

AMERICAN HERITAGE ACADEMY

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

JUNIOR PLAN BOOK

2010-2011

Dear Juniors and Parents/Guardians:

I am pleased to present this year's Junior Planning Book to you as you begin the exciting journey to your post-high school education. This book combine's information from many sources and has been written with you and your needs in mind. It is designed to provide you with the most accurate and current information available. As you use it, you will find it to be a valuable resource in having a successful experience over the next year and one-half.

While this book does have a great deal of information, there is more available to you. It is vital that you arrange regular conferences with your counselor. You will probably be surprised at how much time you will spend in the Guidance Office and with your counselor. Keep in mind that your counselor's vast experience is at your disposal and so I encourage you to access that knowledge and experience.

The planning process you are about to begin can be both very exciting and challenging. For many students and families, planning for college began years ago. Now that you as juniors, are about to take the more formal steps to accomplish that plan, there is a natural and understandable sense of excitement. It is also challenging because you will be working on developing plans in an area in which you have little experience. You should begin by getting organized staying on task, and utilizing all of the people in you life who are ready to help and support you. Your parents/guardians and family, your teachers, and your counselor at American Heritage Academy are the immediate resources for you and as your counselor, I am looking forward to sharing this adventure with you.

Sincerely,

Anne Snyder
College Counselor

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TIMETABLE FOR CLASS OF 2011

JUNIOR YEAR

December 8, 2009	Attend Junior Planning Breakfast
December 15, 2009	Deadline to register for January 23 SAT Reasoning Test
January 23, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Tests administered <u>Administered at AHA</u>
February 4, 2010	Deadline to register for March 13 SAT Reasoning Test
February 6, 2010	ACT Test Administered
February 15 - 19, 2010	Mid-Winter Break – Schedule College Tours – Great time to tour colleges with your family or friends
March 5, 2010	Deadline to register for April 10 ACT
March 13, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test ONLY administered <u>Administered at AHA</u>
March 25, 2010	Deadline to register for May 1 SAT Reasoning and SAT II
April 5 - 9, 2010	Spring Break – Schedule College Tours
April 10, 2010	ACT Test Administered
May, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Administered
May 5, 2010	Deadline to register for June SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II
May 1, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Administered
May 7, 2010	Deadline to register for June 12 ACT
May 3 - 14, 2010	AP Exams
May, 2010	Submit resume, student questionnaire, parent questionnaire, file NCAA Clearinghouse Forms for Division I/II/III athletics, request (2) Teacher Recommendation Letters

June 5, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Administered
June 12, 2010	ACT Test Administered
June - July 2010	Begin to narrow your college list (7-10 Colleges)
Summer, 2010	Continue to visit college campuses and interview when possible

-----Senior Year-----

To Be Announced	Senior Breakfast and Morning program for parents/guardians to discuss application process
August – October, 2010	August – October, 2010 Schedule appointment with counselor to finalize Senior year plans Update student resume Request recommendations from teachers (follow-up if you requested your letters in the spring) Prepare “Short List” of colleges to which you will apply
August, 2010	Deadline to register for September 2010, ACT
September, 2010	Deadline to register for October SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II
September, 2010	Deadline to register for November ACT
October, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Administered
October, 2010	ACT Reasoning Test Administered
November, 2010	SAT Reasoning Test and SAT II Administered
December, 2010	Early Action and Early Decision letters of admission arrive
January - April, 2011	Colleges mail letters of admission
May 1, 2011	<i>Candidates Reply Date:</i> students must send deposit to college you will attend and notify other colleges that you will not attend
May, 2011	AP Exams
May, 2011	Graduation Day for Class of 2011 – Congratulations!!!

THE COLLEGE SEARCH

The Search Process is one that can be both exciting and challenging. It is clearly exciting because you will be taking the first formal steps to find the college you will be attending in two years. It is challenging because there are more than 2,500 colleges and universities in the United States and you might even add to that number by considering colleges in other countries. There are many steps to this process which will be identified in this section. There are many people who will assist you. Your parents, other family members and your school counselor are part of the entire planning process and are eager to assist you in many different ways.

The first step in looking for colleges is an inward look at yourself. You must gain a real understanding of the kind of person and student you are. When you consider going to college, there is the “dream” phase. At this point, you really are thinking about things that are external to attending college. It may be that skiing in Colorado or surfing off the California coast sounds fabulous. But you must ask yourself and your parents if this is a realistic goal. If so, continue with that thought if not; begin to deal with the realities of your plans for college.

