

FREDERICA ACADEMY

2019-2020 COLLEGE COUNSELING HANDBOOK



College Counseling Handbook

Table of Contents

College Counseling Calendar	3
<i>Freshmen and Sophomores</i>	
<i>Juniors</i>	
<i>Seniors</i>	
Naviance & SCOIR	6
The College Search	7
<i>College Visits</i>	
<i>Interviews</i>	
<i>Admissions Interview Questions</i>	
<i>Additional Details to Consider</i>	
College Visit Information Sheet	9
College Applications	10
<i>Official High School Transcript</i>	
<i>Standardized Test Scores</i>	
<i>Personal Statement/Essay</i>	
<i>Supplemental Material</i>	
<i>Activity Résumé</i>	
<i>Recommendations</i>	
<i>Applications</i>	
<i>The Common Application</i>	
<i>Types of Application Deadlines</i>	
Standardized Testing	13
<i>PSAT</i>	
<i>Pre-ACT</i>	
<i>SAT</i>	
<i>SAT Subject Tests</i>	
<i>ACT</i>	
<i>AP Exams</i>	
NCAA Eligibility	17
Financial Aid and Scholarships	18
Glossary	19
College Essays that Worked	21



Welcome to the beginning of the college search process. Frederica Academy's College Counseling Center is looking forward to guiding you through this exciting journey.

The mission of the center is to foster students' academic, intellectual, and personal growth while helping them find a college that matches their academic talents and fits their interests well.

Navigating today's college process requires careful planning and preparation. The College Counseling Handbook is designed to help assist students and parents in the college search and application process.

College Counseling Handbook

College Counseling Calendar: Freshmen & Sophomores

August 2019

- Sophomores: Update résumé in SCOIR
- Attend your scheduled college counseling check-in meeting with Mrs. Nevins

September 2019

- Sophomores: Attend a SCOIR Workshop and continue to explore the program

October 2019

- PSAT- October 16th
- Sophomores: Explore SCOIR

November 2019

- Sophomores: Pre-ACT- November 8th
- Sophomores: Attend Sophomore College Night- November 14th
- Sophomores: Explore SCOIR

December 2019

- Sophomores: Explore SCOIR
- Attend an Understanding your PSAT/Pre-ACT score workshop

January 2020

- Sophomores: Explore SCOIR

February 2020

- Explore SCOIR

March 2020

- Explore SCOIR

April 2020

- Plan your summer experience & college visits
- Explore SCOIR
- Sophomores: Regular registration deadline for May SAT/SAT Subject Tests- April 3rd

May 2020

- Sophomores: AP World History Exam- May 14th
- Sophomores: SAT/SAT Subject Tests- May 2nd
- Sophomores: Regular registration deadline for June SAT/SAT Subject Tests- May 8th
- Plan your summer experience & college visits
- Explore SCOIR

June 2020

- Sophomores: SAT/SAT Subject Tests (at FA)- June 6th
- Explore SCOIR

College Counseling Handbook

College Counseling Calendar: Juniors

August 2019

- Attend your scheduled college counseling check-in meeting with Mrs. Nevins
- Update résumé in SCOIR
- SAT (at FA)- August 24th

September 2019

- Attend a SCOIR Workshop
- Regular registration deadline for October SAT- September 14th
- ACT (at FA)- September 8th
- Regular registration deadline for October ACT- September 20th

October 2019

- SAT (at FA)- October 5th
- Regular registration deadline for November SAT- October 3RD
- PSAT- October 16th
- ACT- October 26th

November 2019

- SAT (at FA)- November 2nd
- College Financial Aid Night- November 7th
- Regular registration deadline for December SAT- November 8th
- Regular registration deadline for December ACT- November 8th

December 2019

- SAT- December 7th
- Review your PSAT/Pre-ACT score with Mrs. Nevins

January 2020

- Junior Class College Night- January 16th
- Regular registration deadline for February ACT- January 10th
- Schedule your individual junior college conference with Mrs. Nevins

February 2020

- Regular registration deadline for March SAT- February 8th
- Regular registration deadline for April ACT- February 28th
- Schedule your individual junior college conference with Mrs. Nevins

March 2020

- SAT (at FA)- March 14th

April 2020

- Regular registration deadline for May SAT- April 3rd
- ACT (at FA)- April 4th
- Attend a résumé building workshop
- Schedule college visits during Spring Break
- Plan your summer experience

May 2020

- Regular registration deadline for June SAT/SAT Subject Tests- May 8th
- Regular registration deadline for June ACT- May 8th
- SAT/SAT Subject Tests- May 2nd
- AP Exams- May 4th–May 15th
- Plan your summer experience & college visits

June 2020

- SAT/SAT Subject Tests (at FA)- June 6th
- ACT- June 13th
- Regular registration deadline for July ACT- June 19th

College Counseling Handbook

College Counseling Calendar: Seniors

August 2019

- Submit the first draft of your college essay to Mrs. Nevins
- Regular registration deadline for September ACT- August 16th
- SAT (at FA)- August 24th
- Attend your scheduled college counseling check-in meeting with Mrs. Nevins
- Update résumé in Naviance
- Update “Colleges I’m Thinking About” in Naviance

September 2019

- Senior College Night- September 12th
- Regular registration deadline for October SAT- September 6th
- ACT (at FA)- September 14th
- Regular registration deadline for October ACT- September 20th
- Begin transferring schools from your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list to your “Colleges I’m Applying To” list
- Begin your college applications

October 2019

- FAFSA becomes available- October 1st
- SAT (at FA)- October 5th
- Regular registration deadline for November SAT- October 3rd
- ACT- October 26th
- Visit or re-visit the colleges on your list

November 2019

- Common Early Decision/Early Action deadlines- November 1st/November 15th
- Regular registration deadline for December SAT- November 8th
- Regular registration deadline for December ACT- November 8th
- SAT (at FA)- November 2nd
- College Financial Aid Night- November 7th

- Pay attention to application deadlines!

December 2019

- Earliest Regular Decision deadline- December 15th
- Check Naviance and college websites for scholarship applications

January 2020

- Common Regular Decision deadlines- January 1st/January 15th
- Check Naviance and college websites for scholarship applications

February 2020

- FAFSA preferred deadline- February 15th
- Update Naviance

March 2020

- Complete all college and scholarship applications

April 2020

- Notify colleges you are no longer considering
- Re-visit colleges you are considering
- Update Naviance

May 2020

- Deadline to make a deposit- May 1st
- AP Exams- May 4th–May 15th
- Update Naviance
- Graduation!

College Counseling Handbook

Naviance & SCOIR



Naviance: student.naviance.com/fredericaaca

SCOIR: app.scoir.com/signin

Naviance and SCOIR are a web-based services designed especially for students and parents. Both programs track and analyze data about college and career plans to provide up-to-date information that is specific to Frederica Academy.

For the 2019-2020 school year, **seniors** will continue to use Naviance to explore college options, keep track of their college applications, create their activity resume, and monitor their GPA and standardized test scores. Transcripts, recommendations, and supporting documentation will be sent to college electronically through Naviance for all seniors.

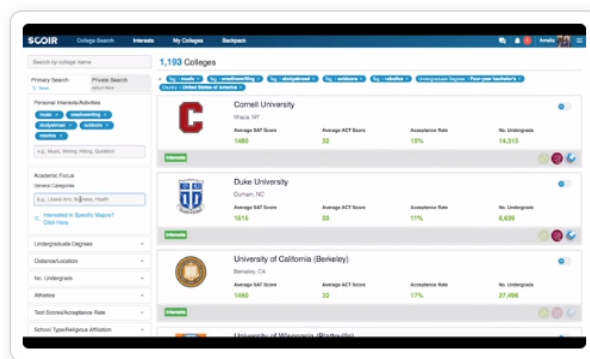
Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will begin using SCOIR in the fall of 2019.

