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SESSION I: GOAL SETTING: TAKING STOCK

This session is for the students to talk about where they are in the college search process (have they begun to think about college, started a search, taken an SAT/ACT)? Some individual time with the Workshop Facilitator and a college admission checklist for 11th and/or 12th grade should end the session.

Objectives:

By the end of this session students will have:

- created a personal definition/description of college
- completed a personal resume
- reviewed a college planning calendar for junior and senior years

Activities and Handouts:

Activity #1: Where are you?

Activity #2: College Means... How do YOU define college?

Handouts: How Do You Define College?
Considering College Types

Activity #3: Who are you?

Handout: College Counseling Resume and
Questionnaire

Activity #4: What and when?

Handouts: Calendar/checklist
How to Use Your School Counselor
Choosing Your Team



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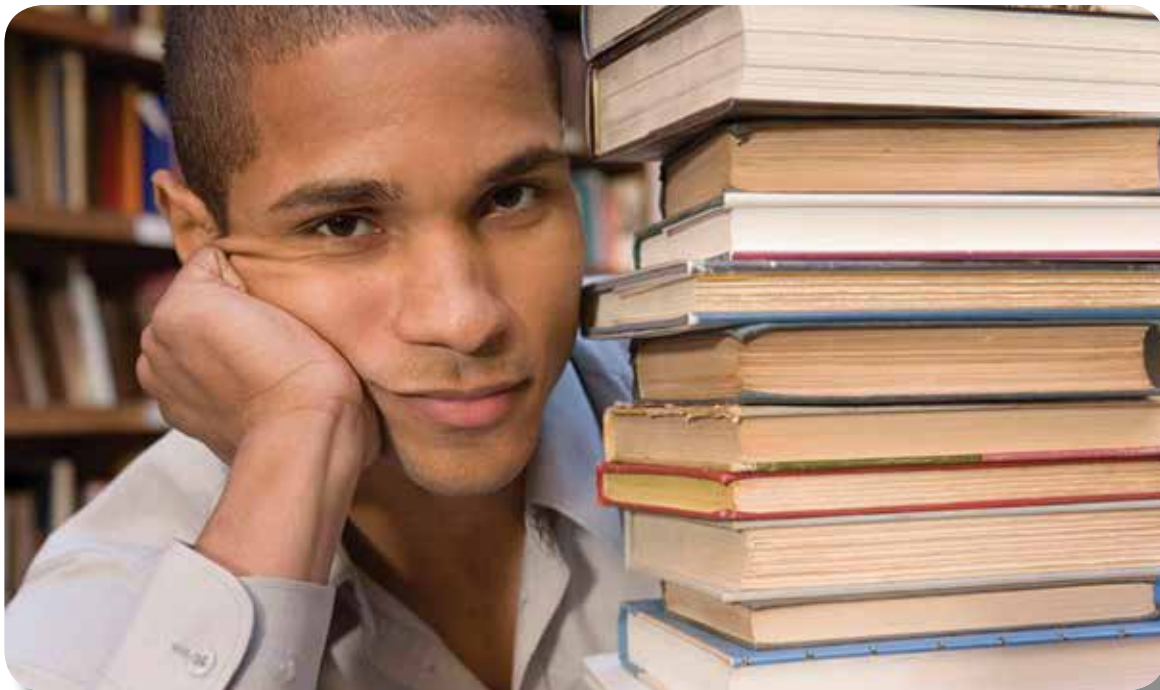
SESSION I: GOAL SETTING: TAKING STOCK

ACTIVITY #1: WHERE ARE YOU?

Opening Discussion:

At this point, students may be at very different stages in the college selection process. Using the following questions, generate a discussion about what steps they have taken so far in the college search. The purpose of the opening discussion is not only to discuss the following questions but also to have the students learn more about one another as they share their ideas. This discussion in many ways is an ice breaker.