In order to be able to find colleges that are appropriate for you from the more than 2,500 colleges and universities in the United States, it is critical to your success and happiness in college that you examine your interest, abilities, how you learn, and what you would like to study or major in while in college. Colleges offer many alternatives and it is possible that some might be more to your liking than others. Before you can examine what colleges offer, you have to examine yourself. Below are some of the questions you may wish to explore before you begin. These are some of the questions that are usually found in a computer search for colleges and those that your counselor is likely to ask as well.

1. How far from home do you want to be? It is time to deal with the reality of who you are and if you should really be closer to home or further away. A guide you may wish to use is: up to 2 hours from home; 2-4 hours from home; 4-8 hours from home; a plane trip from home. Each distance changes your contact with home and you and your parent’s ability to visit you while in college.
2. Have you identified a major, a career direction, or general area of study? All computer searches and a number of printed sources have lists of colleges with your preferred field of study. Some lists such as for English may last several pages while others, such as Pharmacy, may have relatively few colleges.
3. Think in terms of urban, suburban or rural environments. When in or close to a large city, the city may exert a powerful influence on you and your collegiate experience. Is this what you are looking for as part of your experience? Suburban locations may seem the ideal balance between urban and rural but if you like to be in the woods or hills, they can still be quite a distance from you. At the same time, unless the college offers easy transportation from your campus, the city can be quite difficult to access. The rural environment is probably ideal for someone who wants to be away from external influences and may want to be close to the hills and woodlands they enjoy,

but can be dreadful for someone who needs the excitement of a major city. Think about what these choices mean to you.

4. Academically, what degree of challenge is best for you? How do you respond to “pressure-laden” environments? Are you looking for a school where you can participate in some activities or one where most of your time would be devoted to classroom work? Are you comfortable with the idea that you may be near the middle or lower part of your college class or do you prefer being near the top of your college class: These questions relate directly to the demands and intensity of a college situation. How you respond is important to your success academically and to your emotional well being over the next several years.
5. Selectivity in the admissions process is a key consideration in formulating a final list of college applications. There are degrees of selectivity in admissions with some colleges admitting 10-15% of its applicants while on the other end of the spectrum; some colleges admit virtually all applicants. It is fine to apply to your *dream* school regardless of the degree of difficulty but be sure that you have some that are easier in admissions standards. Later in this section you will read about levels of difficulty and some new terminology.
6. Are internships, study abroad, independent study, core curriculum and required courses important to you? If any of these are in you “must have” or “avoid” lists, make them part of your college search.
7. Begin to think about diversity and what role it plays in your college plans. Ask yourself if a racially, socially, religiously, or academically diverse population is one you want or want to avoid. Do you want to replicate your AHA experience or are you looking for something different?
8. Cost is a concern for most families and each family must determine its own level of financial comfort. It is vital that all families discuss limits early on in the process. It is equally important to recognize that financial aid is available and families should feel free to discuss their individual circumstances with college financial aid officers. For some families, the final family contribution may be the same at a college that costs \$10,000 or \$40,000.
9. Sports, clubs, and activities may have been important to you in high school – do you want to continue or investigate some new interests? Would intramural sports satisfy your need to play sports or would you be satisfied only with intercollegiate sports?
10. As you make college choices, how important are the views of your friends, family, or others in your selections? Realistically, they may be more concerned with name recognition prestige and reputation. You, however, may be more concerned about finding a place that will challenge you yet allow you success; a place that will allow you to be engaged in other activities that make you human; a place that will allow you choices; a place from which you will graduate and be a healthy and proactive adult.
11. Learn to set priorities. If you can find a place that has everything you want and need to be successful and you can be admitted, that is wonderful. If such a place does not exist, then what are your priorities? List them in order of importance and see what other colleges will fit you and your plans.

All of the above takes time and by starting your college search in the middle of your junior year, you have the time to think, explore, reflect, and make good decisions; decisions that you can live with and help you to reach your goals for the future.

A good recommendation for all students is to utilize a computer-based search process. In addition to access at home to the internet, the Research Lab offers internet access. Several excellent search programs are available to you including empark.com and U.S. News and World Report (www.usnews.com). By looking at the criteria and selecting from multiple choice responses, student can develop an initial list of colleges to investigate. A computer-based search allows student to change their responses and to find new or other colleges which qualify for them. For example, you may want to find a college that has volleyball along with a radio station in a rural location. By entering those characteristics, you can find colleges with those requirements. You may add other criteria or change them and see another list of colleges. This may be harder work than asking someone for a list ultimately you will find the colleges which “fit” you best. That is the final goal to find a good “fit” or “match”.

