



Class of 2027

*College Planning
Night*





Welcome!

Melissa Bellantonio : Adelphi University

Craig Broccoli: Binghamton University

Sydney Huston: Boston University

Rob Cremmins: Farmingdale State

Melissa Bubelis: The Ohio State University

Sheryl Tinglin: Univ of Tennessee

Wesley Sreter: HHS Alumni



THE FIVE COMPONENTS — OF THE — ADMISSIONS FOLDER

Understanding the Process

Students and parents must fully understand the nuances of the college application process in order to find success.

- What is the role and responsibility of the student, the parent, and school counselor?
- What are the student's aspirations?
- What are the student's strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the specific requirements of each desired institution?
- What are the realistic expectations?
 - Cost, distance, admissions rates, etc.

COLLEGE
APPLICATION

Official High School Transcript



- 3+ years of academic progress on one piece of paper
- Cumulative weighted and/or unweighted GPA calculated at the end of Junior Year
- Level of rigor is noted for all courses
- Consistency in grades is key
- Senior-year courses are posted
- Mid-year senior grades may be requested/required by specific colleges
- Self-reporting grades is mandatory for many schools
- Chosen college will request final transcript for verification of grades and graduation
- Enrollment to chosen college is contingent on final transcript evaluation



Standardized Testing: SAT/ACT/AP



- Create a consistent and productive test prep schedule
- Develop a test schedule for both ACT and SAT
 - Suggestion: Take an actual test for both exams and decide which exam is best fit
- Student is responsible to research colleges' testing requirements.
 - View **Fairtest.org** for test optional schools
 - National Center for Education Statistics
- SAT and ACT are both weighed the same for admissions purposes
- Hewlett HS offers test prep through **Curvebreakers** and online through Castle Learning **Methodize**.
- AP exams are usually not part of admissions process, but students can report scores to strengthen profile.