- Why are you here? Ask students to make appropriate introductions depending upon setting and composition of group. Try to direct the students to talk about their goals for the session and goals for college attendance.
- What have you done if anything to prepare for college? This could be as sophisticated as doing a college search or as simple as taking college preparatory courses in high school, or talking to a next door neighbor.
- Have you visited a college? If so, what was the experience like?
- Have you taken the PSAT/PLAN and/or SAT/ACT? Discuss.
- Have you started the college search process? If so, what have you done?



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SESSION I: GOAL SETTING: TAKING STOCK

ACTIVITY #2: COLLEGE MEANS...: HOW DO YOU DEFINE COLLEGE?

Opening Discussion:

The purpose of this exercise is to determine how much the students know about colleges and how accurate their information is. Remember that “college” can include various forms of higher education, including community college and vocational schools.

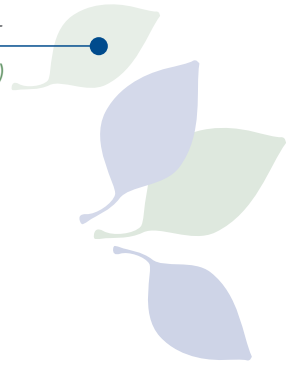
Activity/Handouts:

Definition Worksheet

Considering College Types

Instructions:

1. Ask students to pair with a partner and then try to identify specific names of colleges among the categories of colleges listed to see what they know about different types of colleges.
2. Use this exercise to generate discussion about the variety of options in higher education and to give students an opportunity to interact with one another.
3. After answering questions, ask students to turn to “Considering College Types” and read it together or silently, circling or highlighting any facts that interest them or about which they have questions.
4. Answer questions once students have completed the reading.



HOW DO YOU DEFINE COLLEGE?

Two-year _____

Four-year _____

Ivy League _____

Historically Black _____

Urban _____

Suburban _____

Specialized:

• Engineering _____

• Culinary _____

• Art _____

• Medical _____

• Fashion _____

• Technology _____

• International _____

Coed _____

Single Sex _____

Public _____

Private _____

Major Athletic Conferences _____

Religiously affiliated _____

Undergraduate _____

Graduate _____

Division III _____

Other _____

From: *The College Board College Advising Basics Workbook*



CONSIDERING COLLEGE TYPES

Colleges aren't all the same. Different colleges and universities have different missions (functions or goals). While no two are exactly alike, most fit into one or more of the following categories:

Liberal Arts Colleges focus on the education of undergraduate students. Classes are generally taught by professors who see teaching as their primary responsibility. Because most liberal arts colleges are smaller than universities, classes tend to be smaller and more personal attention is available. As opposed to gaining preparation for a specific career path, students who attend liberal arts colleges are exposed to a broad base of courses in the humanities, social sciences and sciences. In addition, they select at least one area of in-depth study which is their college "major." Many employers look for graduates of liberal arts programs, valuing their well-rounded preparation.

Universities are generally larger and include a liberal arts college, as well as some professionally-oriented colleges and graduate programs. Universities offer a greater range of academic choices than do liberal arts colleges. They will likely provide more extensive resources in terms of library, laboratory, fine arts and athletic facilities. At many large universities class size will reflect institutional size, with most introductory classes being taught in a lecture format. Some classes will be taught by graduate students. Professors at major universities will be involved in research which adds to the vitality of the academic community, but may also draw energy, focus, and resources away from undergraduate teaching.

Technical Institutes and Professional Schools enroll students who have made clear decisions about what they want to study. They emphasize preparation for specific careers, for example in music or fine arts, engineering or technical sciences. You will want to be quite sure of your future direction before selecting one of these options.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities find their origins in the time when African American students were systematically denied access to most other colleges and universities. Students at HBCU's have a unique opportunity to experience an educational community in which they are a part of the majority. They find committed faculty mentors who encourage their expectations of success.

Tribal Colleges are similar to HBCU's, focusing on the needs and education of American Indian students.

Women's Colleges, with their larger numbers of female faculty and administrators, offer college women confidence-building role models, greater opportunities to serve in a full range of student leadership positions, and a heightened awareness of career possibilities for women. Women's colleges graduate a high number of science majors, as well as students who continue on to graduate school and/or professional studies.

