

College Process Overview

Welcome Parents!

Agenda

Overview of College Process

Junior Calendar

Parent Roles in the Process

Guidance Bulletin

Testing: SAT and ACT

How Colleges Look at Prospective Students

Naviance

Criteria to Select a College

Common Application Process

Look Ahead

HS Counselors

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Calendar for Juniors

MARCH/APRIL

- Register for the SAT, SAT Subject test and/or ACT
- Ask your counselor about summer enrichment opportunities
- If you are interested in military academies you need to see your counselor
- Create your senior year schedule with your counselor
- Attend local college fairs
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you and collect information
- Plan visits to colleges
- Take ACT

MAY

- Identify teachers you can ask for a recommendation
- Take SAT, SAT Subject test, AP exams
- Make a profile of colleges that you are interested in applying to

Calendar for Juniors

JUNE

- Take SAT, SAT Subject test and/or ACT
- Continue the college search and discuss choices with your counselor
- Plan visits to colleges
- Create a list of accomplishments over the past four years, including extracurricular activities, work and travel experiences

JULY/AUGUST

- Visit campuses and narrow down your list of schools
- Work on your college essay
- SAT offered in August
- Create an account with Common Application

Parent Roles in the Postsecondary Process

- Talk to your child about their options.
- Read the Guidance Bulletin.
- Be prepared to take your child on college visits/interviews.
- Meet with your child and guidance counselor, if necessary.
- Encourage your child to visit the College & Career Center
- Stay on top of the Junior/Senior calendar.
- Watch out for deadlines!
- Complete the Parent Brag Sheet.
- Financial Aid Deadlines.

Getting Started: Creating Multiple Accounts

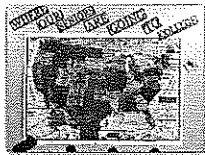
- In order to begin the college process, several accounts/passwords must be created:
- -College Board- SAT Test Registration
- -ACT- ACT Test Registration
- -Naviance- College Search/Application submission
- -Common Application- College Applications
- FAFSA/CSS Profile- Financial Aid Applications
- Students must have a system for remembering important username/passwords in order to successfully work with their counselor on the process. **YOUR STUDENT SHOULD KNOW IT!**



THE SCHOLARSHIP EDITION

BUT FIRST...QUICK REMINDERS

College Deadlines - If you have news on being accepted, deferred, or denied, please let your guidance counselor know as soon as possible. Once you have finished your post-graduate plans, we will add you to our alumni board!



Financial Aid (FA) students should complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). Applications can be completed online at fafsa.gov. The FAFSA is available as of the 1st of the year for the current school year. If you are applying for Financial Aid, you may need to submit a CSS PROFILE. Check your individual college for requirements. Applications must be submitted online at cssprofile.com and cssprofile.com.
* Current residents can find financial aid information at www.fafsa.gov

SCHOLARSHIPS

Guidance provides numerous scholarships throughout the year. We have put together a packet of applications for you. If you receive your first school transcript in a letter of recommendation, fill out a www.scholarship.com with the scholarship information and mailing address.

The first scholarship form is due to one every senior should fill out, even if you are not taking a gap year. This scholarship is made up of numerous events throughout the year for high-achieving students. These include www.scholarship.com and www.scholarship.com.
* If you have any questions about the form, you may email the Ms. Smith@MGRHS.org

Scholarship Application Tips

- Essays should be typed, not handwritten.
- Don't bring it all through planning and consideration into your work - it should be done clear, concise, and to the point every aspect of the essay requirements.
- Read, Edit, and Proofread! Again! Double-check someone proofread it when you need to give you honest feedback.
- Be on time. Pay attention to deadlines and know the difference between when applications are due and the when they should be submitted.

MGRHS CEEB #

222-415

SAT Testing- College Board

- Register online: www.collegeboard.org
- www.sat.org/register
- Test dates in: May, June, August, October, November, December

The SAT

- Three components of the SAT-

Evidence-Based Reading & Writing
Mathematics
Writing -Essay is optional *

Total possible score = 1600
Average SAT score = 500

SAT

- Reflects Classroom Learning
- More Relevant vocabulary
- "Math that Matters"- Primarily Algebra based
- More problem solving and data analysis
- Free Test Practice available through Khan Academy
www.satpractice.org
- SAT Prep Course offered at Mt. Greylock for Math

Score Choice Policy

- This College Board policy gives students the option to choose to send SAT scores by test date and SAT Subject test scores by individual test.