The SCOIR search function helps identify schools students might be interested in based on a number of search parameters including location, academic interests, hobbies, etc. The program's career search and assessment tools may help broaden knowledge of various careers and educational opportunities available. Students are encouraged to utilize résumé building features, which will allow them to keep track of their work, community service, extracurricular activities, and honors and awards.

SCOIR also curates social media and testimonials of students on campus to provide a glimpse into student life. Students are able to curate their own "board", filled with colleges and hashtags they are interested in following.

The SCOIR mobile app enables students to search and manage their profile through their phone. Students and families will be able to view historical data of college admissions rates and success of previous Frederica Academy students, which is helpful in determining the likelihood of admissions.

SCOIR provides an interface for parents so that they may become a part of the search process. Financial calculators are available to help assess and compare the costs of colleges, and parents can even recommend schools that they think their student may be interested in. The platform also allows counselors and teachers to send recommendations, transcripts and additional documents efficiently.



College Counseling Handbook

The College Search

Beginning the college search can be a daunting process. Visiting colleges is the best way to determine whether or not you can see yourself attending that school; however, there may be schools you are unable to visit prior to applying. Researching schools is key to developing a list of prospective colleges. The more you learn about a school you are interested in, the easier it will be to determine if that school is the right “fit” for you.

Naviance and SCOIR are great resources to use when searching for colleges. The sites can be used to help search for specific criteria you are looking for in a college.

College Visits

Spring break is a wonderful time for students to schedule college campus visits. It is recommended that students visit college campuses when the college is in session to get a feel of how the college operates and looks when classes are in session and the campus is full.

College tours and information sessions should be arranged at least 3-4 weeks in advance and can be scheduled through the college’s admissions webpage.

There is a limit of **3** excused absences per year for **juniors** and **seniors** who go on college visits. Students must submit a **Parental Request for Student Absence Form** and speak to their teachers regarding the assignments they will be missing. This absence will only be considered excused if the student submits documentation that the trip was taken for the purpose of considering the college for admission. The form can be picked up in the Upper School office.

Interviews

Interviews are recommended, but not required by most colleges. An interview is a great way

for an admissions counselor to get to know you better and allow you to share with them why you would be a great addition to their colleges’ campus. Colleges and universities are also utilizing modern day technology by scheduling Skype interviews with students who are unable to visit their campus; they also reach out to their alumni to schedule interviews in their hometowns. It is recommended that students schedule interviews when asked to do so by the college.

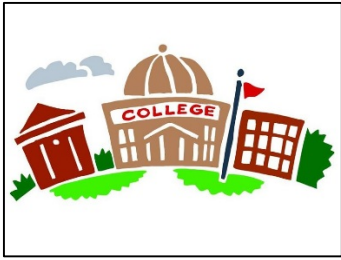
Students who schedule an interview with a school should remember to:

- Dress appropriately
- Be on time
- Use appropriate speech
- Make a list of a few questions to ask the admissions counselor or alumni about the school
- Ask for your interviewer’s contact information to send them a thank you note or email after the interview

It is important to note that the interviewer may never mention your grades or standardized test scores. It is not that they will not be considered for admission, but during the interview, the conversation will most likely be about your interests, what you feel makes you a good candidate for admission, and what you can offer the college as a student.

College Counseling Handbook

The College Search



Common College Admissions Interview Questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- How did you learn about our school?
- How have you prepared yourself for college?
- What activities that you have participated in are the most meaningful to you?
- What are your favorite classes and why?
- What is the name of the last book you read for leisure?
- How would your teachers describe you?
- How would your friends describe you?
- What do you like most about our college?
- How do you plan to contribute to our college community?
- What are you interested in majoring in and why?
- What do you do for fun in your free time?
- Tell me about a challenge that you overcame.
- What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?
- How do you define success?
- What about you is unique?
- What subject in high school did you find the most challenging?
- How have you been a leader or displayed leadership?
- What is a challenge you have overcome?
- Do you have any questions?

Additional Details to Consider When Researching Colleges:

- Campus size (small, medium, large)
- Geographic Location (city, state)
- Size of school (small, medium, large)
- Average number of students per class
- Community and surrounding areas
- Academic programs (majors, joint-degree programs)
- Student body (ratio of men to women, where they're coming from)
- Safety (security, Blue-Light Systems)
- Organizations/clubs (academic clubs, Greek life, intramurals)
- Athletics (NCAA Division, do students attend events?)
- Weekend activities/school events
- College facilities
- Financial aid and tuition (scholarship opportunities)
- Housing (*is housing guaranteed for 4 years?*)
- Meal plans
- Interviews (*are they required?*)
- Application deadlines
- Required standardized tests
- Career services department (*do they help find internships and help with job placement?*)
- Counseling center/office (*hours, staff qualifications*)
- Study abroad opportunities (*requirements, countries*)
- Honor Code
- Retention rate (*what percentage of freshmen return?*)
- Library (*facilities, hours*)

College Counseling Handbook

College Visit Information Sheet

Name of College _____

City, State _____

Urban/Rural _____ Number of Students _____ Tuition _____

Initial impression of the college: _____

What is the Application deadline? _____

Percentage of students accepted _____ Freshmen retention rate _____

Average GPA (for admitted freshmen) _____ Average SAT _____ Average ACT _____

What is the town surrounding the college, or near to it, like? _____

What scholarship opportunities are offered? _____

Is there a separate scholarship application? _____

What is the percentage of students receiving financial aid? _____

What dorms are available to freshmen? _____

Is housing guaranteed for four years? _____

Can freshmen have cars on campus? _____

How often will I meet with my academic advisor? _____

What is the percentage of students that graduate in four years? _____

What is the most popular major? _____

What are the most popular academic programs? _____

How large are classes? _____

What are the library's hours? _____

What pre-professional programs are offered? (Pre-Med, Pre-Vet, Pre-Law, etc.) _____

What activities does the college offer for students? _____

What sports are offered? (Division I, II, III, intramural) _____

How does the career services center help students find internships and jobs? _____

How is freshman orientation planned and organized? _____

What makes this college unique? _____

College Counseling Handbook

College Applications

College admission criteria may vary from one school to another. However, college admissions will tend to focus on the factors below:

1. Rigor/high school curriculum
2. GPA
3. Standardized test scores
4. Essay/supplements
5. Activity résumé
6. Recommendations

Official High School Transcript

Each college you are applying to must receive an official high school transcript. The College Counseling Center will automatically send transcripts to the colleges on the “Colleges I’m Applying To” list in Naviance or SCOIR for each student, as the application deadline approaches. All transcripts will include ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade’s first and second semester grades. Frederica Academy reports only weighted GPAs and numeric averages. Senior grades will only appear if first semester has been completed.

Colleges are also looking at high school transcripts to see how much students have challenged themselves. The rigor of the courses you have selected while in high school are given much consideration by admissions counselors. Colleges want to see that students have taken advantage of the honors and Advanced Placement courses high schools offer. They want to see that students are aware of their strengths and know their potential. For this reason, it is not enough that a student enrolls in an advanced course; how the student performs is just as important. It is best to enroll in an honors or Advanced Placement course that is in a subject you enjoy and are passionate about.

Standardized Test Scores

Please see the Standardized Testing section of the handbook.

Personal Statement/Essay

With each essay or short answer question you submit, you are giving the school more information about yourself; allowing them to see what makes you a unique candidate for admission. Take the time to think of what you would like the admissions counselors to know about you. Each essay you write should be proofed for errors and should be read by an English teacher or the College Counselor.

