the SAT. While grades and SAT scores don't determine everything, focus on maintaining a good academic record; balance your social life, academics/athletics, and school work.

Part of the college application process is writing the essays which, for me, is definitely the most fascinating step. In these essays, we as applicants are expected to convey who we are as accurately as possible to college admission officers in just a few lines and a very limited word count. These essays are our chance to make them love us, but most importantly they are the gateway into self-discovery. Making my way through writing the Common App essay, draft by draft, I questioned myself

every time. Every single self-discovery lead into another until they eventually culminated in my final draft. Enjoy the essay writing process, be as honest and transparent as possible, and make sure that your very distinct STORY shines through. Remember, even the simplest of details in your life matter! Your essay doesn't need to revolve around a major (maybe even typical) topic. After all, it may be that the details are the ones that make you stand out.

A crucial part of the college process is college research. For me, this step was a bit trickier because I had to worry about both the cost of attendance and the prospect of acceptance. I started by searching for colleges that offer need-based aid and ones that offer need-blind admission. I also looked for separate scholarship programs, so do not rule out this possibility and browse the websites carefully to find out about such programs. At the end, your financial aid and scholarship packages might add up into a significant amount. After that, I eliminated the colleges where I thought I won't fit in. You must always remember to search your best fit colleges and not just the BIG-NAME colleges. After all, your college of choice will be your home for the next four years of your life. Search thoroughly and read all about your preferred universities; about dining, housing, student and campus life... Search for your best fit!

Most importantly, visit our school college counselor early on in your high school years and very frequently as well because she is the main source of personalized advice and guidance. She will definitely offer you insight, and she might actually change your life for the best like she did with mine. My best-fit university, turned out to be a university that I never considered until she suggested it.



Eliot Haddad – Class of 2018 – IB Program

Michigan State University with full scholarship

The most critical piece of advice about applying to college is know what you want. Make your plans and decide which universities you are going to target as soon as possible. This enables you to start applying early, which not only increases your chances for admission, but also opens doors for scholarships and grants and more time to make the most informed choice.

On top of this, rely on yourself to find the necessary information for your university. University websites have all the information you are looking for—be it scholarships, admissions requirements, or due dates—and rather than immediately turning to external help, try asking Google. You would be surprised how much information you can find online when you actually endeavor to find it.



Yasmina El Khazen – Class of 2018 – College Preparatory Program

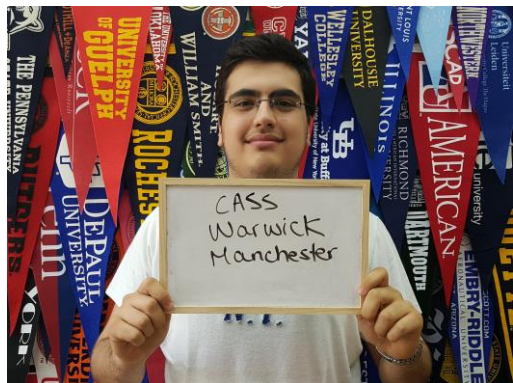
Concordia University

Some decisions may be easy to make while others are bigger and harder and like all my colleagues, I had one of the ‘biggest’ and ‘hardest’ decisions to make and it was the one that defines my future.

I always had a view of my life after graduating from school; I was going to study abroad, precisely in Canada since I have the Canadian passport. At the beginning of my senior year, I was confused and lost. I was anxious about deadlines, portfolio requirements, and keeping up my school record. First thing I did was meet with my school counselor and search online for Canadian universities that interest me. Then

I started filling out my applications and after a couple of months I started receiving admission decisions.

Finally, I think there is no need to stress, just work your best, do your research, seek help from your counselor, and follow-up on your applications. As for me, I still do not know whether I made the right or the wrong decision but I know that I will not regret the experience.



Ali Ismail – Class of 2018 – French Program

University of Warwick

As a senior, the most time-consuming and tiring thing you will have to do is your college applications. This process can seem intimidating, especially if you do not have siblings or people, you know who have already been through it and can offer advice. At first, you will struggle to decide where to apply or whether you would want to study abroad or not.