Community or junior colleges generally offer the first two years of a liberal arts education, in addition to specialized occupational preparation. An associate degree is awarded at the end of a two-year program of studies, following which many students continue their education at a four-year institution.

Proprietary institutions are considered for-profit companies that operate under the demands of investors and stockholders. They attract adult learners and part-time students in search of narrowly-focused professional training opportunities. These programs usually offer a non-traditional format; many for-profits also have classes solely available online.



OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SELECTING COLLEGES

ACCREDITATION AND PARTICIPATION IN THE FEDERAL STUDENT AID PROGRAMS: The goal of accreditation is to ensure that education provided by colleges and universities meets acceptable levels of quality. Accrediting agencies, which are private educational associations of regional or national scope, develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess whether or not those criteria are met. To participate in the federal student aid programs, an institution must be accredited by an accrediting agency or state approval agency recognized by the US Secretary of Education as a “reliable authority as to the quality of postsecondary education” within the meaning of the Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended. This is all very technical, but the bottom line is if a college or university is unaccredited, it will not be able to offer federal student aid. You should be very cautious about considering a school that does not participate in the federal student aid programs.

INSTITUTION SIZE: The size of a college or university will have an impact upon many of your opportunities and experiences. The range of academic majors offered, the extracurricular possibilities, the amount of personal attention you'll receive, and the number of books in the library will all be influenced by size.

In considering size, however, it is essential that you look beyond the raw number of students attending. Consider instead, average class size for both first year students and upperclassmen. Investigate not just the number of faculty, but also how accessible faculty are to students. Perhaps you are considering a small department within a large school, or vice versa. Large schools may offer extensive support services for students with special needs or those who are experiencing difficulty. Smaller schools may not be able to fund similar programs. On the other hand, extra support may not be necessary if faculty work closely with individual students.

LOCATION: Distance from home may be important to you. Is it important to you to be able to visit home frequently, or do you see this as a time to experience a new part of the country? Some of you will prefer an urban environment with access to museums, ethnic food or major league ball games. Others will hope for easy access to outdoor activities or the serenity and safety of a more rural setting.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS: If you have a good idea of something specific you want to study in college or a career for which you want to prepare, look for well-respected academic departments in this discipline at the colleges you explore. Talk with professors and students in these departments. Research relative reputation by surveying adults already in the field and using printed resources which rank academic departments.

You should not limit your selection process to academic program issues alone. Studies show that a majority of college students change college major at least once during their college years. Therefore, it is important to pick a college or university that will offer you many appealing possibilities. Look for unique options such as study abroad, unusual academic calendars, or cooperative education plans which enable you to include several paid internships with your class work, as ways of enhancing your education.

If you are undecided, relax and pick an academically-balanced institution which offers a range of majors and programs. Most colleges offer expert counseling to help the undecided student find a focus.

CAMPUS LIFE: Be sure that you consider what your experience will be like at a college—beyond the classroom. To grow in all ways, you will want a reasonable balance between academic rigor and an active social life. Find out what is available in terms of extracurricular activities, athletics, special interest groups. Does the community surrounding the college offer attractive outlets for students? Are students truly welcomed by the community? Is there an ethnic or religious community in which you can participate? What influence, if any, do fraternities and sororities have on campus life?

Colleges often require that you live in campus housing for one or more years. So, in considering social life, be sure to look carefully at the quality of life in the dormitories. Many colleges now offer residential-life options, such as substance-free dorms and special interest floors for students who share academic, recreational or community service interests. Others offer dormitory-based study assistance, computer facilities and counseling services. Ask if housing is guaranteed to returning students. If so, how are dormitory assignments made after the first year?

COST: Today's price-tag for a college education has made cost an important consideration for most students. At the same time, virtually all colleges work very hard to ensure that academically-qualified students from every economic circumstance can find the financial aid which will allow them to attend. In considering cost, look beyond the price-tag for available assistance. Decide the value of a desired educational experience and how much sacrifice (usually in terms of work and loan) you are willing to make to obtain your goals. Work closely with the financial aid officers at the colleges to which you apply.