Testing: ACT

- ACT Test Dates in April, June, Sept., Oct. Dec.
- Register at : www.act.org
- Offered locally at Miss Hall's, Taconic, Berkshire School, Drury and Mt. Anthony

Academic Profile: Where do you fit?

| Rating | SAT EBRW | SAT Math | SAT Total | ACT | Grades | Percentile |
|--------|-------------|-----------|-----------|---------|---------|------------|
| 6 | 730-800 | 740-800 | 1450-1600 | 33-36 | A, A- | Top 10% |
| 5+ | | | | | | |
| 5 | 650-720 | 650-730 | 1360-1440 | 28-32 | B+, B | Top 20% |
| 4+ | | | | | | |
| 4 | 570-640 | 560-640 | 1200-1350 | 19-27 | B-, C+ | Top 35% |
| 3+ | 500-560 | 510-550 | 1060-1190 | 13-18 | C, C- | Top 50% |
| 3 | 400-500 | 400-500 | 1000 | 7-12 | C- | Top 50% |
| 2 | Below 400 | Below 400 | Below 750 | Below 6 | Below C | Top 65% |

Importance of creating a list of schools: Reach, Target, Safety

How Colleges Look at Prospective Students

- Transcript
- Extracurricular Activities
- Test Scores
- “The Real You”
- Letters of Recommendation

Academic Performance: Transcript

- Advanced Placement courses
- Honors courses
- GPA
- Percentile/Class size

Extracurricular Activities

- Opportunities for Student Engagement
 - Leadership
 - Athletics
 - Performing Arts
 - Community Service
 - Employment

Test Scores

- Advanced Placement
- MCAS Assessment
- SAT
- ACT
- Accuplacer
- ELPT/TOEFL

www.fairtest.org

“The Real You”

- College Admissions Essay
- Interviews
- Auditions
- Portfolio Review
- Teacher Recommendations
- Resume

Letters of Recommendation

- Teacher (2)
- Guidance Counselor
- Coach
- Employer
- Community member

Juniors should begin thinking of individuals to ask now!

Naviance

The Guidance Office is using the Guidance software system, Naviance, in order to process college application materials electronically.

- <http://connection.naviance.com/mtgreylock>

Resources to Assist in the College Process

- Meet with your Guidance Counselor
- Access the College & Career Center
- Visit college campuses
- Attend Open House events
- Use Naviance to research schools
- Fall- College Representative Visits

College & Career Center

- College Guides
- Summer Enrichment Programs
- Study Abroad Programs
- Guides to SAT and ACT Testing
- College Viewbooks- Admissions Checklist
- Financial Aid Books
- Gap Year Ideas

Campus Visits

There's no substitute for seeing a college yourself!

Before You Go Visit:

- Call the Admissions Office in advance or register for a visit online
- Read up on the college and think about questions

While You're on Campus:

- Attend an admissions information session
- Request an interview
- Attend a class
- Take a tour
- Talk to as many students as you can

Criteria to Compare & Select a College

- Student Enrollment
- Location and Surroundings
- College Type and Philosophy
- Curriculum
- Admissions
- Academic Environment
- Campus and Student Life
- Costs and Financial Aid (Need/Merit-Based)

Types of Admissions

Community College/Technical Schools
Open Admissions-Accepts everyone with a high school diploma or equivalent

State/Public Schools
3.0 G.P.A./500 SAT score; Use of Sliding scale

Private/Selective Schools
Most competitive schools accept students within the top 10-12% of their class. Students generally have a minimum of 655-800 SAT score/29 or better on the ACT

Private/Selective Schools

- **Boston University**- 64,482 applications for the Class of 2022, for a class size of 3,620 Average GPA=3.71 Average SAT- 1421 Average ACT - 31
- **Dickinson College**- 6,248 applications for the Class of 2022, for a class size of 635 Acceptance rate-49%
- **UMASS Amherst**- 41,612 applications for a class of 4,700 Average SAT- 1296 Average GPA 3.9 Acceptance rate- 59%