The essay is an important part of the application. If you are writing about a question asked, please be sure that you have answered the question. If you have selected to write a personal statement, think about how someone who does not know you personally will judge what you have written. The writing section of an application gives you, the student, the opportunity to share information that the admissions counselors do not know from the basic information you have provided them.

Please see the Essays that Worked section of the handbook to view sample college essays.

Supplemental Application Material

Depending on your intended major, you may be required to submit an additional portfolio or perform an audition. It is the student’s responsibility to know what supplemental material or documentation is required by each of the schools to which he/she is applying.

Activity Résumé

The activity résumé allows colleges to learn what you, as a student, do when you are not in the classroom setting. It allows admission counselors to learn who you are as an individual; what your interests, hobbies, passions, talents, and honors are. Résumé workshops are offered throughout the school

College Counseling Handbook

College Applications

year for students to work on their résumé with the college counselor.

A copy of each student's résumé will be submitted on their behalf, along with each official transcript sent to a college. Many schools offer scholarships and awards for various activities listed on a résumé. To qualify for these scholarships, schools must be aware of the activities you have participated in and the awards which you have received.

Teacher and Counselor Recommendations

Each student must ask two teachers to write a letter of recommendation. Students are required to ask their teachers in person to write these letters. Once they have done so, each senior must submit an official request through Naviance or SCOIR.

Frederica Academy recommends that students ask two teachers from two different academic subject areas. Teachers should be from core academic areas, preferably from your junior year of high school. The teachers will be writing about your academic performance, effort, participation, and overall attitude in the classroom setting.

The teacher recommendation letter is an important part of your application. It allows the school to get a glimpse of how you conduct yourself in the classroom setting. Colleges recommend that students and parents do not have access to recommendation letters. All recommendations will remain confidential and should only be read by those whom the letters are written to. **Frederica Academy will not share letters of recommendation with students or parents. This is a College Counseling Office policy.**

Each college a senior applies to will receive a letter from the College Counselor. This letter will

mark the student's accomplishments, personality, and overall impact he/she has had on the Frederica Academy community. The College Counselor may also explain any circumstances that may have impacted a student's academic performance. Again, **Frederica Academy will not share letters of recommendation with students or parents. This is a College Counseling Office policy.**

Below is what Frederica Academy is responsible for submitting to a college and what the applicant is responsible for submitting:

Frederica Academy:

- Counselor Recommendation
- Teacher Recommendations
- Official High School Transcript
- School Profile
- Activity Résumé

Student:

- College Applications (including supplements)
- Application fees
- Essays/Personal Statements
- SAT and/or ACT Score Reports

Applications

The first step in applying to a college is completing an application. Students may complete an online application which can be accessed on the school's website. Applications take time to complete. They are a reflection of the student, and therefore should not be rushed through. Many schools require more than one essay or personal statement. Students should think about what they would like the college to know about them that is not already seen in the basic questions asked.

Students are encouraged to meet with the College Counselor to go over their applications.

College Counseling Handbook

College Applications

The Common Application

The Common Application is accepted by over 400 colleges and universities. This application allows students to apply to schools using one single application and can be completed by creating an account at www.commonapp.org.

Each school will require students to complete their own individual supplement on the Common Application site. Please keep in mind that these supplements typically consist of essay questions. Like your individual personal statement/essay, much thought should be given to these supplemental essays or questions.

Students who complete applications through the Common Application should sync their username and password with their Naviance account. This should be done so Frederica Academy can submit all required documentation electronically.

Please note that the Common Application will not be sent to the colleges you have added to your “My Colleges” section of the application until you have completed the signature page and click **SUBMIT**.

Types of Application Deadlines

Regular Decision- Deadline typically falls on or after January 1. Decisions are usually reached by March-April.

Rolling- Applicants will receive an admission decision as soon as it becomes available. The earlier the student applies, the sooner a decision will be made.

Early Action- Admission decision is not binding. Students may apply Early Action to as many schools as they would like. Students who apply to a school as an Early Action applicant will

learn of their admission decision sooner than under a Regular Decision deadline.

Early Decision- This deadline gives a **BINDING** decision. If a student applies and gets admitted, the student **MUST** attend the school. Students are only permitted to apply to **ONE** school as an Early Decision applicant. They may apply to other schools as an Early Action applicant, but must withdraw their applications to those schools if they are admitted into the school they have applied to Early Decision. This deadline typically falls in November and students are usually notified in January. An Early Decision Agreement must be submitted along with the application. This agreement requires a student, parent, and counselor signature. Students should only apply to a college/university as an Early Decision applicant if financial aid/scholarship is not a concern **AND** if it is their number one choice of school.

Early Decision II- This deadline typically falls in November-January. Like Early Decision, this deadline gives a **BINDING** decision. It is a good option for a student who would like to apply to a school Early Decision, but would like to take a November or December standardized test.

College Counseling Handbook

Standardized Testing

Standardized tests are used to assist educators and students in assessing aptitude, ability, and proficiency. Frederica Academy administers the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (**PSAT**) to all sophomores and juniors in October.

Sophomores take the test for practice and exposure to the types of questions asked on the SAT, while **juniors** will have a chance to qualify for a Merit Scholarship and test their skills against other students nationwide. National Merit Scholarships are determined each year by an index totaling the verbal, math, and writing numbers of the test. **Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors** are also administered the **Pre-ACT**, a test designed to expose underclassmen to the format of the ACT exam.

Any Frederica Academy student enrolled in an Advanced Placement (**AP**) course is required to take the AP exam for that course in May. AP courses are designed to help students become successful at college level curriculum, while their exams test student knowledge of material taught.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test, more commonly known as the **SAT**, and the American College Testing's assessment, the **ACT**, are used by colleges and universities for admission. These exams are not the only criteria considered for college admission; however, your score provides colleges with a means of comparing applicants, as it is the only standard component in the application process. How an SAT or ACT score is used varies from school to school, and it is the student's responsibility to know what standardized tests are required for each school they are applying to. **It is imperative that students take test preparation seriously. Studying will help better prepare students for the test and help increase scores.**

Please note that Frederica Academy does NOT report standardized test scores to colleges.

Students must request their test scores be sent to each of the colleges to which they are submitting an application. To do so, please log into your College Board or ACT account via www.CollegeBoard.org or www.ACT.org.

PSAT

Sophomores and **juniors** will be administered the PSAT in October of every year. The PSAT is a College Board exam that is designed to help prepare students for the types of questions seen on the SAT. The exam tests students on evidence-based reading & writing and mathematics. The PSAT's scale is 160-760 for each section. Students will not lose points for incorrect answers; it is advantageous for the student to answer every question on the exam.

Score reports become available in December of the same year and are mailed to each parent.

Sophomores will go over their PSAT scores in a classroom setting in January, and can meet individually with the College Counselor to go over their individual scores. **Juniors** will be required to meet individually with the College Counselor to discuss their PSAT score and the steps to take to begin studying for the SAT. It is recommended that each student log into their College Board account and review their online score report. Online reports can be synced with a **Khan Academy** (www.KhanAcademy.org/test-prep/sat) account which students can use to receive additional help in studying for the SAT.

Pre-ACT

Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors will be administered the Pre-ACT in October of each year. The Pre-ACT is designed to expose students to the format of the ACT exam. Similar to the ACT, the Pre-ACT contains four sections- English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The Composite score of the Pre-ACT gives an estimate of the student's educational development over all of the areas that are

College Counseling Handbook

Standardized Testing

tested. This score ranges from 1 to 35. Like the ACT, there is no penalty for guessing. Therefore, students are encouraged to answer every question.

Pre-ACT results become available in December of the same year and are mailed to each student. Sophomores will go over their Pre-ACT scores in a classroom setting in January, and can meet individually with the College Counselor to go over their individual scores. **Juniors** will be required to meet individually with the College Counselor to discuss their Pre-ACT score and the steps to take to begin studying for the ACT.