DIVERSITY: You learn much from your college classmates every day—in the classroom and in activities. Consider geographic, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the student body as ways of assessing your future learning opportunities.

RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES: One of the best ways to measure the quality of a college or university and the satisfaction of its students is by learning the percentage of students who return after the first year and the percentage of entering students who remain to graduate. Comparatively good retention and graduation rates are indicators:

- a college and a majority of its students are well-matched
- sufficient classes and academic programs are available
- responsible academic, social and financial support systems exist for most students.



From: **CHARTING YOUR COURSE FOR COLLEGE**
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SESSION I: GOAL SETTING: TAKING STOCK

ACTIVITY #3: WHO ARE YOU?

Opening Discussion:

Now is a time to reflect on individual goals and accomplishments. Give a brief introduction of the “College Counseling Resume” and let students know that this information can help them find a college that is a good match. Students should also be encouraged to share this information with their high school counselor and family as they work together to research colleges.

Activity/Handout:

Personal Résumé

Instructions:

1. Ask students to complete the “College Counseling Resume” and encourage them to ask questions.
2. Make sure to collect the questionnaires.
3. Try to allow time for individual Q&A with the students during this activity.
4. Use this interaction to help you determine the needs of this group and to plan future sessions.



COLLEGE COUNSELING RÉSUMÉ

Section I—Family:

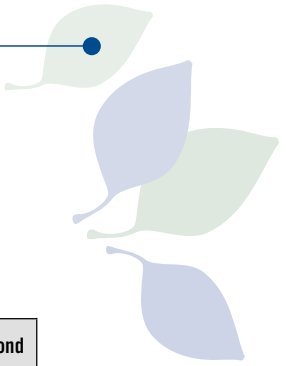
	Parent 1	Parent 2	Guardian	Siblings
Name(s)				
Educational Background (high school, post-high school, etc.)				
Occupation				

Section II—Academics/School:

1. Check the following:

	English	History	Language	Math	Science	Computer	Art	Other
Which subjects do you like the best?								
In which subjects have you done the best?								
Which subjects are more difficult for you?								

2. Your academic record: How would you describe your academic record? Are your grades above, below or consistent with your ability? Why?
3. Your finest academic moment: Describe that achievement or experience.



Section III—School Activities:

Activity

Grade Level

9	10	11	12	Beyond
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Athletics (sport and level [JV, varsity, etc.] and any awards)

Extracurricular Activities (clubs, organizations)

Employment and Summer Activities

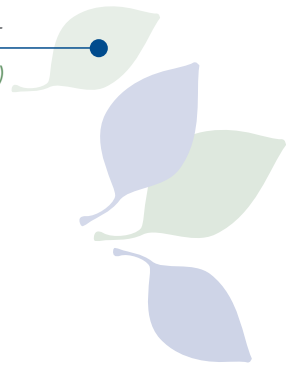
Church/Community Service

Section IV—College/Career Interests:

- List the college majors that interest you.
 a. _____ b. _____
- Identify the profession(s) in which you see yourself working. _____

Section V: FACTORS AFFECTING YOUR COLLEGE CHOICES:

1. Besides getting an education and preparing for a career, why you are going to college?
2. What type of college environment will challenge you to grow the most academically and personally?
3. What are your top four-six criteria in selecting a college?
4. In college, what extracurricular activities do you want to continue or begin?
5. What professions interest you the most?
6. List college majors that interest you.
7. What pressures, if any, are you feeling from yourself or others about going to college?
8. What are your major concerns about attending college?
9. College Type: Single Sex _____ Coed _____ Either _____



10. College Locations—Check regions and circle states of particular interest:

- Midwest (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI)
- Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV)
- Mid-Atlantic (DE, D.C., MD, PA, NJ, NY)
- New England (CT, ME, MA, NH, VT, RI)
- West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, ID, HI, KS, MT, NE, NV, NM, OK, OR, ND, SD, TX, UT, WA, WY)
- Canada, England, Scotland

If you are interested in specific cities, list them here and explain why:

11. Community (check all that apply):

- small town
- large town
- near a city
- near the mountains
- near the coast
- undecided

12. College size (check all that apply):

- under 500–1,000
- 1,000–2,000
- 2,000–5,000
- 5,000–10,000
- more than 10,000
- no preference

Section VI—Final Thoughts:

Is there anything else you'd like to share about yourself?