MA State System Sliding Scale

Recalculate GPA based upon 16 units: 4 years of English, 4 years of Math (Algebra 1 & 2, Geometry or Trigonometry), 3 years of Science (including 2 year lab component), 3 years of Social Science (including US History and World History), Foreign Language- 2 years in the same language, Electives- 1 year in the arts and 5 additional "core" courses such as business, health, technology

| If your GPA is.. | Verbal/Math SAT score must total at least... | ACT score must total at least... |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2.51-2.99 | 920 | 19 |
| 2.41-2.50 | 960 | 20 |
| 2.31-2.40 | 1000 | 21 |
| 2.21-2.30 | 1040 | 22 |
| 2.11-2.20 | 1080 | 23 |
| 2.0-2.10 | 1120 | 24 |
| Below 2.0- Not admissible | | |

Sliding Scale for UMass Amherst

Recalculate GPA based upon 16 units: 4 years of English, 4 years of Math (Algebra 1 & 2, Geometry or Trigonometry), 3 years of Science (including 2 year lab component), 3 years of Social Science (including US History and World History), Foreign Language- 2 years in the same language, Electives- 1 year in the arts and 5 additional "core" courses such as business, health, technology

| If your GPA is.. | Verbal/Math SAT score must total at least... | ACT score must total at least... |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 2.51-2.99 | 950 | 20 |
| 2.41-2.50 | 990 | 21 |
| 2.31-2.40 | 1030 | 22 |
| 2.21-2.30 | 1070 | 23 |
| 2.11-2.20 | 1110 | 24 |
| 2.0-2.10 | 1150 | 25 |
| Below 2.0- Not admissible | | |

Admissions Calendars

Watch those Deadlines!

- Regular Decision- non-binding application to multiple schools filed Jan 1-Feb 1; notified by April 1
- Early Decision I- binding application for only one school filed by Nov. 1-Nov.15; notified by December 15.
- Early Decision II-binding application for only one school filed by Jan.1; notified by February 15.
- Early Action- non-binding application to one or two schools filed by Nov. 15; notified by December 15.
- Early Action Single Choice- non-binding application to only one school filed by Nov. 15; notified by December 15.
- Early Action Restrictive- non-binding application to one school filed by Nov. 15; notified by December 15.
- Rolling Admission- non-binding application to one or several schools filed over an extended time frame; no standard notification dates, but typically notified within 2-4 weeks

Common Application

Why Use it?

- www.commonapp.org
- Over 750 schools subscribe to the Common Application
- Simplifies the college admission process by saving time and eliminating duplication of effort
- Supplements for Individual Schools
- Submit application electronically

Common Application

- Personal Data
 - Secondary School Report
 - Teacher Evaluation
 - Mid-year Report
 - Optional Report
 - Final Report
 - School Supplement(s)
- Collegewise- Guide to the Common Application: How to Make your Common App a Lot Less Common

Transcript Request Process

- Link Common App account with Naviance
- "Pink Sheets"
- Importance of Deadlines
- Student Data Sheet + Parent Brag Sheet= Appointment with Counselor
- NCAA website www.ncaa.org

LOOKING AHEAD

- 1) Finalize a list of 8-12 Colleges
- 2) Complete the Parent Brag Sheet
- 3) Senior Year Counts!
Grades, Discipline, Attendance, Activities
- 4) Financial Aid/Scholarships
File as early as October 1st!

The Application Components

1. HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT

- Courses taken, grades earned
- Cumulative GPA
- Balance and strength of curriculum
- Consistency of performance

2. SAT/ACT TEST RESULTS

- Not all schools require standardized tests.
- Most schools have a minimum test score, but the test results are generally viewed in combination with other factors.
- Compatibility of the test scores with high school achievement.
- Most only look at your best scores on the ACT/SAT.
- Each test has a different format so consider taking both!
- Test dates are already posted online (SAT offers tests 7 times a year and ACT offers 5 test dates per year).
- Have your official scores sent directly to colleges of interest.