SAT

The SAT is a test that asks you to use your reasoning skills to answer questions on math, reading, and writing. The test emphasizes critical analysis and real-world problem-solving.

The SAT contains two major sections: Evidence Based Reading & Writing and Math, and is made up of five long sub-sections testing writing and language, reading, math (in two sections), and writing. Both major sections are scored on a scale of 200-800, for a total score between 400-1600.

English: There are two English sub-sections which have an emphasis on rhetoric, analysis, and punctuation. These scores of the sub-sections will be combined to create the first section score on a score range of 200-800.

- The writing and language section tests grammatical and rhetorical skills.
- The reading section tests evidence-based reading comprehension skills.

Math: The math section covers topics from pre-algebra through basic trigonometry, with a heavy emphasis on rhetoric and analysis. There is a math calculator and no-calculator section of the exam. The scores of the two math sub-sections

will be combined to create a second section score on a score range of 200-800.

(Optional) Writing: The writing section of the SAT is optional. **Frederica Academy's college counselor recommends that all students take the Writing portion of the SAT.**

Score Choice is a feature the College Board has created which allows students to select one test date score to send to the colleges of your choice. However, most colleges will consider a student's best score on each section of the SAT when determining admission. A College Board SAT Score Report will include all SAT/SAT Subject Tests a student has taken, unless the student chooses to use Score Choice.

It is recommended that **juniors** take at least one SAT exam in the spring (March, May, or June), and one in the fall of their senior year (October or November). Every student who registers to take the SAT should prepare for the exam (this means studying!).

Students must register for each SAT they choose to take. They can do so by creating an account through the College Board (www.CollegeBoard.org). It is the student's responsibility to register for the SATs he/she wishes to take, and to request official score reports be sent to the colleges to which he/she is applying. **Juniors** and **seniors** who register for an SAT exam may choose up to four schools to receive SAT Score Reports for free (at the time of registration). Students will be charged for each additional report ordered.

College Counseling Handbook

Standardized Testing

2019-2020 SAT Dates & Deadlines

Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
*August 24, 2019	July 26, 2019	August 13, 2019
*October 5, 2019	September 6, 2019	September 24, 2019
*November 2, 2019	October 3, 2019	October 22, 2019
December 7, 2019	November 8, 2019	November 26, 2019
*March 14, 2020	February 14, 2020	March 3, 2020
May 2, 2020	April 3, 2020	April 21, 2020
*June 6, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 27, 2020

*Offered at Frederica Academy

SAT Subject Tests

Some colleges may require or recommend students take SAT Subject Tests. SAT Subject Tests are one hour in length and test specific subject areas students have been taught in school. Subject Tests are often looked at by colleges because they can be used to consider students' level of readiness to begin taking college level courses in the specific areas tested. It is recommended that students submit 2-3 Subject Tests to the colleges/universities that recommend or require them. Students may take up to 3 SAT Subject Tests on a test date. Students cannot take the SAT and SAT Subject Tests on the same test date.

The typical Frederica Academy student can expect to be prepared to take the following SAT Subject Tests after completing the courses:

Frederica Academy Course	SAT Subject Test
Biology/AP Biology	Biology-M
Chemistry/Chemistry Honors	Chemistry
Physics/AP Physics	Physics
Algebra II/Algebra II Honors	Math I
Pre-Calculus/Pre-Calculus Honors	Math II
American Literature/AP Language	Literature
World History/AP World History	World History
U.S. History/AP U.S. History	U.S. History
Spanish IV/Spanish IV Honors/AP Spanish	Spanish
Latin IV/Latin IV Honors	Latin

ACT

The ACT is a curriculum based assessment which contains English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and optional Writing sections. **Though the writing section is optional, Frederica Academy recommends that each student taking the ACT complete the writing portion of the exam, as many schools will not consider an ACT score without a writing section.** Some schools that recommend or require SAT Subject Tests will accept the ACT with writing instead.

Students who take the ACT will receive a Composite Score, which ranges from 1-36. The Composite Score is the average of the English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science scores received on the exam. A separate score is given for the writing portion of the exam. The score received on the ACT can be compared to the score received on an SAT exam by using a conversion chart found under the Understanding Your Scores section of ACT's website.

It is recommended that **juniors** take one ACT exam in the spring (April or June), and one in the fall of their **senior** year (September or

College Counseling Handbook

Standardized Testing

October). Students must register for each ACT they choose to take. They can do so by creating an account through the ACT (www.act.org). It is the student's responsibility to register for the ACT's he/she wishes to take and to request official score reports be sent to the colleges to which he/she is applying.

Students can expect each section of the test to have the following content:

- Math:** Up to trigonometry
- Science:** Charts, data, graphs
- Reading:** Reading passages- prose fiction, social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences
- English:** Grammar usage

2019-2020 ACT Dates & Deadlines

Test Date	Regular Registration Deadline	Late Registration Deadline
*September 14, 2019	August 16, 2019	August 30, 2019
October 26, 2019	September 20, 2019	October 4, 2019
December 14, 2019	November 8, 2019	November 22, 2019
February 8, 2020	January 10, 2020	January 17, 2020
*April 4, 2020	February 28, 2020	March 13, 2020
June 13, 2020	May 8, 2020	May 22, 2020
July 18, 2020	June 19, 2020	June 26, 2020

*Offered at Frederica Academy

AP Exams

AP (Advanced Placement) courses are designed to help students become successful at college level courses, while their exams test student knowledge of material taught. AP exams are administered in May of each year. Every student enrolled in an AP course is **required** to take the AP exam for that subject. AP exams are scored on a scale of 1-5. Many colleges will

award college credit for grades of 3 or better on an AP exam. If a student would like his/her score to be considered for college credit at the college he/she is attending, he/she must request a copy of their AP Score Report be sent to the school.

The College Counseling Center will order all AP exams. Families will be billed for the cost of each exam. Seniors may opt-out of AP exams if an opt-out form is submitted by the selected deadline.

2020 AP Exam Schedule

Exam Date/Time	AP Exam
Monday, May 4, 2020 (8am)	AP U.S. Government
Tuesday, May 5, 2020 (8am)	AP Calculus AB/BC
Wednesday, May 6, 2020 (8am)	AP Literature & Comp.
Thursday, May 7, 2020 (8am)	AP Chemistry
Thursday, May 7, 2020 (12pm)	AP Physics I
Friday, May 8, 2020 (8am)	AP U.S. History
Friday, May 8, 2020 (12Pm)	AP Computer Science A
Monday, May 11, 2020 (8am)	AP Biology
Tuesday, May 12, 2020 (8am)	AP Spanish Language
Wednesday, May 13, 2020 (8am)	AP Language & Comp.
Wednesday, May 13, 2020 (12pm)	AP Psychology
Thursday, May 14, 2020 (8am)	AP Comparative Government
Thursday, May 14, 2020 (8am)	AP World History
Friday, May 15, 2020 (12pm)	AP Statistics

Please use Frederica Academy's school code when registering for each standardized test.
(CEEB: 110-474)

College Counseling Handbook

NCAA Eligibility

www.NCAAEligibility.org



Students interested in playing a sport at the NCAA **Division I** or **Division II** level are encouraged to plan ahead! Each high school is required to submit its courses to the NCAA Eligibility Center for approval. Any course approved by the NCAA will be calculated in a student's GPA for eligibility. Those courses, such as non-academic electives and fine arts electives that are not approved by the NCAA, are not calculated into a student's GPA when being considered for eligibility. Frederica Academy's academic requirements exceed both NCAA Division I and Division II credit requirements. However, each student interested in playing a sport at the college level should inform the College Counselor so a credit evaluation can be conducted.