Here is my advice to you: The earlier you start the better. You should start thinking about the application process and about universities before getting to 12th grade. Furthermore, if you want to apply to several colleges, be aware of every deadline. Keep in mind that admissions offices receive thousands of applications at once so beat the rush by submitting yours early. I started thinking about the universities I wanted to apply back in 11th grade. During summer, I wrote my personal statement and sent the recommendation letter requests to my teachers. I also worked during the month of august to strengthen my application.

Moreover, admission officers review a huge number of applications in a very short period, so make sure to capture their attention by differentiating yourself and by making an impact on them. Always remember to stay true to yourself, to reflect on your experiences, and express your opinions with sincerity and originality.

By the beginning of my senior year, my application was ready and was set to go. I applied to six universities, one local and five abroad, and I have received offers of admission to four of them.



Alexander Nassar – Class of 2018 – French Program

McGill

Always have an updated agenda and keep track of deadlines for each university. Don't take anything for granted, like a high score on IELTS or SAT, it might be easy for some, but others need to repeat it a number of times until they get the required scores. So basically, the earlier you do things the better, and don't stress. IC offers its students the privilege of having counselors and career guides. I strongly encourage every student to

start the year by a counselor-parent-student meeting. This 30-40 minute talk set my parents and me on the right track from the beginning. With the help of experienced people, and looking around and taking advantage of the very useful activities offered by the school (career and college fairs and presentations), I was able to make a step towards my academic life outside of school.

Students share their experience on Job Shadowing

Karim Kotob – Grade 10 – BankMed

During my job shadow day, I had the opportunity to spend a day at BankMed and meet with the branch manager. I was introduced to the different departments in a bank including the CSR and the tellers department. The branch manager briefly explained the general bank functions. Afterwards, I started taking notes as I headed to all the departments. They explained to me in detail the complex yet logical bank function. This journey made me realize the importance of banks in our modern society.



Hind Arayssi – Grade 11 – Wojooh, Chalhoub Group

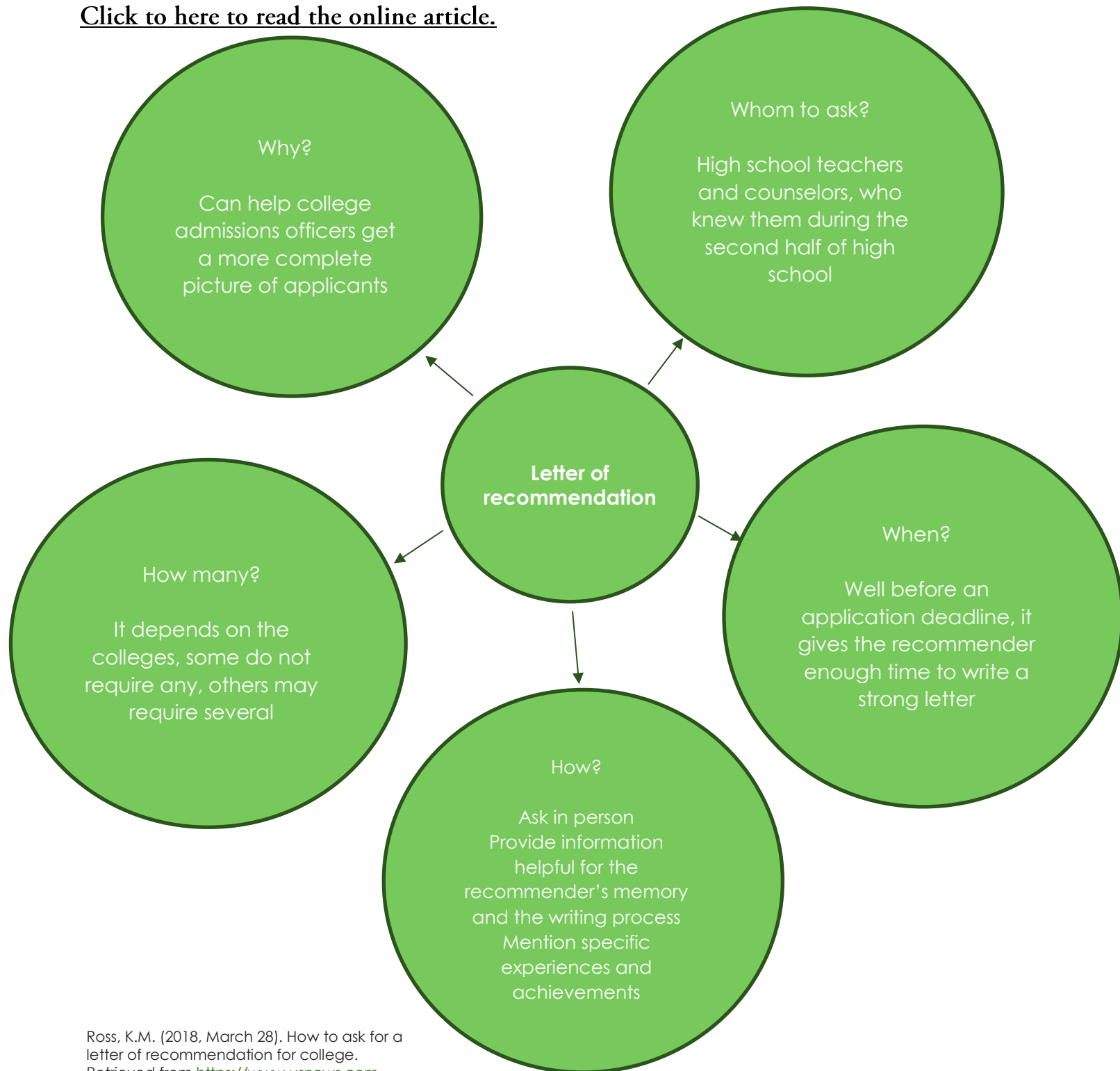
As part of the job shadow program and my increasing interest in brand management, I met with the Chalhoub Group's area manager of the well-known cosmetics store, Wojooh. Chalhoub Group is the leading partner for luxury across the Middle East and an expert in retail, distribution and communication, with a network of over 650 retail stores. I was able to have a first-hand experience of her job, getting to know what goes on in her daily work life, the different types of problems she encounters, and the highlights of her job.

