THE ULTIMATE MARIETTA HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE ADVISING MANUAL

ACT
A standardized college admission test. It features four main sections: English, math, reading and science — and an optional essay section.

Admission Tests
Also known as college entrance exams, these are tests designed to measure students' skills and help colleges evaluate how ready students are for college-level work. The ACT and the College Board's SAT are two standardized admission tests used in the United States. The word "standardized" means that the test measures the same thing in the same way for everyone who takes it. Read more about admission tests.

Articulation Agreement
An agreement between two-year and four-year colleges that makes it easier to transfer credits between them. It spells out which courses count for degree credit and the grades you need to earn to get credit.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA)
An agreement many colleges follow that gives applicants until May 1 to accept or decline offers of admission. This agreement gives students time to get responses from most of the colleges they have applied to before deciding on one.

Class Rank
A measurement of how your academic achievement compares with that of other students in your grade. This number is usually determined by using a weighted GPA that takes into account both your grades and the difficulty of the courses you've taken.

Coalition Application
A standard application form accepted by members of the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success. You can use this application to apply to any of the more than 90 colleges and universities that are members of the Coalition.

College Application Essay
An essay that a college requires students to write and submit as part of their application. Some colleges offer applicants specific questions to answer, while others simply ask applicants to write about themselves. Colleges may refer to this as a "personal statement."

College Credit
What you get when you successfully complete a college-level course. You need a certain number of credits to graduate with a degree. Colleges may also grant credit for scores on exams, such as those offered by the College Board's AP Program® and CLEP. Learn more about AP and CLEP.

Common Application
A standard application form accepted by all colleges that are members of the Common Application association. You can fill out this application once and submit it to any one — or several — of the nearly 700 colleges that accept it. Go to the Common Application.

Deferred Admission
Permission from a college that has accepted you to postpone enrolling in the college. The postponement is usually for up to one year.

Early Action (EA)
An option to submit your applications before the regular deadlines. When you apply early action, you get admission decisions from colleges earlier than usual. Early action plans are not binding, which means that you do not have to enroll in a college if you are accepted early action. Some colleges have an early action option called EA II, which has a later application deadline than their regular EA plan.

Early Decision (ED)
An option to submit an application to your first-choice college before the regular deadline. When you apply early decision, you get an admission decision earlier than usual. Early decision plans are binding. You agree to enroll in the college immediately if admitted and offered a financial aid package that meets your needs. Some colleges have an early decision option called ED II, which has a later application deadline than their regular ED plan.

Financial Aid
Money given or loaned to you to help pay for college. Financial aid can come from federal and state governments, colleges, and private organizations. Learn more about financial aid.

Grade Point Average (GPA)
A number that shows overall academic performance. It's computed by assigning a point value to each grade you earn. See also **Weighted Grade Point Average.**

Legacy Applicant
A college applicant with a relative (usually a parent or grandparent) who graduated from that college. Some colleges give preference to legacy applicants (also called "legacies").

Need-Blind Admission
A policy of making admission decisions without considering the financial circumstances of applicants. Colleges that use this policy may not offer enough financial aid to meet a student's full need.

Open Admission
A policy of accepting any high school graduate, no matter what his or her grades are, until all spaces in the incoming class are filled. Almost all two-year community colleges have an open-admission policy. However, a college with a general open-admission policy may have admission requirements for certain programs.

Placement Tests
Tests that measure the academic skills needed for college-level work. They cover reading, writing, math and sometimes other subjects. Placement test results help determine what courses you are ready for and whether you would benefit from remedial classes.

Priority Date or Deadline
The date by which your application — whether it's for college admission, student housing or financial aid — must be received to be given the strongest consideration.

Registrar
The college official who registers students. The registrar may also be responsible for keeping permanent records and maintaining your student file.

Rolling Admission
An admission policy of considering each application as soon as all required information (such as high school records and test scores) has been received, rather than setting an application deadline and reviewing applications in a batch. Colleges that use a rolling admission policy usually notify applicants of admission decisions quickly.

SAT
The College Board's standardized college admission test. It features three main sections: math, reading and writing, which includes a written essay.

Sophomore Standing
The status of a second-year student. A college may grant sophomore standing to an incoming freshman if he or she has earned college credits through courses, exams or other programs.

Transcript
The official record of your course work at a school or college. Your high school transcript is usually required for college admission and for some financial aid packages.

Transfer Student
A student who enrolls in a college after having attended another college.

Undergraduate
A college student who is working toward an associate or a bachelor's degree.

Universal College Application
A standard application form accepted by all colleges that are Universal College Application members. You can fill out this application once and submit it to any one — or several — of the more than 3,044 colleges that accept it.

Waiting List
The list of applicants who may be admitted to a college if space becomes available. Colleges wait to hear if all the students they accepted decide to attend. If students don't enroll and there are empty spots, a college may fill them with students who are on the waiting list.

Weighted Grade Point Average (GPA)
A grade point average that's calculated using a system that assigns a higher point value to grades in more-difficult classes. For example, some high schools assign the value of 5.0 (instead of the standard 4.0) for an A earned in an AP class.

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