NCAA Checklist

- Speak to the College Counselor about your desire to be a college athlete
- Discuss recruitment strategies and appropriate Division level with your coach
- Register with the Eligibility Center (NCAA recommends that students register at the beginning of their sophomore year)
- Request an official high school transcript be sent to the Eligibility Center at the end of your junior year
- Have all standardized test scores (SAT and ACT) sent to the Eligibility Center, using test code "9999"
- Request an official high school transcript be sent to the Eligibility Center at the end of your senior year

Division I

- Complete 16 core courses.
 - Ten of the 16 core courses must be completed before the seventh semester (senior year) of high school.
 - Seven of the 10 core courses must be in English, math or science.
- Earn a core-course GPA of at least 2.300.
- Earn the ACT/SAT score matching your core-course
- GPA on the Division I sliding scale
- Graduate high school.

Division II

- Earn a core-course GPA of at least 2.200.
- Earn the ACT/SAT score matching your core-course
- GPA on the Division II full qualifier sliding scale
- Graduate high school



College Counseling Handbook

Naviance & SCOIR

There are two types of aid: **need-based** and **merit-based**. Need-based aid is determined by completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Merit-based aid is given in the form of scholarship. Scholarships can be awarded to students based upon their academic achievement in high school, standardized test scores, talents, or achievements.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

The FAFSA can be accessed and completed by visiting www.fafsa.ed.gov. The application cannot be filed before January 1 of your senior year. Each college/university will determine an individual amount of aid to offer you. This is determined by assessing your family income, assets, and what they believe is your family's ability to pay for college tuition. Each college has its own priority filing date which you must be aware of. Need based aid may include loans, grants, and work study.

Net Price Calculator

The Net Price Calculator is a tool that students can use to estimate their "net price" to attend a particular college or university.

Net price is the difference between the "sticker" price (full cost) to attend a specific college, minus any grants and scholarships for which students may be eligible. Sticker price includes direct charges (tuition and fees, room and board) and indirect costs (books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses). Each college's financial aid webpage has access to a Net Price Calculator, so students and parents can get an estimate of the amount of aid a college will provide.

Student Aid Report

Students will receive the Student Aid Report once the FAFSA has been submitted. This report will indicate your Expected Family

Contribution (EFC), or the amount the school believes you can pay. You can get a sense of what your EFC will be by using a financial aid calculator, such as the one available through www.finaid.org.

CSS Profile

The CSS Profile is required by many private colleges and considers students for additional aid funded through the individual institution. This profile can be found online at: www.profileonline.collegeboard.com.

HOPE Scholarship

To be eligible for the HOPE Scholarship, students must have earned a minimum GPA of 3.0 in their core subjects, must meet HOPE Scholarship Rigor Requirements, and must be a legal resident of the state of Georgia. The HOPE Scholarship covers a percentage of the tuition at a Georgia state college or university. Students attending a private college/university in Georgia may also be eligible for the HOPE Private Scholarship. This scholarship also covers a percentage of the college/university's tuition. The Zell Miller Scholarship covers full academic tuition, if the student has earned at least a 3.7 GPA in his/her core subjects, meets HOPE Scholarship Rigor Requirements, and has earned a score of at least 1200 on the critical reading and math portions of the SAT or a Composite Score of 26 on the ACT.

Seniors must complete a Georgia HOPE Scholarship and Grant Application to be considered for the HOPE Scholarship. For more information and to complete an application, visit www.GAfutures.org.

GAfutures.org
Explore. Plan. Succeed.

College Counseling Handbook

Glossary

Admit- You are admitted into the university! A deposit must be submitted by May 1.

CEEB Code- Frederica Academy's College Entrance Examination Board Code is 110-474.

Deferred- Students who receive a deferred admission decision are placed into the Regular Decision admission pool. A school which has deferred you may want 1st semester grades or more information from the College Counselor.

Demonstrated Interest- Some schools prefer to accept students who have shown a strong interest in the college and its programs. These schools keep track of the number of times a student has visited campus or contacted the admission office. This may be taken into account when considering a student for admission. If you are applying to a school which tracks students' demonstrated interest, it is best to make direct contact with the admission office, and email the regional representative for Glynn County to introduce yourself. Each time you visit campus, you should either stop by the admission office or make an appointment with a counselor.

Denied- Unfortunately, the school cannot offer you admission. Students may not re-apply for the same term. If desired, you can attend another school and apply to transfer for another term.

FAFSA- The Free Application for Federal Student Aid allows students to be considered for need based aid. The application becomes available on October 1 of students' senior year, and can be accessed and completed by visiting www.fafsa.gov.

Grant- Funds that do not require a repayment. Students can receive both government grants and institutional grants.

Loans- Funds that must be repaid. Subsidized loans are awarded based on financial need and do not charge interest before payments are due. Unsubsidized loans charge interest before loan payments begin.

Matriculation- Students are considered to be matriculated if they are enrolled in a degree seeking program.

Need-Blind Admission- Students are considered for admission without the consideration of financial need.

Need-Aware Admission- Students are considered for admission with the consideration of financial need.

Scholarships- Funds that are awarded from a college or independent organization and do not need to be repaid.

Senioritis- Falling into the habit of not putting effort into senior year courses. Senior year is important! On every acceptance letter a student receives, the college will indicate that your acceptance is contingent upon the completion of your current academic program or year. Colleges can, and will, rescind an admission offer if your grades have significantly decreased. Frederica Academy will report first semester grades, if a school wishes to see them, or if the student applies through the Common Application.

Superscore- When a college takes a student's highest subscores from different test dates for a new, higher "superscore."

TOEFL- The Test of English as a Foreign Language is administered by the Education Testing Service (ETS) and is recommended for students with five years or less of English language usage. Colleges may use the TOEFL score as a replacement for the SAT Critical Reading score and colleges generally list

College Counseling Handbook

Glossary

TOEFL minimums on their international admissions websites.

Waitlist- The college would like more information or did not have enough room for additional students. Instead of denying you admission, the college has decided to place you on a waitlist. To be taken off of the waitlist, you must contact the school. Colleges will be able to notify you of your admission status after May 1. Students should still submit a deposit with an alternate school to meet the deposit date of May 1.

Work Study- Student is employed part-time through the college/university and earns money for college costs. Work Study programs are funded by the government and are offered through financial aid packages from colleges.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Title: Auntie El
By: Samuel
College: Hamilton College

Eleanor, or "Auntie El" as she was called by everyone, was my primary caretaker for the first fifteen years of my life. Auntie El grew up in the blue-collar town of Everett, Mass., never married and lived with my grandmother, who was her older sister. She spent her spare time bowling and looking for bargains on items nobody needed. Auntie El worked for the Gillette Company for 43 years in its South Boston factory as an inspection clerk in the Quality Control Group, scrutinizing the edges of razor blades under a microscope. Auntie El retired in November of 1989, the exact same month and year in which I was born. My parents both had demanding jobs with long hours and therefore needed someone to look after me during the day. Three months after I was born, they still had not found a babysitter, and time was running out. My grandmother volunteered her younger sister, mainly to get her out of the house they were sharing. Auntie El was called in to "pinch hit" on a temporary basis.

Cranky and wheezy from her latest cigarette, Auntie El walked into our house on her first day wearing her flowered apron and carrying a plastic grocery bag in which she packed her clothes for the week — not exactly Mary Poppins. Both my parents did not see this arrangement working, but were grateful for her services until a suitable caretaker could be found. She took care of me for two weeks until she went on a previously scheduled trip to Las Vegas. I guess she must have softened to the idea of caring for me because, halfway through the trip, she called my mother and told her she wanted the job full time. Auntie El started the next Monday.