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ACTIVITY #4: WHAT AND WHEN AND WHO?

Opening Discussion:

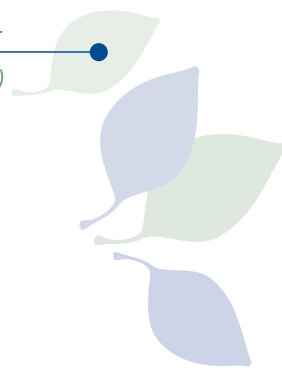
Remind students that even though the process can seem overwhelming, if they take it step-by step, it will be easier. They will feel as if they are in control of the process. Keeping a calendar of important dates and deadlines is absolutely essential throughout the college search and application process. Developing a solid relationship with the school counselor is an additional source of support, as will recognizing the role of family, friends and community contacts.

Activity/Handouts:

Calendar/Checklist**How to Use Your School Counselor****Choosing Your Team**

Instructions:

1. Hand out the calendar for the junior and senior year that will give students an idea of where they should be in the preparation for entering higher education.
2. Briefly go over the list letting students know that much of the information will be discussed in future sessions.
3. Ask students to check the appropriate boxes and keep the calendar in a safe, useful place.
4. Go over the handout on “How to Use Your School Counselor,” pointing out to students the importance of using their counselor to help them through the application process.
5. Ask students if they have met with their counselor.
6. Hand out “Choosing Your Team” and ask students to identify at least one person who can support them as they apply to college.
7. Ask the students to take home their checklist, resume, and questionnaire, to complete and bring them back for the next session.



PREPARING FOR COLLEGE: JUNIOR/SENIOR CHECK LIST

JUNIORS

Fall:

- Start your year off right by **talking with your school counselor about the year ahead**. Confirm that your courses will put you on the right track for college admission. Be sure to ask about test dates for the PLAN, PSAT, ACT, and SAT. You'll need to register up to six weeks ahead of time.
- Starting developing a résumé**—a record of your accomplishments, activities and work experiences. This will be an important part of your college application.
- If you haven't participated in many activities outside of class, now is the time to sign up**. Consider clubs at schools, team sports, leadership roles, or involvement in your religious or civic community group.
- Take the PSAT**. Taking the test as a junior will qualify you for some scholarship consideration and identify you to colleges as a potential applicant. When you receive the results (usually in December), review them to learn more about your strengths and weaknesses. Discuss the results with your family and school counselor.
- Begin to prepare for the ACT or SAT**. Free test preparation may be available at your school, your local community colleges, and community-based programs; in addition, there are many free resources on the Internet. If you can't find the best websites, ask your counselor. You should plan to take at least one of these tests in the spring and again next fall during your senior year. **Ask your counselor if you qualify for a fee waiver**.

January/February:

- Meet with your school counselor again to develop your senior schedule**. Make sure that you will be enrolled in the most challenging courses for which you are qualified.
- Register for a spring offering of the SAT and/or ACT**. Ask your counselor if you should take an SAT Subject Test this spring.
- Ask your counselor about summer opportunities on college campuses**. These can be a great way to find out what college life is all about and make you a more attractive candidate for admission to colleges.