Once you have developed your first list of colleges to investigate, there a number of steps to take and gather more-in-depth information. In this booklet you will find a list of print materials along with web-site information. A good recommendation to follow would be to read the general college descriptions available in guidebooks such as Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges, or the College Handbook. There is no need to purchase these publications since once you get past this part of the search, you will not likely need these again. These and other such books are available in the guidance office, the public libraries in the area and at bookstores such as Barnes and Noble and Borders. These guidebooks may help you in narrowing your list to some degree. The next step is to call, write or e-mail the colleges for their own publications. Most colleges have extensive web sites as well. Colleges publish view books and their course catalog, which are available for students. They must be read carefully and thoroughly. Take care to read the statement at the beginning of the catalog under the heading Philosophy or Mission Statement, which will tell you how they view their goals and how they intend to develop their programs for students. It will tell you a great deal about the college.

You are now on your way to developing a list of schools that make sense for you. Note the emphasis on the word you. This list should represent you, your interests and your needs, not your friend’s interests. Arranging for campus visits, with possible interviews and information sessions, should take you to the point where you can work on creating what is often called your short list. By the time school starts in the fall, you should have a list of colleges and universities which have the characteristics that are important to you.

While it is easy to find colleges, it is challenging to find colleges that have the features which are important to you. Once you have identified those colleges, the next step is to see where they fall in terms of admission standards. Remember that some colleges are very selective and others are less so. Below is a description of three commonly used approaches to defining admission selectivity for individual students.

One word of caution is needed here. One student's Reach school may be another's Likely or Safe school. It is vital to be realistic in this assessment and there are publications, American Heritage Academy statistics and your counselor's experiences to assist you.

REACH

A "reach" school can be defined as one where your credentials may not match those of the typically admitted student. Another way to define this category of school is to look at their admission percentage. Colleges which admit fewer than 25% of its applicants, should be considered "reach" schools for all applicants, since there is little predictability in their choice of admitted students. You may have the credentials to fit their profile but when colleges admit so few students, other characteristics play an important role in the admissions process. These other factors include geographic distribution, special talents, and a family's history with that college. This last factor is known as legacy.

MID-RANGE

In this category, your credentials match those of the typically admitted student. This category may have the largest number of schools for you and may, in fact, encompass some schools that are more selective than the others, but they represent a group of colleges from which you might expect letters of admission.

LIKELY

This category of colleges should represent those places where your credentials exceed those of the typically admitted student. It is strongly recommended that you select at least two schools from this group. While they may not represent your top choices, they should be colleges that have the most important characteristics on your list and which you would be content to attend. Two such applications are recommended because every year and in every high school, some students will attend their likely or safe school. All students would like to make choices and this would give everyone that opportunity.

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS SELECTIVITY GUIDE

Defining admissions selectivity and listing colleges in these categories can be a useful tool for students and parents in identifying colleges. Colleges range in admissions difficulty with some admitting fewer than 20% and others offering admission to all applicants who have followed a college preparatory program. The definitions and listings below come from various guidebooks. They are intended for use in determining whether a particular college is a possible, highly likely, or unlikely admissions situation for a student. Used properly it can assist families in making informed choices.

MOST COMPETITIVE

Colleges in this group are among the most difficult in the nation in which to gain admission. SAT scores tend to range from 655-800 and students are usually in the top 10% or first decile although some are admitted whose rank is somewhat lower. Barron's states that "fewer than 35% are admitted" – this group also includes colleges and universities that admit as few as 12% of its applicants. Among the colleges in this group are: all of the Ivies, Amherst, Bates, Brown, Carnegie-Mellon, Colby, Colgate, Duke, Harvard, Lafayette, Lehigh, New York University, UCL, Vassar and Williams, and Yale. Barron's also notes, "even superior students will encounter a great deal of competition for admission" from these schools. Students usually will have a transcript with predominately Honors Level and many Advanced Placement courses.

HIGHLY COMPETITIVE

The median score range for successful applicants to colleges in this group are 620-654 and students usually rank in the top third to top half of the high school class. Students who expect to successfully gain admission from colleges in this group typically will have many of their courses at the honors level and some Advanced Placement courses. Colleges in this group include: Agnes Scott, Bard, Bucknell, George Washington University, Hamilton, Lawrence, Loyola of Maryland, Muhlenberg, Oglethorpe, Providence, Smith, Syracuse, Trinity (CT), Tulane, Union, University of Miami, Vanderbilt, and Villanova.