She started off with introducing how she landed her job, the external factors that affect the sales of the store, and the methods that can be used to encourage customers to purchase their products. To my surprise, she does not have a degree in business or marketing, but in philosophy. I later learned that philosophy in the retail sector plays a very important component, for the way items are displayed plays an important part in attracting a customer. This shows that our unique character, along with hard work and perseverance, can fill in the gaps needed to reach our dream job. Some of the hardships of the job is that one must be extremely organized and on track. It also requires displacement between shops to supervise and support the employees and make sure the needed items are available. This job shadowing experience expanded my knowledge in a way that hours of online reading about brand management couldn't. As well as seeing the difficult aspects of the job, I saw what truly makes it a special job, especially for someone like me who is very interested in the field. This enlightening experience let me confirm my possible future career in business and in particular, brand management and marketing.



How to ask for a letter of recommendation for college

[Click to here to read the online article.](#)



Ross, K.M. (2018, March 28). How to ask for a letter of recommendation for college.
Retrieved from <https://www.usnews.com>

How to stay on top of everything

Grade 9

- Consider contacting your college counselor to schedule a meeting.
- Pay attention to your grades, the transcript sent to colleges will include grade 9.
- Work to keep your disciplinary record clean; this information is given to universities.
- Think about what program you want to be in at the secondary school.
- Get in the habit of checking your IC email. This is how your teachers, the college counseling office, and the administration communicate with you.

Grade 10

- Check your IC email daily
- Study hard and be aware of your grades
- Keep your disciplinary record clean
- Get involved beyond the classroom
- Familiarize yourself with Naviance
- Create a testing strategy
- Consider meeting with your college counselor

Grade 11

- Continue to work hard in your classes and keep a clean disciplinary record
- Demonstrate your dedication and passion in your extra-curricular activities
- Meet with your college counselor
- Take the SAT and other tests that you may need
- Start your college RESEARCH
- Consider which teachers you might ask for letters of recommendation
- Over the summer, begin your applications and write drafts of essays

Grade 12

- Meet with your college counselor
- Attend workshops for completing applications
- Confirm your letters of recommendation with teachers
- Complete each of your applications by the deadline
- Fill out financial aid information or proof of finances
- Keep working in class and keep your disciplinary record clean. Even after your applications are submitted, changes in your grades or disciplinary status will be reported to colleges and could result in a denial or withdrawal of acceptance