March/April:

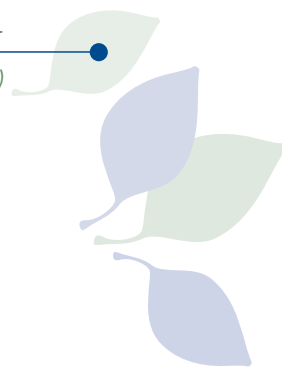
- Begin taking a more serious look at colleges and universities.** Make a file for each college and gather information about academics, financial aid, and campus life. Go to college fairs and open houses and learn as much as you can about the colleges online.
- Begin planning college visits.** Spring break is a good time to visit. Try to visit colleges near you and include a large, medium size, and small campus.
- Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you.** Write or email to request a viewbook and additional information.
- Think about lining up a summer job, internship or co-op.**

May:

- Take a look at some college applications** and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
- Make a list of teachers, counselors, employers, and other adults you might ask to write letters of recommendation** for your college applications.

Summer:

- Continue investigating colleges.**
- Begin thinking about your applications. Generally, colleges will have their applications online by the beginning of August. Work on the essay before you return to school.**



SENIOR YEAR TIMELINE

August/September

- Register for the SAT and/or ACT** if you didn't take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your score and want to take it again. (Your counselor can help you with fee waivers).
- Take a look at some college applications** and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
- The SAT test date most popular with high school seniors is this month.**
- Visit with your school counselor to make sure you are on track to graduate** and fulfill college admission requirements. If you're ahead of schedule, consider taking courses at a local university or community college to get a jumpstart on college credit.
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges:** meeting with college representatives who visit your high schools during the fall, attending local college fairs, visiting campuses (if possible). Ask your counselor if they know of special campus visitation programs.
- Narrow down your list of colleges** and begin to consider "safe," "reach," and "realistic" schools. Make sure you have the application and financial aid information for each school. Find out if you qualify for any scholarships at these schools.
- Create a checklist and calendar** to chart:
 - Standardized test dates, registration deadlines, and fees
 - College application due dates
 - Financial aid application forms and deadlines
 - Other materials you'll need for college applications (recommendations, transcripts, essays, etc.)
 - Your high school's application processing deadlines
- Some schools require the CSS/Financial Aid Profile.** Ask the colleges to which you are applying for their deadlines. Register as early as September. See your school counselor about fee waivers.



October

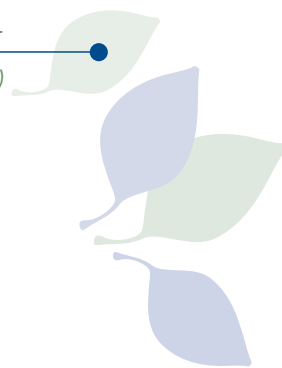
- Some colleges will have deadlines as early as this month.** These would include Rolling Admission, Early Decision and Early Action deadlines.
- If you cannot afford the application fees that many colleges charge, **ask your counselor to help you request a fee waiver.**
- Finalize your college essay.** Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Request personal recommendations from teachers, school counselors or employers.** Follow the process required by your high school or provide a stamped, addressed envelope, the appropriate college forms, and an outline of your academic record and extracurricular activities to each person writing you a recommendation.
- Research possibilities of scholarships.** Ask your counselor, colleges and religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. There are also some good scholarship websites, including FastWeb (www.fastweb.com) and The College Board (<http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search>). You should NEVER pay for scholarship information.

November

- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month.** Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school.** Follow your school's procedure for sending transcripts.
- Make sure testing companies (ACT or SAT) have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.**
- The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) will be available this month,** but cannot be completed before January 1. Visit www.fafsa.gov to complete this form.

December

- Begin to organize regular decision applications** and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.
- Register for the January SAT (if needed). It is the last one colleges will be able to consider for a senior.**



January

- Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as January 1.** Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able consider it).**
- Ask your guidance office in January to send first semester transcripts to schools where you applied.** At the end of the school year, they will need to send final transcripts to the college you will attend.
- It is time to file the FAFSA (no later than Feb 1).** The sooner you complete it, the sooner you will have an idea of your financial aid options. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed or watch your email if you filed electronically.