VERY COMPETITIVE

In this group, colleges will typically admit 50% of the applicants whose median SAT scores range from 573-619. Class rank can vary dramatically in this group. Many colleges will admit students through the 6th deciles although many will have significantly higher rank. Colleges in this group expect students to have completed a rigorous college preparatory program from some honors or Advanced Placement courses adding additional strength to the transcript. Colleges categorized as Very Competitive include: Antioch College, Appalachian State University, Auburn University, Berry College, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical, Charleston College, Clemson, Manhattan College, Northwestern College, Radford University, University of Tennessee, University of Texas, and Wesleyan.

COMPETITIVE

The median SAT score for students in this group range from 500-572. These colleges will usually admit 75% of the applicant pool and class rank varies widely. In many instances, the student's major will have a significant impact on admission. Class rank may go into the 7th decile. Students will be expected to have completed a strong college preparatory program of studies which our College Prep level suffices. Admission standards vary widely in this group and some of the colleges at this level of selectivity include: Jacksonville State University, Johnson & Wales, Kentucky State University, Macon State College, Virginia State University, and Wright State University.

LESS COMPETITIVE

Barron's also classifies some colleges as Less Competitive for admission purposes. Colleges in this group have median SAT scores that fall just below 500 and they typically admit more than 80% of the students who apply for admission. Some colleges in this group are branches of state universities whose main campus may be significantly more competitive. There are a number of excellent choices in this group. For a large number of students, colleges in this group offer particular strength in a chosen major. For other students, the competitive level in class is more appropriate. For other students, colleges in this group offer opportunities of academic growth which may then allow them to start their collegiate career with the hope of transferring to other institutions. Some of the colleges that Barron's classifies as less competitive for admission are: American Internal College, Colby-Sawyer, Franklin University, High Point, and Strayer University.

Another category in Barron's is that of the specialty school. Often music conservatories and art schools, these colleges expect students to complete a college preparatory program of studies but admission decisions may rest primarily with auditions or portfolio presentations. Several colleges in this group also look for academic strength as reflected in course choices, grades, class rank, and test scores.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Most colleges and universities require some form of entrance examination. Students are responsible for researching the required or recommended tests for each college in which they have an interest. The exam most frequently taken by students is the SAT Reasoning Test, administered by the College Entrance Examination Board, the CEEB. The other test is known as the ACT and is most often required by colleges in the Midwest or the south. Most colleges will accept either test but students must check each college's catalog for specifics. The third test that a smaller number of colleges require is the SAT II, also administered by the College Entrance Examination Board. The section below will describe these tests in more detail.

- **SAT Reasoning Test**
The SAT is formally known as the Scholastic Assessment Test. It is a four hour examination, offered seven times during the school year. It is designed to be a reasoning test using verbal, math and writing knowledge. There are three scores for the test, one verbal, one math, and one writing. Essays were added to the SAT in 2005. Registration booklets are in the guidance office and also on-line at www.collegeboard.org.
- **SAT II**
The SAT II is a series of one hour examinations based on school acquired knowledge in specific subject areas. Among the more popular are the Math I or II, high school sciences, world languages, and history. The SAT II is required by a fairly small

number of colleges, usually private and usually more selective in admissions. Sometimes, colleges will waive a course requirement for college graduation based on a minimum score on a SAT II. It is important to plan in advance for these tests and they are usually scheduled at the completion of a course or in June of the junior year.

- **ACT**

The ACT is an alternate admission test which is subject based and closely follows the curriculum that the high school classes follow. For students who have difficulty attaining SAT scores they feel are reflective of their abilities, the ACT is a viable option to consider. The ACT provides brochures similar to those offered by the College Board and are available in the guidance office.

- **STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES**

Testing agencies such as the College Board and the ACT, have special provisions for students with documented learning or other disabilities to take admissions tests with modifications. Students must complete a SSD Eligibility Form to document the disability.

- **WHEN AND HOW OFTEN TO TAKE THESE TESTS**

A good recommendation is for juniors to sit for their first SAT I in the early spring of the junior year. There are opportunities to sit for the exam again in May of the junior year and also in the fall of the senior year. The June date should be reserved for the SAT II. Taking the test in the early spring provides good practice and an opportunity to get acclimated to the test situation. Since colleges will use your best total or the highest individual scores from any sitting, there is little risk in taking the test in the early spring. The second SAT I is recommended for May of the junior year. If, after two tests, students don't feel that they have reached their level of ability, it is time to consider a test preparation course or tutoring in the subject areas on the test. Many students have successfully prepared themselves by working at home using print or computer-based materials. Other students feel that the discipline of attending a formal class to prepare for the SAT I is a more successful approach. Several commercial firms offer test preparation classes at various times throughout the year. The most popular test preparation companies in this area are The Princeton Review and Stanley Kaplan. Many Adult Education, Evening School and Continuing Education programs offer test preparation courses as well.