3. ESSAYS / PERSONAL STATEMENTS

- Use the essay as an opportunity to give your application more depth.
- Not all schools require an essay or personal statement.
- Colleges will look at content, style, mechanics, and creativity.
- There are three types of essays: Creative, About You and Why Us?
- Approach the essay like you would an English assignment. Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to work on the statement (brainstorm, write, re-write and edit). Check that your writing is organized and that it sticks to a theme.
- Ask someone you trust to review the final document.
- Remember that admission counselors are reading hundreds of these; longer does not mean better. Your essay should be in your voice and not in the vocabulary structure of British literature.

4. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Colleges use letters to discover student contributions to school and community, to learn more about student's personal traits, and to get to know the student better. If your application is borderline, this can push it in the positive direction.
- Give your recommenders plenty of lead time – they often have many letters to write in a short amount of time.

5. RESUME

- Attach a resume that includes school and community activities.
- Don't use abbreviations for clubs.
- Neatness, organization and spelling count.
- Be sure to post your name at the top of the resume.
- Colleges look for quality of activities; not quantity; depth of involvement rather than breadth; evidence that an applicant knows the value of perseverance and investment in a goal; demonstration of leadership; and balance in activities.

6. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- Portfolio reviews for Art majors
- Creative writing pieces for English majors
- Laboratory reports for Science majors
- Auditions for Music and/or Drama majors

TIPS FOR COMPLETING APPLICATIONS

- Before doing anything else, carefully read all directions.
- Make a checklist of everything that is required for each school. Some schools do this for you.
- NEATNESS COUNTS! Most colleges offer an electronic application which enables you to type the application. If you do not want to send an application online, you may be able to download the application, complete it on the computer, print it, and mail it.
- If doing applications by hand, PRINT (don't write) and use BLACK INK.
- Do not have scratch outs or write over mistakes. USE WHITE OUT to make corrections.
- Do not hand write the essay or personal statement unless specifically asked. Generate it on the computer and attach to the application.
- PROOFREAD – there is no excuse for spelling or grammatical errors.
- BE COMPLETE – fill in all the blanks. If a question is not relevant, use N/A. If you attach a resume or personal statement, say, "See attached."
- Make sure you complete all parts. Some departments have extra forms or special applications. Most have a form to be given to your counselor; turn this in with the application. If there is a form to be completed by the teacher, give this to him/her early.
- PHOTOCOPY the completed application for your records.

Resources:

www.collegeboard.com

www.collegeview.com

www.nacac.com

Get into the College of Your Dreams!

The 10 Most Important Factors in College Admissions

Much of the stress surrounding college admissions occurs because students and parents possess little first-hand knowledge of what colleges actually seek in students. With that knowledge, you can increase your potential for acceptance to your top-choice colleges by focusing on those strengths which are priorities for the college.

1. A challenging high school curriculum.

Academically successful students should take at least five core courses every semester. Take AP, IB, and Honors if you can get good grades. Note: Most colleges recalculate GPA based only on core subjects.

2. Grades that represent strong effort and an upward trend.

Slightly lower grades in a rigorous program are preferred to all A's in less challenging courses.

3. Solid scores on the SAT or ACT — consistent with high school grades.

High scores do not compensate for low grades.

4. Passionate involvement in a few activities, demonstrating leadership, initiative, impact — and an angle.



Depth, not breadth, of experience is most important. Colleges seek “angled” students with a passion, not “well-rounded” students. Substantive commitment to a few activities is preferable to participation in several mini activities. To complement your applications, create a resume to showcase your activities.

5. Out-of-school experiences, including summer activities, work, and hobbies that reflect responsibility, dedication, and areas of interest.

Meaningful use of your free time is essential! Include these commitments on your resume.

6. Special talents or experiences that will contribute to an interesting, well-rounded student body.

A student who goes the extra mile to develop a special talent in sports, research, writing, the arts, or anything else will gain an edge. Consider sending a college evidence of anything that makes you stand out (e.g., portfolio of your creative writing, research abstract, CD or DVD of your talent).

7. A well-written essay that provides insight into your personality, values, and goals.

Your application essay should be thoughtful and highly personal. It should demonstrate careful and well-constructed writing. This is your chance to tell your story!

8. Anecdotal letters of recommendation from teachers and your counselor that give evidence of your intellectual curiosity, special skills, and positive character traits.