Resume/Activities

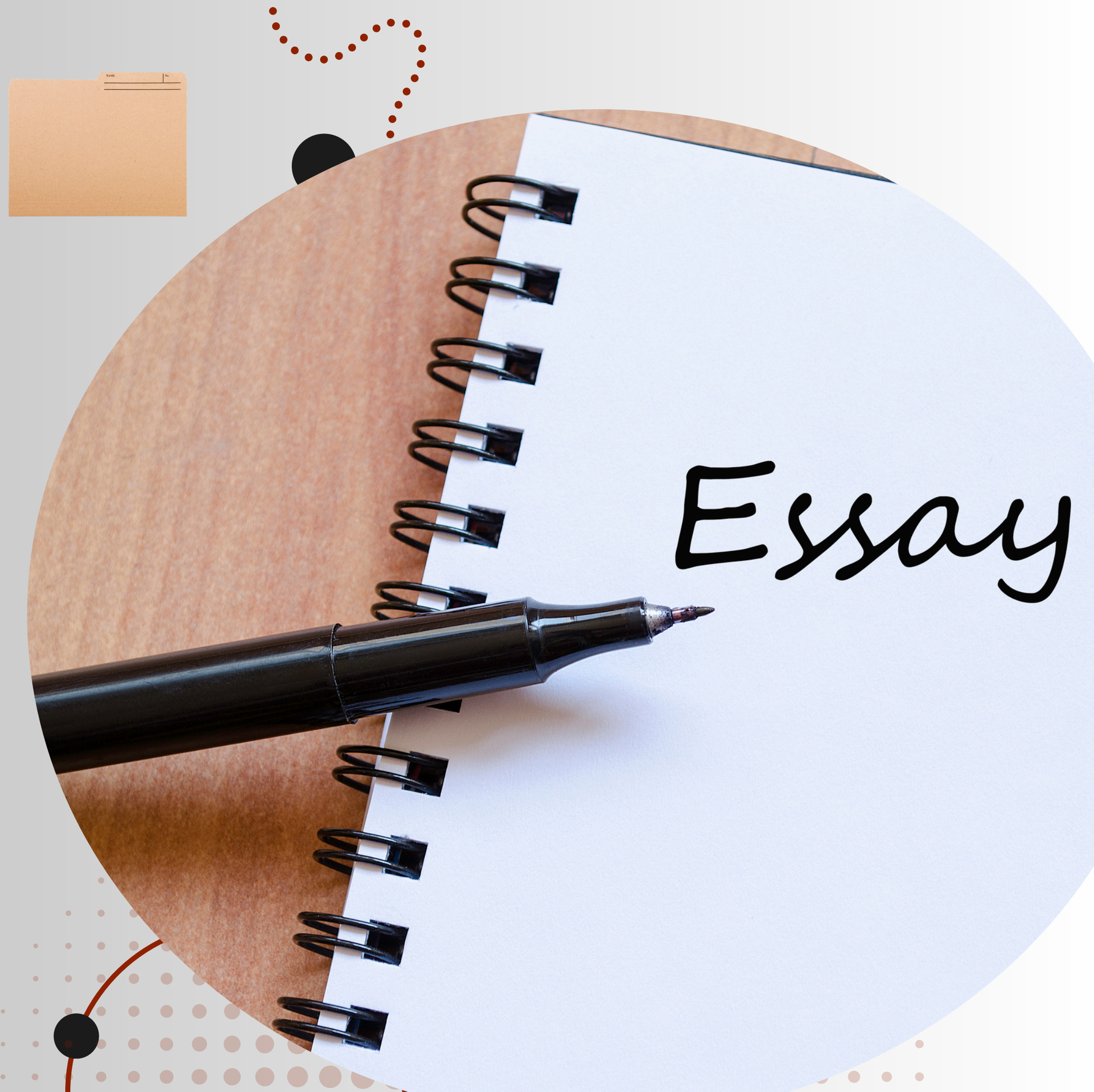


- Emphasis should be on quality of experience/activity - not the quantity
- Consistent and loyal participation is key
- Deeper dive into meaningful experiences such as community service, athletics, music, work, summer experiences, educational programs, outside responsibilities
- Showcase awards/recognitions/leadership
- Partake in activities that correlate to chosen major
- Develop solid relationship with club advisor, coach, employer
- Most importantly, students should enjoy and learn from the activity



College Essay(s)

- Provides opportunity for student voice and creativity
 - What should Admissions Committee know about student?
 - What makes the student unique?
- Essay must be engaging and have authentic narrative
- Requires multiple drafts
- Colleges may require additional essays that are specific to their college
 - Why does student want to attend?
 - Why particular major?
- Watch for Essay Development workshops at HHS in the spring and summer
- View the College Essay Guy for great tips



Recommendation Letters



- Provides insight on character beyond grades and test scores
- Defines potential for success in college
- Tells a story of student's character, work ethic, and place within community
- Admissions reps look to admit students who faculty will enjoy teaching
- Students should build solid relationships with teachers by:
 - Engaging in class; seeking out teacher for extra help; working well with classmates
- Supplemental letters can come from employer, coach, organization leader
- Colleges vary in the amount of letters permitted
 - Students will be asked to prioritize letters





TRENDS IMPACTING COLLEGE ADMISSIONS IN 2026

RETURN OF STANDARDIZED TESTING

DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

AI IN ADMISSIONS REVIEW

PROFILE CONNECTS TO MAJOR

INFLUENCES SHAPING COLLEGE LIST

RETURN OF STANDARDIZED TESTING

- Each admission cycle is experiencing an increase in colleges reinstating their SAT/ACT testing
- While many continue to be test-optional, students must stay abreast on announcements (Fairtest.com)
- In this regard, students should be prepping to take SAT and/or ACT
- Many students are submitting scores to test optional schools if they fall above the mean, which has inflated the mean score
- Students must look at each college closely to determine their course of action in regard to submission and/or non-submission of scores



PROFILE MATCHING

INTENDED MAJOR

- Majors are under a microscope. With increased interest in majors such as Computer Science, Engineering, Biology, and more, college representatives are looking for connections to the desired major through classes, internships, activities, and competitions.
- Essays or additional information sections are opportunities to share connection to major
- Think twice about finding the 'backdoor' into a college by selecting a less popular major. If your profile has no connection to your selected major, regardless of the competitiveness, you're risking the chance of admission
- If student is truly 'undecided' about a major, apply accordingly as college reps understand that most 17 year-old students are still exploring interests. Colleges leave many seats available for this curious group

A circular inset image showing a college campus. In the background, there is a modern, curved building with large windows. In the foreground, there are lush green trees with some autumn-colored leaves, a paved walkway, and a grassy area. The text "COLLEGE MAJOR" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

**COLLEGE
MAJOR**

DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

- 43.3% of colleges surveyed considered 'demonstrated interest' to be of either considerable or moderate importance
- Many colleges look for prior connections and/or communication with their campus via a scheduled visit, attendance at a regional event, communication with an admissions representative, etc.
- More interest = stronger possibility of enrollment or possible scholarship money
- Open emails from interested colleges - they are watching
- Learn who your area representative is and communicate directly with him/her
- Attend open houses and other special events of interest
- Larger universities do not track demonstrated interest



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

- AI is here to stay and it's changing the way students apply to college and how they are being evaluated
- AI can compile lists of prospective colleges for students based on their interests and academic profile
- Students can format resumes and draft essay ideas - but BEWARE as software is being produced to detect AI in submitted documents such as GPTZero
- Approximately 17% of colleges have used AI as a summarizing tool that weeds out non-competitive applicants by quickly analyzing course rigor and grade trends
- College essays are computer scored, based on AI for structure, vocabulary, and grammar
- Admissions offices are also using AI to investigate an applicant's digital footprint with the overuse of social media.



INFLUENCES SHAPING COLLEGE CHOICE

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are here to stay in college admissions
- Colleges have maintained or increased strategies to enroll underserved students
- Political climate and ideology have become a significant part of college choice as young adults are deeply engaged in social and political issues
- Religious groups have expressed increased worry about safety on campus and may choose a college that aligns to their beliefs
- Cost and affordability: Many private colleges are approaching \$90,000 per year for tuition, room, and board