The fall of the senior year offers more opportunities to sit for the SAT and SAT II. Other test dates in the year may also be possible based on individual student plans. Your counselor can discuss these decisions with you and can offer suggestions specifically for you.

Several common sense suggestions for all students come from the College Board. While they may seem obvious, students don't always follow them.

- Get a good night's sleep so that you will be able to stay alert for the 4 hours of testing.

- Eat breakfast. You need all of your brainpower to do your best on the test. Your brain needs food for fuel. Being well nourished will help ensure that your brain will have the energy it needs to operate at peak efficiency.
- Have everything ready that you need for the test the night before the test. Have your admission ticket, calculator (with fresh batteries), several (sharpened) number 2 pencils and your identification in a place where you can find them immediately in the morning. Don't throw yourself into a panic because you can't remember where you have everything.
- Leave home early enough to arrive at the test center on time. Take into account the unusual things that can happen on the way such as a traffic jam. If you have been assigned to a test center and you are not familiar with the location, make sure you get directions the day before the test and give yourself more than enough time to arrive at the test center. Remember that you can always wait if you are early but if you are late, you may not be able to enter the test center and take the test.
- Finally, think positive, stay focused, and concentrate on you own work and pace.

KINDS OF SCHOOLS

College: An institution that offers educational instruction beyond the high school level in a two-or four-year program.

University: An institution which grants undergraduate and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine, journalism, or agriculture). It is composed of a number of "Schools" or "Colleges", each of which encompasses a general field of study.

Liberal Arts College: A four-year institution that emphasizes a broad-based, undergraduate education. Pre-professional and/or professional training may be available but is not emphasized.

Engineering or Technological College: An independent professional school which provides four year training programs in engineering and the physical sciences. They are often referred to as Institutes of Technology or Polytechnic Institutes.

Junior College/Community College: A two-year institution of higher learning that provides vocational training and academic curricula (terminal and transfer).

Certificate Program: The academic program is complete in itself. A student who completes the program is prepared to enter a specific occupation.

Transfer Program: An academic program designed to provide the first two years of collegiate study with the final two years to be completed in a four-year college or university.

Technical School: An institution that offers occupational programs intended to prepare students for immediate employment in fields related to engineering and/or various trades. Students may earn an Associated Degree or a certificate/diploma, depending upon the institution and length of program.

Nursing School: There are two types of education programs for students interested in nursing. Students can prepare for nursing careers through a two-year college program leading to an Associate's Degree and RN certification. Students can also prepare for nursing in a college or university program leading to a Bachelor's Degree plus RN certification.

Military School: Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, and Air Force. These institutions: West Point, Annapolis, Air Force Academy and Merchant Marine Academy require a recommendation and appointment by members of Congress (more information is available in subsequent pages). Private and state supported military institutes, however, operate with a college application procedure. Each offers degree programs in engineering and technology with a concentration in various aspects of military science. The Coast Guard Academy handles admission as do other colleges and universities.

READING A COLLEGE GUIDEBOOK/COLLEGE CATALOG

There are several college guidebooks on the market, some filled with straight facts (statistics) and others, written in a more narrative form. Whatever your preference, be certain to read more than one guidebook in order to more accurately compare and contrast schools. The college's own catalogs and web-sites should also be read using the guidelines below.

Information that you should be looking for:

- The philosophy of the college. What are the objectives of the school? The entrance requirements? The grading systems? Core curriculum requirements? Academic majors? Typical class sizes (not average class size)?
- The faculty. What percentage of courses are taught by full-time faculty members (vs. graduate assistants, etc.)? How available are professors outside of the classroom? Are there opportunities to conduct independent research with faculty members?
- The courses offered in your area of interest. What preparation do you need for your chosen course of studies? Course requirements? Are there internship opportunities? Cooperative education alternatives?
- Does the college have an active Career Center to help you prepare for a successful job search after graduation?

- What percentage of graduates who apply are accepted to graduate, medical, or law school?
- Is there nearby access to computers and other equipment on campus, as well as library resources? Are the dorms wired for full access to the net, library, etc.?
- The rules and regulations governing student behavior.
- The percentage of students accepted from the total pool of applicants. Also, identify the number of students who have granted admission that eventually “accept” the school.
- The total expense. Tuition, room and board, fees, books, transportation to and from home, and your personal expenses such as laundry and entertainment.