An extra recommendation from a coach, supervisor, or someone who knows you well can help only if it sheds new light on your talents. However, letters from family friends, even if they are well known, are rarely given much weight.

9. Demonstrated enthusiasm for attending a university, as evidenced by a campus visit, interview, and ongoing contact with the admissions office.

Early in your college-planning process, schedule a campus visit, including an information session, tour, and interview if available. Stay in touch with an admissions representative. Attend local presentations.

10. Demonstrated intellectual curiosity through reading, school and extracurricular pursuits, summer activities, and more.



JUDI ROBINOVITZ ASSOCIATES EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING

ACCREDITED BY THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES & SCHOOLS

Boca Raton
(561) 241-1610

Coral Springs
(954) 510-0600

Palm Beach Gardens
(561) 626-2662

Wellington
(561) 333-8882
Weston
(954) 510-0600

www.ScoreAtTheTop.com

Worksheet: Application Schedule

| Application Checklist | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | College 1 | College 2 | College 3 |
| Applications | | | |
| Request info/Application forms | | | |
| Regular application deadline | | | |
| Early application deadline | | | |
| Grades | | | |
| Request h.s. transcript sent | | | |
| Request midyear grade reports sent | | | |
| Test Scores | | | |
| Send SAT scores | | | |
| Send SAT Subject Test scores | | | |
| Send ACT scores | | | |
| Send AP scores | | | |
| Letters of Recommendation | | | |
| Request recommendations | | | |
| Send thank-you notes | | | |
| Essays | | | |
| Write essay(s) | | | |
| Proof essay(s) for spelling and grammar | | | |
| Have two people read essay(s) | | | |
| Interviews | | | |
| Interview at college | | | |
| Send thank-you notes to interviewer(s) | | | |
| Send and Track Your Application | | | |
| Make copies of all application materials | | | |
| Apply online | | | |
| Include application fee | | | |
| Sign application | | | |
| Confirm receipt of application materials | | | |
| Send supplemental material, if needed | | | |
| Financial Aid Forms | | | |
| Priority financial aid deadline | | | |
| Regular financial aid deadline | | | |
| Mail FAFSA | | | |
| Submit CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®, if needed | | | |
| Mail institutional aid form, if needed | | | |
| Mail state aid form, if needed | | | |
| After You Send Your Application | | | |
| Receive admission letter | | | |
| Receive financial aid award letter | | | |
| Send deposit | | | |
| Send final transcript | | | |

COLLEGE RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES

College Search

www.collegeview.com
www.petersons.com
www.princetonreview.com
www.mycollegeguide.org
www.campustours.com
www.anycollege.com
www.usnews.com
www.collegeweeklive.com
www.unigo.com

Testing

ACT Registration
www.actstudent.org

SAT Registration
www.collegeboard.com

Test Preparation
www.princetonreview.com

Books

Campus Visits and College Interviews by Zola Dincin Schneider
Looking Beyond the Ivy League- Finding the College That's Right for You by Loren Pope
The College Admissions Mystique by Bill Mayher
The College Solution: A Guide for Everyone Looking for the Right School at the Right Price by Lynn O'Shaughnessy
Right Price by Lynn O'Shaughnessy
Visiting College Campuses by Janet Spencer and Sandra Maleson

Comprehensive objective directories

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges
The College Board College Handbook
Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges
The Fiske Guide to Colleges
The Hidden Ivies: Thirty Colleges of Excellence
Colleges that Change Lives by Loren Pope
The Insider's Guide to Colleges

Financial Aid Information

www.fafsa.ed.gov
www.cssprofileonline.collegeboard.com
www.finaid.com
www.fastweb.com
www.studentaid.com



College VISITS

Making a college visit is the best way to find out if a college is going to be right for you.

To get the most out of your college visit, do the following:

- Prepare for your visit by learning as much as you can about the college. Visit their Web site, look through their catalog, talk to people who have attended there, etc.
- Think about what you want to do on your visit. Then call the admissions office. They will help you plan your visit. Try to schedule your visit when school is in session.
- After your visit, write down your thoughts and impressions of the college. Also, write a thank you note to anyone who met with you.