No longer able to smoke because of my fragile lungs (I was on a respirator for several days after I was born), Auntie El had to find activities to take her mind off cigarettes. She took me on long walks every day and, as I grew older, would play catch with me in the backyard. Her health improved dramatically. We were good for each other.

As the years passed, we became even closer. By the time I was in first grade, she was a faculty favorite at my school and could be found waiting for me every day in the parking lot in her white Cutlass Ciera Oldsmobile with her BINGO plate on the front. She quickly became a school legend when she was the only adult in memory to join the Halloween parade which took us through every classroom in the school in costume. Auntie El wore a witch's hat and a black and orange polka dot apron; I was a fireman.

Through our years together, we had numerous adventures. One night, her nose bled profusely and she could not stop the bleeding. Since my parents were at work, she had to call an ambulance and was forced to take me with her. With the sirens blaring, I hopped in the back, dressed in my red Power Ranger pajamas.

Auntie El's tough, gritty mentality made me a stronger person. She grew up without a father and her family was poor. She and her siblings were taken out of school by tenth grade in order to help support the family. She never missed a chance to point out how hard my parents worked to provide me with great opportunities and called the town in which we lived "la de da land." I always had Auntie El to give me a dose of reality.

The littlest things seemed to pull Auntie El and me together. Our passion for food was a regular topic, and we would have daily discussions on what I had to eat for lunch that day at school.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Late at night, I would sneak up to her room and watch episodes of Everybody Loves Raymond and would laugh until my parents heard us and ended the fun. No matter where we were, you could always find Auntie El and me laughing about something and enjoying the moment.

In the fall of my freshman year, Auntie El was diagnosed with colon cancer. After a successful operation, she spent some time in a rehabilitation center to regain her strength. On Thanksgiving evening, 2004, Auntie El suffered a heart attack. She fell to the floor, and hit her head. She was found later the next morning, and was pronounced dead. I found out when I heard my mother scream on the phone with the hospital. Auntie El's passing affected our whole family, but it was particularly tough for me. My good friend, my partner in crime and my teacher was no longer with me. Coming home to her every day for fifteen years was something I really enjoyed. Arriving home to an empty, quiet house and having days pass without talking to her was the worst experience of my life. I did not know life without Auntie El.

However, my family and I had to adjust but I did not know how to start over. I found myself thinking about Auntie El a lot and, one day, realized that she was still with me when I would hear her voice in the back of my mind during a test or a game or just when I was making dinner for myself.

More importantly, I realized that Auntie El instilled in me the values that I admired in her. She was genuine, caring and respectful. She taught me to work hard, and be mentally tough for life's challenges. Her perseverance and grit showed me a lot and provided me with the perfect role model for life.

Title: Untitled

By: Joseph

College: Tufts University

When problems arise, I solve them using copper fittings.

I first discovered this versatile building material as a seven-year-old visiting my father's HVAC shop. While waiting for him to finish working one night, I wandered from the modestly finished space at the front of the building to the shop in back, which featured high ceilings and imposing stacks of shelves. I was fascinated by the dusty machines with tubes, knobs, and old cracked nozzles. When Dad found me shoulder-deep in the scrap copper bin--which I later referred to as "the world's coolest trash can"--he determined that it was time to teach me to solder. Thirty minutes later, armed with a bowl haircut, a pair of safety glasses, and a healthy dose of self-confidence, I was ready to take on the world.

From then on, my childhood was a patchwork of failures. I fell into a constant cycle of thinking, designing, building, and rethinking. Common Christmas wish list items included drafting supplies and architectural stencils. Each childhood interest led me back to the shop, where I figured out a way to build it from copper fittings. Learning to play trombone inspired me to design my own instrument. After a faulty mouthpiece and soldering mistakes ruined three prototypes, "The Plumbone," an instrument that could play three distinct notes, became my first successful creation. When a middle school acids and bases project called for building a paper maché volcano, I built a cannon instead. Though my first model failed to "erupt," my second sprayed its contents so far that it left a swath of dead grass in my lawn. While the grass grew back, I built a soapbox car entirely out of copper and steel strut channel only to find myself claiming last place in the annual "Soapbox Derby." Noting that the lightest cars accelerated

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

quickest, I rebuilt my car, replacing steel with PVC pipe, and took second the next year. Having navigated around so many obstacles, I imagined that I could build anything so long as I had copper fittings.

As I matured, however, I began to drift away from my old standby. While attempting increasingly abstract projects, I grew frustrated by the limitations of copper fittings. It felt like the end of an era when I decided to build one last copper item, a small creature that I gifted to my dad.

Leaving the familiarity of copper behind felt like entering a new, entirely foreign world. Embracing the freedom and uncertainty of Python, I began coding my newest idea: a game called "Dive." While the concept proved exhaustingly ambitious, success seemed imminent as I stitched my project together, patch by patch. Yet when I looked through my computer one morning, I realized that "Dive" was gone, wiped inadvertently during a visit to the Apple store. I stared in disbelief at the blank computer screen, wondering if my vision was lost forever.

At this pivotal moment, I realized why copper fittings represent such an important part of my childhood. When my cannon refused to fire correctly, I learned something new about propulsion. When I soldered my instruments incorrectly, I refined my technique. Had I given up every time an idea failed, I would not have learned from my mistakes, and more importantly, I would not have found success. Even if I never solder again, the lessons I learned from copper fittings are the lessons that will guide me through life.

Losing "Dive" remains difficult to accept, yet excitement about the potential in a new game quickly overshadowed my disappointment. Years of faulty designs and unfortunate

accidents have taught me to revise my methods, but not my goals, in the face of failure. With a confidence that only arises after realizing that success was just out of reach and finding the audacity to reach further, I set out to make "Dive 2.0," the best game you'll ever play.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Title: Untitled
By: Bridget
College: Tufts University

I have always loved riding in cars. After a long day in first grade, I used to fall asleep to the engine purring in my mother's Honda Odyssey, even though it was only a 5-minute drive home. As I grew, and graduated into the shotgun seat, it became natural and enjoyable to look out the window. Seeing my world passing by through that smudged glass, I would daydream what I could do with it.

In elementary school, I already knew my career path: I was going to be Emperor of the World. While I sat in the car and watched the miles pass by, I developed the plan for my empire. I reasoned that, for the world to run smoothly, it would have to look presentable. I would assign people, aptly named Fixer-Uppers, to fix everything that needed fixing. That old man down the street with chipping paint on his house would have a fresh coat in no time. The boy who accidentally tossed his Frisbee onto the roof of the school would get it back. The big pothole on Elm Street that my mother managed to hit every single day on the way to school would be filled-in. It made perfect sense! All the people that didn't have a job could be Fixer-Uppers. I was like a ten-year-old FDR.

Seven years down the road, I still take a second glance at the sidewalk cracks and think of my Fixer-Uppers, but now I'm doing so from the driver's seat. As much as I would enjoy it, I now accept that I won't become Emperor of the World, and that the Fixer-Uppers will have to remain in my car ride imaginings. Or do they? I always pictured a Fixer-Upper as a smiling man in an orange T-Shirt. Maybe instead, a Fixer-Upper could be a tall girl with a deep love for Yankee Candles. Maybe it could be me.

Bridget the Fixer-Upper will be slightly different than the imaginary one who paints houses and fetches Frisbees. I was lucky enough to discover

what I am passionate about when I was a freshman in high school. A self-admitted Phys. Ed. addict, I volunteered to help out with the Adapted PE class. On my first day, I learned that it was for developmentally-disabled students. To be honest, I was really nervous. I hadn't had too much interaction with special needs students before, and wasn't sure how to handle myself around them. Long story short, I got hooked. Three years have passed helping out in APE and eventually becoming a teacher in the Applied Behavior Analysis summer program. I love working with the students and watching them progress.