A PARTIAL LIST OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES

Barron’s Profiles of American Colleges, Barron’s Educational Series, Inc., Woodbury, NY.

Chronicle Four-Year College Data Book, Chronicle Guidance Pub., Moravia, NY.

College Admissions Data Handbook, Orchard House, Inc.

The College Handbook and Index of Majors, College Entrance Examination Board, NY.

Comparative Guide to American Colleges, James Cass and Max Birnbaum, (Harper and Row).

Insider’s Guide to Colleges, Yale Daily News.

Letting Go: Parents’ Guide to Today’s College Experience, L.L. Coburn & M.L. Treeger. Adler & Adler; Bethesda, Maryland.

Lovejoy’s College Guide, by Straughn, Monarch, N.Y.

Peterson’s Annual Guide to Undergraduate Study.

Playing the Private College Admissions Game, Richard Moll, Director of Admissions, University of California at Santa Cruz; now in paperback edition.

The Public Ivies, Richard Moll.

Selective Guide to College, Edward Fiske.

DESCRIPTIVE GUIDES FOR TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

Barron's Guide to the Two Year Colleges, Barron's Educational Series, Inc., Woodbury, NY.

Chronicle Two-Year College Data Book, Chronicle Guidance Publications, Moravia, NY.

FINANCIAL AID

Best Buys in College Education, Edward Fiske (Time Books).

Chronicle Student Aid Annual, Chronicle Guidance Publications, Moravia, NY.

The College Cost Book, The College Entrance Examination Board, NY.

Don't Miss Out- The Ambitious Student's Guide to Scholarships and Loans, Robert Leider.

Financial Aid for Higher Education. Oreon Keeslar, (Wm. C. Brown).

How to Pay for Your Children's College Education, Gerald Krefetz, CEEB.

Lovejoy's Guide to Financial Aid, Robert Leider, Monarch Press, NY.

Need a Lift? American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN 46206, \$1.00 (pre-paid), updated annually.

Peterson's College Money Handbook, Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ.

SPECIALTY GUIDES

The Black Student's Guide to Colleges, Barry Beckham, Editor

Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities, Peterson's.

Directory of European Council of International Schools, European Council of International
Wilmington, Delaware.

The Gourman Report, National Education Standards.

National College Databank, Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ.

Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges, Frederick E. Rugg.

The Teenagers Guide to Study, Travel and Adventure Abroad, Margaret E. Sherman, ed.
New York: Council, NY.

Whole World Handbook: A Guide to Study Travel and Work Abroad, Margaret E. Sherman,
ed. New York: Council on International Education Exchange and Frommer/Pasmanier
Publishing Corporation.

USEFUL WEBSITES

ETS Net

<http://www.ets.org>

ETS is the Educational Testing Service that prepares the SAT. The site offers a virtual store where you can buy books and software to study for the tests, and an online magazine by and for high school students.

College Link

<http://www.collegelink.com>

You can search for colleges, compare them and apply to colleges on this site.

Office of Post-secondary Education

<http://www.ed.gov/offices/OPE/index.html>

Established by a branch of the federal government's Department of education, this site offers information on financial aid, the FAFSA form, and college codes.

FinAid (The Financial Aid Information Page)

<http://www.finaid.org>

Sponsored by the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, this page provides links to hundreds of sources of information about student financial aid, including FastWeb, a searchable database of more than 180,000 private-sector scholarships, fellowships, grants and loans.

College Board Online

<http://www.collegeboard.com>

Register for SATs, search for colleges, get test dates, apply to colleges and more.

Embark

<http://www.embark.com>

Search for colleges that match your goals and interests; find useful advice and information on researching, applying and going to college.

College Net

<http://www.collegenet.com>

“The internet guide to colleges and universities.” This is a searchable database of colleges, scholarship opportunities and academic resources. It offers a comprehensive college/university index with good graphics and some interesting resources for financial aid and scholarships.

Kaplan

<http://www.kaplan.com>

You will find a full complement of information on standardized tests, as well as details on Kaplan’s prep courses.

College View

<http://www.collegeview.com>

By combining an extensive database of two- and four-year colleges with engaging multimedia “tours,” CollegeView gives students and parents a general overview of a college, plus a direct e-mail option for requesting additional information. This site includes Career Center information, electronic applications and financial aid information. A very comprehensive site!

CollegeXpress

<http://www.collegeexpress.com>

Search colleges by state, major, and host of other factors. Take a virtual tour of some colleges and ask their “experts” questions about the college admissions process.