February/March/April

- While most of your applications are complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, **don't slack in the classroom.** The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive.** Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

- May 1 is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit.** When you've made your college decision, notify your counselor and the colleges. Send in your deposit by the postmark date of May 1. If you've been offered financial aid, accept the offer and follow the instructions given. Also notify schools you will not attend of your decision.
- Make sure that you have requested that your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.**
- If you are "wait listed" by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write** the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.



Summer

- It's been a long journey through high school and to college. **Enjoy your summer.**
- Summer jobs** can help pay some of your college expenses and give you great career preparation.
- Make a list of what you will need to take with you for your dorm room.** The suggested list of items, room and furniture dimensions and many other questions can usually be answered by visiting your college's website and searching under "Housing" or "Residence Life" for further information.
- You will most likely get a roommate assignment** from your college. Call, write or email to get acquainted in advance. In your conversations and communication, you should be able to figure out who will bring what for your room.
- Some colleges will offer a summer orientation/registration.** Make sure to attend to meet fellow students and other important people on campus and to familiarize yourself with your new school. This is often the time you sign up for your fall courses.




HOW TO USE YOUR SCHOOL COUNSELOR

School counselors are one of the best ongoing sources of support for students who plan to go to college. They can be your friends throughout the entire college process. If you are lucky enough to have access to a counselor in your school, it is in your best interest to visit him or her on a regular basis.

Start by making an individual appointment to introduce yourself to your counselor. If small-group college counseling or information sessions are offered, sign up. But don't only settle for a "group" meeting in which you will have to share time with other students. Make sure that you schedule an uninterrupted time for a private, one-on-one session. **Begin by introducing yourself and stating clearly that it is your definite goal to attend college.** Make sure your counselor realizes this is IMPORTANT to you and you are HIGHLY MOTIVATED!

Throughout your high school years, your counselor can help you:

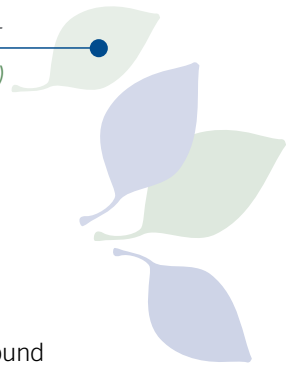
- Plan classes that will prepare you well for college admission and success. Your counselor knows which high school classes are required for college admission.
- Review your academic record with you and suggest areas that need improvement. If you need to do some catching up, your counselor can suggest ways in which to do that.
- Begin the admission process by identifying the questions you should be asking—and finding honest answers. Questions such as: "Do I want to stay near home? Does the college have my major? How important is size?"
- Clarify and understand terms, ideas and experiences for you encounter during research, campus visits or meetings with college representatives. Your counselor knows where to find information; for example in books, catalogues, brochures, and CDs that deal either with the admission process or a specific college or university. In addition, your counselor will be able to point you to websites that offer RELIABLE and FREE information about college.
- Identify special opportunities that may maximize your chances for being a well-prepared and appealing candidate for colleges. These might include weekend or summer programs on college campuses (often free for first-generation students), internships or community college classes open to high school students. Your counselor will know about local college fairs, opportunities to visit college campuses, and even overnight visits to colleges that may be offered.
- Familiarize yourself with everything you need to know about the required college admission tests. Your counselor can make sure that you get registered for the PSAT (the practice test for the SAT) and PLAN (the practice test for the ACT) tests. She/he can help you know which tests (SAT, ACT, SAT Subject tests, or TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language) will be required by the colleges to which you may apply. Counselors know how and when to register for tests. She or he can even help with fee waivers if your family can't afford to pay for tests.
- Secure applications, identify application deadlines and prioritize to make sure that everything gets done carefully and ON TIME! Here also, if you do not have enough money to pay for application fees, your counselor can assist in asking colleges to waive application fees.
- Complete your applications and polish any required college essays so that the product you send to colleges will represent the best of your thinking and writing abilities. Make sure that you take a "rough draft" to your counselor early on. Leave plenty of time for revision and rewriting, prior to deadlines.