When senior year arrived, college meetings began, and my counselor asked me what I wanted to do for a career, I didn't say Emperor of the World. Instead, I told him I wanted to become a board-certified behavior analyst. A BCBA helps develop learning plans for students with autism and other disabilities. Basically, I would get to do what I love for the rest of my life. He laughed and told me that it was a nice change that a seventeen-year-old knew so specifically what she wanted to do. I smiled, thanked him, and left. But it occurred to me that, while my desired occupation was decided, my true goal in life was still to become a Fixer-Upper. So, maybe I'll be like Sue Storm and her alter-ego, the Invisible Woman. I'll do one thing during the day, then spend my off-hours helping people where I can. Instead of flying like Sue, though, I'll opt for a nice performance automobile. My childhood self would appreciate that.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Title: Block by Block, Word by Word

By: Daniel

College: Hamilton College

You can make almost anything out of LEGOs. You can build miniature spaceships, colorful forts, or cities of blocky skyscrapers that span the basement floor. My favorite was constructing ancient, booby-trapped temples like the ones from Indiana Jones.

In elementary school, I was fanatical about my LEGOs. I would build the medieval castle, complete with the moat and the drawbridge and guard stations and the throne room for the king and queen and their royal dog, Patches. (Coincidentally, Patches was also the name of my dog.) I would kneel for hours, hunched over the hundreds of blocks spread over the carpet, to select just the right piece for each part of the structure.

Once the castle walls were erected and the knights on horseback were set to approach from the other side of the moat, I was done. I didn't really play with the castle afterward. I moved it to the corner so that my sister's Barbie convertible wouldn't crash into it and ruin my little "Ages 3 and Up" masterpiece.

Looking back on my childhood, I was a bizarrely obsessive little kid. For days after building a fort or a spaceship, I would stop and examine that every plastic block was still in place.

It's strange to think that between the age of riding a tricycle and the age of driving a car, I am, in some ways, exactly the same. I don't play with LEGOs anymore, but I am a construction worker of types. Now I write essays and stories and newspaper articles, and I approach it with the same compulsion.

Every word is painstakingly selected with the same intensity I exerted as a child choosing the

right color block. Every phrase is turned around and around in my head like arranging the walls of the castle gate. Every sentence is examined for its structural quality. At my desk — like kneeling over my rug — I craft meticulously.

By writing, I hope to create the grand and intricate images in my mind, to give them some physical incarnation. Inked on a page, a nebulous mass of related thoughts can be forged into something real. A story or essay can be erected as the fulfillment of a single concept. My gratification comes from being able to perfectly embody an idea. This can be frustrating because I've never written anything close to perfect. For as much as I agonize over my words and methodically rework every draft, my ideal eludes me. Still, I return to my desk and keep writing, editing, and rewriting because if I don't return to my desk, I'm sure I'll never write the essays, stories, and newspaper articles that I know I want to write.

You can make almost anything out of words. You can build planet-sized spaceships, long-lost medieval castles, or cities of glass structures that pierce the clouds. If my construction work is solid enough, I believe I will be able to make these worlds — real and imaginary — come alive on paper the way they did on the rug of my basement. So I continue to build — block by block, word by word, sentence by sentence — in the hope that I will end up with something I can put to the side of my desk and examine every once in a while to see that every word fits in place.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Title: Breaking Into Cars
By: Stephen
College: Johns Hopkins University

I had never broken into a car before.

We were in Laredo, having just finished our first day at a Habitat for Humanity work site. The Hotchkiss volunteers had already left, off to enjoy some Texas BBQ, leaving me behind with the college kids to clean up. Not until we were stranded did we realize we were locked out of the van.

Someone picked a coat hanger out of the dumpster, handed it to me, and took a few steps back.

“Can you do that thing with a coat hanger to unlock it?”

“Why me?” I thought.

More out of amusement than optimism, I gave it a try. I slid the hanger into the window’s seal like I’d seen on crime shows, and spent a few minutes jiggling the apparatus around the inside of the frame. Suddenly, two things simultaneously clicked. One was the lock on the door. (I actually succeeded in springing it.) The other was the realization that I’d been in this type of situation before. In fact, I’d been born into this type of situation.

My upbringing has numbed me to unpredictability and chaos. With a family of seven, my home was loud, messy, and spottily supervised. My siblings arguing, the dog barking, the phone ringing—all meant my house was functioning normally. My Dad, a retired Navy pilot, was away half the time. When he was home, he had a parenting style something like a drill sergeant. At the age of nine, I learned how to clear burning oil from the surface of water. My Dad considered this a critical life skill—you know, in case my aircraft carrier

should ever get torpedoed. “The water’s on fire! Clear a hole!” he shouted, tossing me in the lake without warning. While I’m still unconvinced about that particular lesson’s practicality, my Dad’s overarching message is unequivocally true: much of life is unexpected, and you have to deal with the twists and turns.

Living in my family, days rarely unfolded as planned. A bit overlooked, a little pushed around, I learned to roll with reality, negotiate a quick deal, and give the improbable a try. I don’t sweat the small stuff, and I definitely don’t expect perfect fairness. So what if our dining room table only has six chairs for seven people? Someone learns the importance of punctuality every night.

But more than punctuality and a special affinity for musical chairs, my family life has taught me to thrive in situations over which I have no power. Growing up, I never controlled my older siblings, but I learned how to thwart their attempts to control me. I forged alliances, and realigned them as necessary. Sometimes, I was the poor, defenseless little brother; sometimes I was the omniscient elder. Different things to different people, as the situation demanded. I learned to adapt.

Back then, these techniques were merely reactions undertaken to ensure my survival. But one day this fall, Dr. Hicks, our Head of School, asked me a question that he hoped all seniors would reflect on throughout the year: “How can I participate in a thing I do not govern, in the company of people I did not choose?”

The question caught me off guard, much like the question posed to me in Laredo. Then, I realized I knew the answer. I knew why the coat hanger had been handed to me.

Growing up as the middle child in my family, I was a vital participant in a thing I did not govern, in the company of people I did not choose. It’s

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

family. It's society. And often, it's chaos. You participate by letting go of the small stuff, not expecting order and perfection, and facing the unexpected with confidence, optimism, and preparedness. My family experience taught me to face a serendipitous world with confidence.

Title: Time to Spin the Wheel

By: Romila

College: Johns Hopkins University

For as long as I can remember, one of my favorite pastimes has been manipulating those tricky permutations of 26 letters to fill in that signature, bright green gridded board of Wheel of Fortune.

Every evening at precisely 6:30 p.m., my family and I unfailingly gather in our living room in anticipation of Pat Sajak's cheerful announcement: "It's time to spin the wheel!" And the game is afoot, our banter punctuated by the potential of either big rewards or even bigger bankruptcies: "She has to know that word—my goodness, why is she buying a vowel?!"

While a game like Wheel of Fortune is full of financial pitfalls, I wasn't ever much interested in the money or new cars to be won. I found myself drawn to the letters and playful application of the English alphabet, the intricate units of language.

For instance, phrases like "I love you," whose incredible emotion is quantized to a mere set of eight letters, never cease to amaze me. Whether it's the definitive pang of a simple "I am" or an existential crisis posed by "Am I", I recognized at a young age how letters and their order impact language.

Spelling bees were always my forte. I've always been able to visualize words and then verbally string individual consonants and vowels together. I may not have known the meaning of every word I spelled, I knew that soliloquy always pushed my buttons: that -quy ending was so bizarre yet memorable! And intaglio with its silent "g" just rolled off the tongue like cultured butter.

Eventually, letters assembled into greater and more complex words.