FishNet

<http://www.mycollegeguide.org>

Get information on colleges via their college search page; ask questions of their admissions expert; get information about paying for college, read a collection of articles about college and the admissions process. Teen friendly web site!

Peterson’s Education Center

<http://petersons.com>

Peterson’s college database is available on the Home Page, as is other educational and career information.

The Princeton Review

<http://review.com>

You may search the Princeton Review's site by the school's name, region, state, size, and cost. PR also provides you with their rating of hundreds of colleges. Apply online and complete a career inventory.

National Association for College Admission Counseling (College Fairs)

<http://www.nacac.com>

This is where college admission professionals, including high school college counselors, go to interact with their peers. The dates and locations of the NACAC National college Fairs can be located at this site.

US News and World Reports – College Ranking Online

<http://www.usnews.org>

You may find it interesting to see how US News ranks colleges in America. Just keep in mind that "best" for one student may not be for another so the information you glean here should be only one of the many factors that play a role in deciding where to apply.

World Alumni Net

<http://www.alumni.net>

Search for names of alumni and alumni organization all over the world. Locate your college of interest and surf for e-mail addresses.

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW

The college interview is a wonderful opportunity to discuss a specific college with a member of the admissions staff of the school. It is time to find out more about the school in both general and specific terms. You can share information about yourself, your interests and your goals. Similarly, the college can gain a better sense about how you would fit in to its community. Be prepared to go into the interview to discuss yourself, the school and how you will be able to utilize the experiences at the college to grow and how your involvement as a member of the community will benefit the college. Interviews are not there to torture you but they are there to challenge you to think and engage in a good discussion with you.

Interviews can take several different formats. One type of interview is the informational interview. This is one in which you as the student can talk about your questions and concerns while the college representative tells you about the college. In this setting, you can share information without the contents of the conversation ever being used to evaluate you as a prospective applicant/student. This type of interview is designed to better inform you about the college, its programs and opportunities, and to get you excited about applying to that school. It is a great chance for you to get your questions answered about any topic of interest.

A second type of interview is what can be called the *recruiting* interview. It is one in which the college is trying to sell itself to you and to other prospective applicants. You should expect to be impressed with the things they talk about, the buildings and facilities, and their

other resources. Keep in mind, this does not mean that the college does not offer a quality program for you. It may in fact, be a very selective college in terms of admissions but does not do other types of interviews for very specific reasons. Don't judge quality or appropriateness for you based on the type of interview or the lack of an interview opportunity.

A third type of interview has often been called the *evaluative* interview. It is one designed to give the college information about you which will be used in the decision-making process. Again, they are not trying to trick you or to trap you. Rather, they are trying to find out who you are, your interests, how you utilize the resources of the college, what personal skills you bring to campus, and how your being a student would benefit both you and the college. These interviews, when done by a skillful interviewer, will try to get you to talk about those things about which you are most passionate. Are you articulate, do you enjoy and pursue some things in depth, what "makes you tick?" Other topics may include your family, your school and personal life and your scholastic background. Questions may include books you've read, or interesting people you have met. In many ways, the content of this kind of interview is similar to the topics that some colleges ask you to write about in their essays. It is a perfect time to talk about your most challenging classroom experiences, test score concerns, transcript issues or even your senior courses.

Preparing for the interview is critical. Take along a copy of your high school transcript, resume, and test score reports. Be prepared to discuss your test scores, read about the college in guide books or on the school's web site. Nothing could be worse than talking with an admissions officer and telling the person that you want to major in electrical engineering when the school has no engineering major or opportunities to study related fields. While this may be an extreme example, let this be your guide to doing your research in advance. A good way to look at the do's and don't of an interview would be to talk and act the way you would with someone you respect or in a situation where you are using all of your social and intellectual skills. Appropriate questions can be some of the following.

1. Will I ever have the chance to do research with a professor?
2. What is the admit rate to Medical/Law/Business school?
3. How does the college assist with year-abroad programs?

Finally, arrive on time, be early but never be late. Dress appropriately. Read and be conversant with the school and its programs. Don't be afraid to make some notes that you will take into the interview with you. And remember to send a thank you note directly to the person who interviewed you (with correct name and spelling) when you return home.

While not all interviews will fit neatly into the categories or styles listed above, they will revolve around some variation of these. Don't let a good or bad interview sway you into believing that you just got in or that there is no chance of ever being admitted. Never make a final decision based on a school interview alone, it is only one more piece of information that must be used in conjunction with all of the other information you have about a college.