What to Do on a College Visit

Take a Walking Tour

A group tour is a great way to learn about a college and to see their campus. During the tour, your guide (probably a student) will provide you with facts and information. Your tour guide will also make sure that you see what's most important on campus.

On your tour, you are likely to see the following:

- Library
- Various Classrooms
- Athletic Facilities
- Recreation Centers
- Dorms
- Dining Halls
- Student Union
- Computer Labs

Explore on Your Own

In addition to a formal tour, walk around campus on your own. Eat in a dining hall or go to the student union and talk to some students. Ask them what they like about the college, what they don't like, how much they have to study, what they do on weekends, etc.

Check Out the Surrounding Area

Learn about the community, city, or town the college is in or near. Remember, you won't just go to school there; you will also live in that community.

Visualize Yourself as a Student

As you walk around campus, imagine being a student there. Do you feel comfortable on campus? Does the college feel like a good fit?

What to Do on a College Visit

Attend an Information Session

Most colleges have information sessions for prospective students and parents. If possible, attend a group session.

Talk to an Admissions Counselor

Admissions counselors are available to discuss their admissions requirements and to answer questions about the admissions process. If you would like to discuss your record or your chances of being admitted, take an unofficial transcript with you.

Talk to Someone in Your Major

If there is a major or program (study abroad, co-op, etc.) in which you are interested, ask the admissions office to set up an appointment with a faculty member who can talk to you about the specifics of that program or major.

Attend a Class

Sitting in on a class in your intended major will give you an idea of what it would be like to be a student there.

Talk to a Financial Aid Counselor

Many students need help paying for college. If you have questions about getting financial aid, make an appointment with a financial aid counselor.

Spend the Night

In order to get a real feel for what it's like to be a student at a college, ask if you can stay overnight in a dorm.

COLLEGE

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____

 DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY: _____
 SETTING: urban suburban rural small town
 SIZE OF STUDENT BODY: undergraduate _____
 graduate _____
 SIZE OF CAMPUS: _____
 AVERAGE CLASS SIZE: _____
 FACULTY TO STUDENT RATIO: _____
 FIELD OF STUDY, MAJORS: _____

 HOUSING: on campus off campus
 HOUSING GUARANTEED FOR 4 YEARS? Yes No
 HOUSING STYLE: dorm suite private semi-private
 RATE DORMS 1-10: _____
 FRESHMEN HOUSED TOGETHER: Yes No
 % OF STUDENTS WHO LIVE ON CAMPUS: _____
 % OF STUDENTS WHO COMMUTE: _____
 FRESHMAN HOUSED TOGETHER: Yes No

STUDENT LIFE

GREEK LIFE: Yes No
 ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: Yes No
 ACCESS TO RESTAURANTS? Yes No
 ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY: Yes No
 ACCESS TO A CITY: Yes No
 SUITCASE CAMPUS: Yes No
 SENSE OF COMMUNITY: Yes No

PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

COLLEGE: _____
 DATE OF VISIT: _____
 ADMISSIONS OFFICER NAME: _____
 EMAIL: _____
 REGIONAL COORDINATOR NAME: _____
 EMAIL: _____
 TOUR GUIDE NAME: _____
 EMAIL: _____

NOTES

OVERALL RATING ON A SCALE FROM 1-10: _____

VIBE OF CAMPUS: positive negative indifferent

DESCRIBE: _____

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

APPLICATION: Common App Universal
 STANDARDIZED TESTING: _____
 TEST OPTIONAL: Yes No
 BOTH SAT/ACT ACCEPTED: Yes No
 SUBJECT TEST REQUIRED: Yes No
 If yes, how many? _____
 SUPPLEMENTS: Yes No
 APPLICATION SUBMISSION OPTIONS: _____

INTERVIEW: Yes No
 # OF APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED: _____
 % OF STUDENTS ADMITTED: _____
 AVERAGE SAT/ACT ACCEPTED STUDENTS: _____
 AVERAGE GPA OF ACCEPTED STUDENTS: _____
 AP CREDITS ACCEPTED: Yes No