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

I was an avid reader early on, devouring book after book. From the Magic Treehouse series to the too real 1984, the distressing *The Bell Jar*, and Tagore's quaint short stories, I accumulated an ocean of new words, some real (epitome, effervescence, apricity), and others fully fictitious (doubleplusgood), and collected all my favorites in a little journal, my Panoply of Words.

Add the fact that I was raised in a Bengali household and studied Spanish in high school for four years, and I was able to add other exotic words. Sinfin, zanahoria, katukutu, and churanto soon took their rightful places alongside my English favorites.

And yet, during this time of vocabulary enrichment, I never thought that Honors English and Biology had much in common. Imagine my surprise one night as a freshman as I was nonchalantly flipping through a science textbook. I came upon fascinating new terms: adiabatic, axiom, cotyledon, phalanges...and I couldn't help but wonder why these non-literary, seemingly random words were drawing me in. These words had sharp syllables, were challenging to enunciate, and didn't possess any particularly abstract meaning.

I was flummoxed, but curious...I kept reading.

"Air in engine quickly compressing..."

"Incontestable mathematical truth..."

"Fledgling leaf in an angiosperm..."

"Ossified bones of fingers and toes..."

...and then it hit me. For all my interest in STEM classes, I never fully embraced the beauty of technical language, that words have the power to simultaneously communicate infinite ideas and sensations AND intricate relationships and complex processes.

Perhaps that's why my love of words has led me to a calling in science, an opportunity to better understand the parts that allow the world to function. At day's end, it's language that is perhaps the most important tool in scientific education, enabling us all to communicate new findings in a comprehensible manner, whether it be focused on minute atoms or vast galaxies.

It's equal parts humbling and enthralling to think that I, Romila, might still have something to add to that scientific glossary, a little permutation of my own that may transcend some aspect of human understanding. Who knows, but I'm definitely game to give the wheel a spin, Pat, and see where it takes me...

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

Title: Five/Seventeen

By: Elizabeth

College: Connecticut College

I definitely didn't become an adult when I was five. But it's important I talk about a certain day when I was five in order to make sense of the day I did.

Recently, a freshman at my high school was sitting at my lunch table and started talking about 9/11. By the way he was talking, that infamous day was ancient history to him – something he read about in a textbook, something he expected no one at the table to remember personally.

I closed my eyes. I was downtown that day:

It is my third day of kindergarten at P.S. 89 and the principal has called a sudden assembly. My class lazily files into the auditorium. The principal tells us something bad has happened a few blocks away at the World Trade Center and before I can process this, my dad races into the building, completely disheveled. He grabs my older brother David and me and together we speed out of the school and now I'm scared. Looking up, I see a skyscraper I have passed every day, now with a massive, gaping hole. It's black and red and it almost seems like I'm looking at a picture except I also know my younger brother Andrew attends pre-school at the WTC. The cops wouldn't let us go south to get him, so we start walking, then racing, north. I'm not crying. I feel outside my feelings. The air is thick with something – soot? Dust? My dad tries to rip his dress shirt into squares to cover our mouths, but it won't rip. A stranger walking near us instantly rips his own. Now we are running, me on my dad's shoulders. Now we are alongside a lady we know. Now we are on a bus being handed construction masks which I do not want to wear because they make me feel like maybe I'll suffocate.

Now it's night. We still haven't heard from my mom or little brother and it is 11 p.m. and we can't go home, if our home is even still standing in Battery Park City. We are staying with the lady we were running with. I am watching TV on a blow-up mattress when finally she calls: my mom. She and my younger brother were evacuated by the Army Corps of Engineers and were safe. She had a late start and had not dropped Andrew off after all...

... Back at the lunch table, I opened my eyes. Someone had clearly just mentioned that I had been there that day. The freshman looked at me with wide eyes. He asked what it was like.

I could have mentioned my fear, the horror of losing possessions, the paralyzing dread wondering whether my mom and little brother were alive. Instead, I found myself talking about the man who ripped his shirt, the construction worker who forced me to wear a mask so I could stay healthy, the generosity of the woman who gave us a place to stay. As a result of that day, my life path was completely altered. I still wonder what direction it would have taken had I not been forced to leave the city.

And yet the day I became an adult wasn't that day in 2001. It wasn't when I was 5. It was in that lunchroom when I was 17, when I realized that I can choose how to remember something. I can choose to find meaning in that day, not in the horror but in other people's kindness. I can't choose what to remember but I can choose how to remember.

It is probably too soon to truly say I am an adult. But something did change in me that day and I feel different – I look forward to continuing to change, to sharing my experiences, and to learning what other people have to teach me.

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College Essays that Worked

Title: Superheroes

By: Mathias

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Legends, lore, and comic books all feature mystical, beautiful beings and superheroes—outspoken powerful Greek goddesses, outspoken Chinese maidens, and outspoken blade-wielding women. As a child, I soared the skies with my angel wings, battled demons with katanas, and helped stop everyday crime (and of course had a hot boyfriend). In short, I wanted to save the world.

But growing up, my definition of superhero shifted. My peers praised people who loudly fought inequality, who rallied and shouted against hatred. As a journalist on a social-justice themed magazine, I spent more time at protests, interviewing and understanding but not quite feeling inspired by their work.

At first, I despaired. Then I realized: I'm not a superhero.

I'm just a 17-year-old girl with a Nikon and a notepad—and I like it that way.

And yet—I want to save the world.

This understanding didn't arrive as a bright, thundering revelation; it settled in softly on a warm spring night before my 17th birthday, around the fourth hour of crafting my journalism portfolio. I was choosing the best photos I'd taken around town during the 2016 presidential election when I unearthed two shots.

The first was from a peace march—my classmates, rainbows painted on their cheeks and bodies wrapped in American flags. One raised a bullhorn to her mouth, her lips forming a loud O. Months later, I could still hear her voice.

The second was different. The cloudy morning following election night seemed to shroud the school in gloom. In the mist, however—a golden face, with dark hair and two moon-shaped eyes, faces the camera. Her freckles, sprinkled like distant stars across the expanse of her round cheeks, only accentuated her childlike features and added to the soft feel of the photo. Her eyes bore into something beyond the lens, beyond the photographer, beyond the viewer—everything is rigid, from the jut of her jaw, to her stitched brows, her upright spine and arms locked across her chest, to her shut mouth.

I picked the second picture within a heartbeat.

During my career as a photojournalist, I lived for the action shots: the excited gestures of a school board member discussing plans, a rabbi preaching vividly, a group of teenagers chanting and waving flags downtown. To me, the most energetic photos always told the biggest and best stories. They made me feel important for being there, for capturing the superheroes in the moment to share with everyone else. The softer moments paled in comparison, and I thought of them as irrelevant.

It took about one second to tear down one year's worth of belief.

The idea dawned on me when I was trapped within the distraught weight in the girl's eyes. Sometimes the moments that speak the loudest aren't the noisiest or the most energetic. Sometimes they're quiet, soft, and peaceful.

Now, I still don't completely understand who I am and who I want to be, but really, who does? I'm not a superhero—but that doesn't mean I don't want to save the world. There are just so many ways to do it.

You don't always have to be loud to inflict change. Sometimes, it begins quietly: a snap of the shutter; a scrape of ink on paper. A

College Counseling Handbook

College Essays that Worked

brehtaking photograph; an astonishing lede. I've noticed the impact creativity can have and how powerful it is to harness it.

So, with that, I make people think and understand those surrounding them. I play devil's advocate in discussions about ethics and politics. I persuade those around me to think past what they know into the scary territory of what they don't—so to make people feel. I'm determined to inspire people to think more about how they can be their own superheroes and more.

See, that's the kind of world-saving I do.