

# MAKING THE MOST OF BAYLOR

Preparation for the  
College Process...

{ Grades  
11-12

# ELEVENTH GRADE

## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN WHY & WHERE

### EXPLORING THE **WHY?** *Why does one go to college?*

Baylor takes a student-centered approach when addressing the critical question, “Why does one go to college?” and the junior year provides the tools to begin forming an answer. That year, a student’s path through Baylor’s curriculum comes into focus and sharpens – course selection speaks to the student’s academic interests, and perhaps offers a tentative look at the majors and careers that they will find interesting. Additionally, participation in extracurricular activities may lead to leadership opportunities or roles with increased responsibilities. While students needn’t avoid seeking new experiences even in the final two years of high school, they should look for opportunities to deepen their involvement in activities and interests they’ve already identified. In the junior year, the college counseling office also encourages students to consider the value and the role of paid and unpaid work experiences during the summer and the academic year.



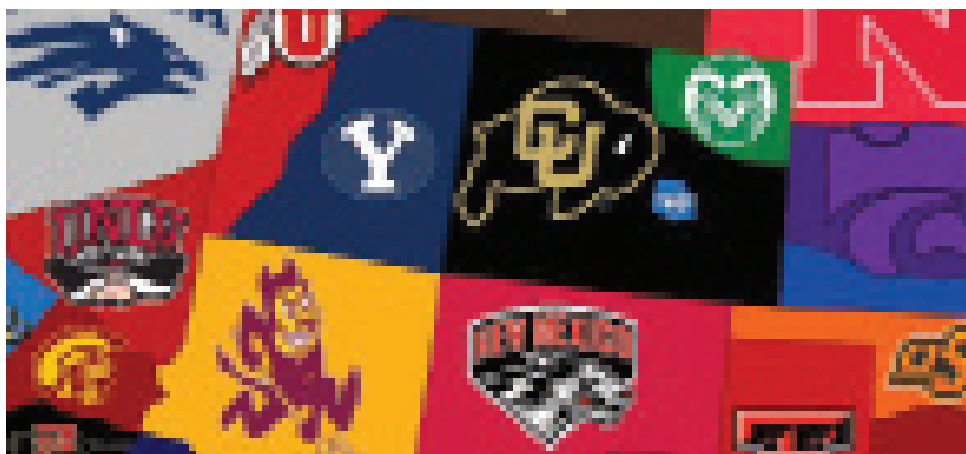
## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ♥ *Have you built a strong foundation of academic and personal habits of mind that will last beyond Baylor?*
- ♥ *Have you taken inventory of your strengths and challenges in order to use self-reflection as a tool throughout the college process?*
- ♥ *Are you being thoughtful about your participation in the classroom, demonstrated intellectual curiosity, and fostered connection with your teachers?*
- ♥ *Are your interests becoming evident from your transcript?*
- ♥ *What is the common theme or thread that runs throughout your Baylor experience?*
- ♥ *How varied or diverse is your extracurricular involvement?*
- ♥ *How are you being intentional with activities, both curricular and extracurricular such as leadership, community engagement, and enrichment beyond the school day?*
- ♥ *What aspects of high school have been most meaningful to you?\**

## SIGNATURE PROGRAMMING

- ♥ Fall College Fairs
- ♥ PSAT
- ♥ Junior Seminars (Students)
- ♥ College Forum (Parents & Students)
- ♥ Individual Meetings
- ♥ School Day ACT
- ♥ Campus & Virtual Visits
- ♥ Spring College Fair
- ♥ Application Workshop
- ♥ Essay Workshop
- ♥ Practice PSAT/ACT/SAT
- ♥ Athletic Recruitment Night
- ♥ Case Studies Program
- ♥ Red Raider Road Trips to Colleges
- ♥ Financial Planning Webinars





## EXPLORING THE **WHERE?**

The where of college should follow the why. There is no “ideal” school, only the right school. In the junior year, college counselors ask students to initiate research that builds on their responses to “why.” This process employs a wide range of tools, including frequent meetings with a college counselor, research completed via SCOIR or other online tools (virtual visits, Zoom seminars), and campus visits. The relationship between the counselor and student is critical within this process, and clear communication and active participation allows counselors to better understand and advocate for each student.

## **PRACTICALLY SPEAKING, THIS MEANS...**

- ♥ Counselors introduce themselves and the process to juniors via two seminars in December of the junior year. These seminars identify expectations and cover certain practical and philosophical elements of the college process. Counselors assist students with the creation of a SCOIR account with tutorial, an initial survey of academic work along with activities and achievements, and discussion of the role of standardized testing.
- ♥ Counselees will meet with their counselor several times during the second semester. These meetings begin with a discussion about a student’s interests and aspirations. Counselors explore how the combination of academic interests and extracurricular activities shapes a student’s story, and



they encourage students' cogent self-reflection in both writing and speaking. The conversations then shift to crafting more well-defined goals specific to the college process.

- Each student's list of schools of interest will grow from these initial meetings and incorporate suggestions from both counselor and student. The list provides students with the opportunity to begin researching schools, initially through SCOIR and later in the form of possible campus visits.
- Students work alongside their academic advisors and academic deans to select appropriate courses for their senior year.
- Students have opportunities to discuss summer plans and programs with their counselors.
- Counselors meet with parents during the spring to fully understand a student's story and to discuss all aspects of the college search and application process.



# TWELFTH GRADE

## FROM WHERE TO HOW, AND BACK TO WHY

*Understanding the transition from “where” to “how.”*

Senior year builds on the work from junior year; students refine their list of schools of interest, and finish crafting applications and essays. Meanwhile, counselors evaluate strategic decisions within the application process:

- ♥ how and when to apply
- ♥ the role of standardized testing
- ♥ the role of demonstrated interest and recommending student outreach where appropriate

The “how” of the application process involves assembling a student’s story from the diverse pieces of both their Baylor and off-campus lives, and then placing that story in the context of a college application. Although the “where” remains an important part of the conversation between counselee and counselor, the senior year pays special attention to building an application that fully captures the depth and breadth of a student’s Baylor experience.



## **BUILDING A STRONG APPLICATION MEANS...**

- Frequent meetings with your counselor to hone the storytelling aspect of the college application. These meetings include essay and application review with an emphasis on fitting your narrative within the expectations of a college application.
- Guidance on when to apply to specific institutions. Students work with their counselors to determine the best timeline to submit applications and to consider Early Action, Early Decision, Regular Decision, and Rolling timelines.
- Using student input and institution requirements to identify an appropriate standardized testing sequence. As a reminder, students take the school day SAT in the spring of their junior year at Baylor.
- Demonstrating interest by exploring opportunities to engage with colleges and universities from virtual information sessions to on-campus visits.
- Managing deadlines and document production.
- Identifying unique opportunities within the admission process like honors college admission, academic merit aid, and terms abroad that will enhance your college experience.
- Once students receive admissions decisions from the institutions to which they applied, the conversation shifts back to the “why” as they determine the best fit.

## **SIGNATURE PROGRAMMING**

- Application Workshop
- Fall College Fairs
- Campus & Virtual Visits
- Individual Meetings
- Senior Workshop Day
- Financial Planning Webinars
- Athletic Recruitment Night
- Red Raider Road Trips to Colleges



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