



VOLUME I  
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## Virtual College Fair: Tuesday July 7 & Wednesday July 8

NEARR (*New England Area Regional Representatives*) will be hosting a virtual college fair on Tuesday, July 7 and Wednesday, July 8. Their member colleges have formed seven different groups based on various characteristics (i.e. location, size, religious affiliation, etc.). Each grouping will present together about their schools and take questions from attendees, allowing attendees to learn about a handful of colleges at one time. Students and their families are invited to participate. Please note, at this time registration is limited to New England residents.

This consortium includes the following institutions:

Alfred University	Dickinson College	Miami University - Ohio	University of Tennessee
University of Alabama	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University	North Carolina State University	Texas Christian University
University of Arizona	Hamilton College	Ohio Wesleyan University	Trinity College Dublin
University of British Columbia	High Point University	University of Pittsburgh	University College Dublin
Butler University	Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Rutgers University	Ursinus College
Catholic University	Hofstra University	Saint Bonaventure University	Xavier University
University of California - Irvine	Indiana University	St. Louis University	
University of Delaware	Ithaca College	University of South Carolina	
DePaul University	LeMoyne College	Syracuse University	

The Virtual College Fair schedule and registration can be found [here](#)

## Getting to Know You: Senior Questionnaire, Parent Response Form, Etc.

While the COVID-19 outbreak and shutdown has disrupted your college planning process, the college counselors were glad we could sustain our contact with you through individual online meetings, Decisions classes, college information sessions, essay workshops, and the Virtual Brickyard. There is still a lot to do, but it is in your power to stay on track and position yourself to apply to college in the coming school year. It is important to keep in touch with your college counselor, because we will be writing a letter of recommendation in support of your admission candidacy - almost every college requires a college counselor recommendation and we want to advocate for you as vigorously as possible. Unlike a teacher recommendation which focuses on your skills in the classroom in a specific academic subject, the college counselor recommendation highlights your broader contributions to campus, emphasizes your strengths in all areas of your life, and explains distinctive aspects of your personal and academic background. Thus, we need to learn as much as we can about your passions and experiences, your strengths and setbacks.

To that aim, we gather information from a wide variety of sources. MOST IMPORTANT is the Senior Questionnaire, which you will find in the surveys section of your Scoir account. We don't start writing your recommendation until you answer the questions in that questionnaire. This is your opportunity to share the important experiences that have shaped you; to brag about your accomplishments; to explain any bumps in the road. You are giving us the essential content that we can use to shape our advocacy for you. This survey is even more important this year since we haven't been able to see you in action

or interact with you in person. So please use the opportunity to expand on anything you think will help us appreciate what makes you tick... what you think we should share with a college admission office.

While the Senior Questionnaire is critical - after all, who knows you better than you?! - we also like to hear from others who know you well. We will be collecting input from your advisors who can shed additional light on your growth at Thayer and your special qualities. We incorporate comments and thoughts from your teachers so that we can convey your academic skills and intellectual accomplishments. And if you are active in the arts, athletics, and other clubs and activities, we like to connect with your mentors and coaches in those areas as well. Lastly, we deeply value the insights that your parents share in their answers to the Parent Response Form. They have known you all your life, and you could argue that they sometimes know you better than you know yourself. They can offer perspectives that we don't see on campus, giving us a better sense of what happens "behind the scenes." So please encourage your parents to complete that form and submit to your college counselor as soon as they are able.

Once we assess all of this information, we will be prepared to write a compelling and detailed letter of recommendation. Please complete your Senior Questionnaire as soon as you can, especially if you plan to apply to college for any of the early deadlines. We really appreciate receiving questionnaires (and parent response forms) in the summer so that we can get an early start on writing your recommendation and be prepared for the fall frenzy of applications. If you have any questions about the Senior Questionnaire or Parent Response Form, please contact your college counselor.

## HANDBOOK HIGHLIGHTS:

### Interviews

Although less popular than it used to be (colleges have to prioritize their resources due to large applicant pools), interviewing in some form is still a part of the process for many Thayer students. While checking out virtual visitation offerings, be sure to take stock of the interviewing opportunities at your favorite colleges so you can sort through what's available to you and start to make a plan. With the pandemic, colleges are shifting from in-person interviews to online so you will be able to interview from home throughout the summer and during the school year.

Colleges take different approaches to interviews. Usually the policy is clearly outlined on the admissions section of the college's website and will fall into one of the following categories:

1. **Interviews are not available. Only group information sessions are an option.**
2. **Interviews may be arranged but are optional and for informational purposes only.**
3. **Interviews are encouraged or recommended and become part of the application.**
4. **Interviews are required (only a small percentage of schools).**
5. **Interviews with alumni are available. Often these can only be arranged after a student has applied.**

If an interview option is available, you should try to take advantage of it. Aside from the obvious benefits of learning more about a college, it can be a tool for expressing interest (some colleges care a lot about how much you have engaged with them prior to applying). You can usually schedule an interview using the calendar on the Admissions visitation website. With alumni interviews, you often have to "opt in" first and then wait for a volunteer alumni interviewer to reach out to you. As you investigate the options, pay attention to interviewing deadlines. For example, some NESCAC schools encourage the interview but they stop conducting them in the late fall (even if you are applying regular decision with a January deadline). Interview schedules can fill up, so it is best to make plans early.

Certainly colleges are using the interview to get to know you better, and some may even be assessing whether you are a good fit for their school. Simultaneously, this is a perfect time for you to ask questions that will help you determine if the college lines up with your needs. To that end, make sure you have questions for the interviewer. Stay away from basic questions about the size of the

school or if they have a particular major (if you're interviewing, you should already know the basics). If you have a sense for what type of interview it is (informational or evaluative), this could impact the questions you ask. For example, will you be meeting with a student, an alumnus, or an admissions officer? Knowing in advance could influence the questions you want to ask.

While preparing for your interview, research the college - go through their website, take advantage of their online offerings (such as information sessions and tours), read any of the brochures you've received in the mail, etc. Take notes so you can read through them before your interview. Also, practice answering typical interview questions (*see the College Counseling Handbook under College Search for a list of questions to expect*). This will make you feel more knowledgeable and confident when you sit down with the interviewer.

As part of your preparation, the Thayer college counselors can offer *mock interviews*. Contact your college counselor who can connect you with one of the other college counselors - it is better to practice with someone who knows less about you. If you try a mock interview a few days before your first admission interview, you can get valuable practice and feedback. And with interviews moving online, it is critical to become comfortable with this format.

As you make final preparations, select appropriate attire to make a good first impression. What you're wearing and how you conduct yourself non-verbally will contribute to an interviewer's perception of you. And if you aren't comfortable with what you are wearing, that could distract you from the task at hand. And of course, do everything in your power to avoid being late.

Most of all, try to relax and enjoy the conversation. Interviews are not intended to trick you or make you feel badly. Whomever you are sitting with is someone who likes people and is looking forward to learning more about you and, in some cases, can illuminate how that college fits what you are looking for. Embrace the experience to meet this new person! And when it's over, don't forget to send a thank you note!

If you have any questions about the interview process, contact your college counselor. We can help you think through what to expect, what to say, and how to prepare. We can also help you set up a mock interview if you think that would be helpful.

For more information about college admission interviews, the admission staff at Bentley University has prepared some tips:

[How To Ace The College Interview](#)

## ACT Update

If you are registered for the July ACT, you should have been notified via email about whether or not your test site will be open. ACT has also posted a master list of cancelled and rescheduled test sites [here](#).

ACT has stated that registration for their fall test dates will open the week of July 27.



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