FINANCIAL AID

TOTAL COSTS (TUTION/ ROOM/BOARD/FEES): _____

 FAFSA DEADLINE: _____
 CSS PROFILE REQUIRED: Yes No
 CSS PROFILE DEADLINE: _____
 INSTITUTION AID FORMS REQUIRED: Yes No
 COLLEGE FORM DEADLINE: _____
 SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE: Yes No
 TYPES OF SCHOLARSHIPS: _____
 MERIT SCHOLARSHIPS: Yes No
 SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE: _____
 NEED BLIND OR NEED AWARE: _____

PROS

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

ACADEMICS

REQUIREMENTS: _____
 OFFERINGS: _____
 HONORS/SCHOLARS PROGRAMS AVAILABLE: Yes No
 HONORS/SCHOLARS APPLICATION DEADLINE: _____
 STUDY ABROAD AVAILABLE? Yes No
 INDEPENDENT STUDY AVAILABLE? Yes No
 FRESHMAN SEMINAR REQUIRED? Yes No
 COMPLIMENTARY TUTORING AVAILABLE? Yes No

CAREER CENTER

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: Yes No
 RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES: Yes No
 JOB PLACEMENT AFTER GRADUATION: Yes No
 BUSINESS OR INDUSTRIES CONNECTIONS? Yes No
 % OF STUDENT PLACED? _____

SPORTS

DIVISION: I II III
 CLUB SPORTS AVAILABLE? Yes No
 TRY OUT REQUIRED? Yes No
 INTRAMURAL SPORTS? Yes No
 SPORTS INTEREST: _____

ARTS

SUPPLEMENTS REQUIRED: Yes No
 SUPPLEMENT DEADLINE: _____
 AUDITION REQUIRED: Yes No
 AUDITION DEADLINE: _____

MISCELLANEOUS

IS THERE A BLUE LIGHT SECURITY SYSTEM? Yes No
 IS THERE A QUIET ROOM IN THE LIBRARY? Yes No
 NUMBER OF EATING OPTIONS ON CAMPUS: _____

CONS

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

OVERALL EVALUATION

CAN YOU PICTURE YOURSELF
 ATTENDING THIS UNIVERSITY? Yes No

DOES YOUR GUT TELL YOU
 THIS COULD BE THE RIGHT FIT? Yes No

WOULD I APPLY TO THIS UNIVERSITY?
 Yes Probably Possibly

IF ACCEPTED, WOULD I ATTEND?
 Yes Probably Possibly

Speak the Language: College Admissions

If you're not familiar with the college admissions process, it probably seems like it has a language all its own. To help you learn the lingo, here are definitions of some of the college admission terms you're likely to come across.

Acceptance Rate: The percentage of applicants a college accepts for admission.

Accreditation: Certification that a college meets the standards of a state, regional or national association.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA): This agreement, sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling, states that in order to allow students to consider all their college options, students have until May 1 to accept any college's offer of admission.

Common/Universal Application: Standardized application forms accepted by many colleges. After you fill out the Common or Universal Application, you can send it to any college that accepts it as the institution's own application.

Competitive College: A college with a rigorous, highly selective admissions process. Competitive colleges typically admit fewer than 25 percent of applicants.

Deferred Admission: A student's option to defer an offer of admission for up to two years.

Personal Statement: Sometimes referred to as a college application essay, personal statements are essays that give admissions officers insights into your character, personality and motivation.

Reach School: A college where admission might be a stretch for you, based on the average GPA and test scores of accepted students and the college's overall admission requirements.

Retention Rate: The percentage of students who return to a college for their sophomore year. An indicator of student satisfaction.

Safety School: A college where, based on the average GPA and test scores of accepted students, you have a high likelihood of being admitted.

Student-Faculty Ratio: The number of students at a college compared to the number of faculty. Some colleges see this as an indicator of class size and professor accessibility, but a lower ratio doesn't guarantee either. For a true indication of class size and professor accessibility, speak with students and professors at a college.

Supplemental Material: Items you include with your college application to provide more information about your talents, experiences and goals. Materials could include work samples, additional essays, newspaper clippings, music CDs or art slides. Verify if a college welcomes (or requests) these materials before sending.

Transcript: An official record of classes you have taken and the grades you received. Usually you must provide a high school transcript with your college application.

Waitlist: A list of students a college may eventually decide to admit if space becomes available.

Yield: The percentage of accepted students who go on to enroll at that college. Competitive colleges have high yield rates.