- 
- Figure out how to pay for college. First, your counselor can give you essential information about the “need-based” financial aid application process. He or she can help you understand how to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and, if required, other aid applications—such as those required by individual colleges or the College Board’s “College Scholarship Service Profile.” Your counselor may also be able to help you research scholarships based on factors other than your ability to pay for college.
 - Write a letter of recommendation to colleges or universities. Many colleges will require that you obtain recommendations from both a counselor and one or two teachers. In addition, counselors are often asked to complete “secondary school and mid-year reports” (included with applications).
 - Compare offers of admission and financial aid after you have heard from all of your colleges. This can be an essential step in making a final decision. Your school counselor can help you decide which programs are best suited to your educational goals. She or he can also help you compare offers of scholarships and need-based financial aid that may be sent to you in very different formats from different colleges.

There are a few other very important things to remember about working with your school counselor.

- Most school counselors have many, many students whom they want to help. So make it as easy as possible for your counselor to help you.
 - Make appointments early and show up on time.
 - Submit any forms that require counselor completion well in advance of due dates.
 - Carefully follow any procedures that have been established by your school for turning applications and related forms or for securing transcripts.
 - Whenever possible, make copies of everything you mail or give to your counselor. Sometimes, with so much paper, things get lost. When you have a copy easily at hand, nothing is lost forever.
- Make sure that you keep your counselor “in the loop” about what you are hearing from colleges. If there are any problems which arise, your counselor can act as your direct advocate with colleges.
- Whenever you have questions don’t hesitate to return to your counselor for advice, especially if you feel you are being asked by a college to do something that doesn’t seem “just right.” Your counselor will know the rules of the game by which both students and colleges are supposed to play.
- If you think it would be helpful, try to schedule a meeting with your counselor AND your parent(s). There are parts of the college process where you need lots of help from them. This is particularly true when it comes time to completing the financial aid applications.
- Be sure to thank your counselor for assistance given. The counseling door is always open to students who show that they are appreciative of a counselor’s time and effort.

Finally, when all is said and done, and you have made it successfully through the college selection and admission process, make sure that you take time to THANK your counselor one more time with a handwritten note (as well as any teachers who helped). If you have made good use of your counselor’s knowledge and assistance, the thanks will be more than well-deserved. When the student-counselor relationship “clicks,” your counselor will be able to offer the essential emotional support and encouragement you need during one of the most important times of your life. And your expression of gratitude will build a reservoir of good-will, should you need to return for further assistance at any time in the future.



CHOOSING YOUR TEAM

Content adapted from the book *In* by Mike Moyer.

Getting into college is a team effort. You are the captain of your application team, but you will need to surround yourself with individuals who can help make your college application shine. Like any ace squadron, your team needs members with different skills. Your team should include:

Counselors

They should provide: College information and academic advice. Counselors are great sources of information and can open your eyes to college possibilities. Don't be afraid to pick their brains about potential schools and if you might be a good fit. Nobody knows more than your counselor.

Family Members

They should bring: Support and guidance. The best thing your parents can do is help you make the most of high school by providing a good environment for studying and by offering the encouragement you need during this stressful time. They should also support you in your college decision.

They should avoid: Making decisions for you about your activities and interests or ultimately running your college search. The right school for your parents may not be the right place for you.

Friends

They should bring: Support. Getting through high school and applying to college can be stressful. Lean on your friends for support, understanding and stress relief because they're probably going through the same process. Be cautious of turning your decisions over to friends.

References

They should bring: The ability to speak positively not just about your accomplishments, but about your passions and potential. These can be teachers or other adults who know you well. A reference might be someone you worked with on a volunteer project, an employer or church leader. They should be willing to contact a potential college on your behalf. Most colleges require letters of recommendation from at least one teacher so it pays to be in good standing. Do you have a class you like or a teacher that is particularly engaging? A good relationship with a teacher can lead to a good recommendation, and this can help open college doors for you.

My Team

School/College counselor _____

Friends and Family _____

References _____

Don't forget: Send thank-you notes to everyone on your team!

For more tips, go to www.Cappex.com/tips.

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