Cappex Fit Fact: More than half of all students enrolling said a "very important reason" for going to college was "to find my purpose in life." Go to Cappex.com today to see which colleges match your fit factors. It's free and easy!

Speak the Language: **Financial Aid**

When it comes to money, you don't need any misunderstandings. To help you navigate the waters of paying for college, here is a list of commonly used terms and what they mean.

Award Letter: Official notification of the type and amount of financial aid a college is offering you.

Demonstrated Need: The difference between what your family can contribute toward college expenses and the actual cost of attending college.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC): How much money you and your family are expected to contribute toward college expenses. EFC is based on your FAFSA application and a calculation by the federal government.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): The federal application every student must submit in order to be eligible for federal financial aid. For more information and to complete the FAFSA visit fafsa.ed.gov.

Grants: Money for college that does not have to be repaid. Most grants are need-based and are awarded by the state or federal government.

Institutional Aid (or Campus-Based Aid): Financial assistance given by a college, typically either need-based or merit-based aid.

Loans: Money given to a student that must be paid back. There are several types of loans, including low- to zero-interest student loans given out by the federal government, like the Perkins and Stafford loans. These are the best options, since you don't have to pay back the money until you graduate. Private loans, offered through banks and credit unions, typically have higher interest rates.

Merit Aid: Financial aid awarded to you from a college based on your individual achievements and talents. For a full listing of what's available, visit MeritAid.com.

Need-Based Aid: Financial aid given based on the ability of you and your family to pay for college.

Scholarship: Money for college that does not have to be paid back. Usually awarded based on specific criteria, such as your academic performance, extracurricular activities, college major, ethnic heritage or religious affiliation. Scholarships may be awarded by colleges, private groups or states.

Student Aid Report (SAR): After you file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), you will receive a SAR stating your EFC (expected family contribution) and eligibility for financial aid. This report is also sent to the colleges you indicate on the FAFSA.

Student Loan: Financial aid that must be repaid. Student loan programs are available through the federal government and private lenders.

Work-Study: Financial aid given in exchange for work (typically at a job on campus). To qualify for the Federal Work Study (FWS) program, you must complete the FAFSA.

Cappex Fit Fact: There is more than \$11 billion in merit scholarships available to students. Many of these scholarships are renewable each year. Go to MeritAid.com today, and find out which scholarships fit you *before* you apply.

Financial Aid Applications

| Type of Application | FAFSA | CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® | College's Financial Aid Form |
|--|--|--|---|
| Who requires it? | All colleges | Some colleges (primarily private) | Some colleges |
| Cost? | Free | \$25 for initial application including one college, plus \$16 for each additional school* | Free |
| Available online or paper? | Online is recommended fafsa.gov | Online only profileonline.collegeboard.org | Depends on college |
| When is the form available? | October 1 | October 1 | Depends on college |
| How do I make corrections after the form is submitted? | Online | Send new information directly to colleges | Send new information directly to colleges |
| How do I get started? | Create an FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov | Create a collegeboard.org account and complete the online CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE registration | Obtain the application form directly from the college |
| Who signs the form? | Student and Parent | Student or Parent | Depends on college |
| How is it used? | Calculates eligibility for federal, state, and some college/university financial aid | Calculates eligibility for college/university financial aid | Calculates eligibility for college/university financial aid |

* Fee waivers may be available. Check with your school counselor.

The Financial Aid Timeline:

September:

As you finalize your college list, use the online Net Price Calculator at each school for a customized estimate of your financial aid. Make sure to have some affordable college options on your list.

September – January: Attend a MEFA College Financing seminar for a detailed explanation of how financial aid works.

September: Create an FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov. Your FSA ID will be used to log in to certain websites including the FAFSA website, FAFSA.gov. Both the student and a parent will need an FSA ID.

October – December: Early Action/Early Decision applicants may have early financial aid deadlines. Check with each college's financial aid office.

October 1: The FAFSA and the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE® are available. Check to see which applications are required from each college on your list and be sure to submit your application(s) before the deadline. Every college will require at least the FAFSA.

Sign up for emails from MEFA to stay on track throughout this process. Connect with MEFA online for useful, timely updates on college planning.