CAMPUS VISIT

Campus visits provide the perfect opportunity to get a sense of the campus in the most direct way possible. You will have an opportunity to observe students on campus, to visit all the important facilities, to sit in on classes and to meet with those people on campus who can provide information to help you make your best decision. In addition to specific features about the school, you will get a “feel” for the school to find out if it would be a good place for you to spend the next four years of your life. Much like any other major purchase you make, a campus visit is a vital part of gathering information before you make a financial as well as personal commitment to a college.

COLLEGE TOUR

Your campus tour will typically be a one hour activity led by a student volunteer or paid member of the admissions office. The student will be well-versed on all aspects of the college but will not necessarily be an expert. You should feel free to ask questions about anything the tour guide says and about things that have not been discussed but are important to you. Use this time to gather information about the college that you will need later in deciding whether to apply and later still, to decide if you will attend this school.

You should expect to visit a classroom building, at least one dormitory with a view of someone’s room, the library, the student center, the gym/field house, the computer facility, and other parts of the campus that the college wants you to see. Keep in mind, they are trying to entice you to apply as much as you are trying to find out if this would be a good place for you. If you do not visit a facility that is important to you such as dance or art studios, practice rooms, or other specific places, ask directions to those places so that you can visit them after the formal tour. Small colleges will usually take you to all of the places you want to see, while larger state universities may be so spread out, that you will only get a sampling of one part of the campus. If a campus is that large, use your car and a campus map to drive around the campus.

It is always a good idea to take some time to walk or drive around the perimeter of campus to get a sense of its place in the neighborhood and its place in the community. Look for transportation availability to local places of interest such as shopping areas, movie theaters, or restaurants. You will leave campus from time to time to just “get away” and you should know if there are places to go and if it is possible to get there easily from campus. Unless you plan to have a car on campus, public transportation or college sponsored buses will likely be your next choice until you meet someone who does have a car. Check these things out for yourself. If you will not be driving to school and will be using bus, train, or air transportation, find out how far from campus these terminals are located and if there is easy and convenient transportation to and from campus.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. Where do students study? Many dorms are noisy and if you need quiet places to study at your best level you will need to find out if there are quiet dorms, quiet floors, quiet rooms – or will it be necessary to use the library to study. If so, how far from the dorm is the library. Is it a long walk to make at night? What type of security is provided to return to the dorms if it is late?
2. Is the campus “hard-wired” or “wireless” for all computer needs?
3. If you will be using lab facilities, are the labs easily available at night, on week-ends, during vacations?
4. What hours does the library maintain? Are there 24 hour rooms, week-end hours? Are the athletic facilities available to all students and when are they available, or is the beautiful new pool only for the swim team?
5. What percentage of students who apply Early Action or Early Decision are accepted?
6. Check out the services you will need. Health services, career planning office, graduate school assistance, advisory committees, faculty advisors, and counseling services.
7. Ask your tour guide to which other schools he/she applied. Why did the guide decide to attend that school? What have been the most positive surprises? Any disappointments? What do you like about this school? What would you liked to see changed about this school?
8. After the tour, stop other students and talk with them using the same questions as above.
9. Take time to eat a meal on campus. It is a great chance to sample the cafeteria and variety of food available.

OTHER TIPS

There may be times when students and parents might want to take separate tours of a campus. Different tour guides, different questions, and different perspectives may help get a clearer picture of the school. Some people prefer taking a small camera along in order to take a few pictures to help refresh memories of the different schools. Certainly before leaving campus, take a few minutes to write down your impressions of the school, the special features that mean something to you and to also note things you did not like or were uncertain about. While at that moment you feel certain you will never confuse that school with another, after a few visits, especially when they are all in a few days, there will be memory lapses and confusion on specific things that could be important later in the decision making process.

After your initial set of campus visits, you will be in a position to evaluate your choices and identify those schools in which you are most interested. A second visit to campus will provide a wonderful opportunity to check out your initial impressions, see things that you did not initially see and to perhaps have an on-campus interview if provided by the college. A

second visit may allow you time to visit with specific faculty members or coaches and spend more time on in-depth issues.

FOR PARENTS

Parents may want to spend time in the Financial Aid Office or the Business Office discussing college financing during your campus visit. Financial aid issues, processing of forms and arranging for various financial concerns can easily be handled during your campus visit but please remember to call in advance for an appointment. If you as parents have any other particular concerns about the college relative to your son/daughter, pursue them. The security office can answer questions about campus security, automobile registration or other concerns. You may want to find out about programs of study off campus or doing a semester or a year abroad, including financial arrangements for such study. Find out as much as you can about non-need or merit-based scholarships. Look into college loans for parents which the college may offer aside from government or bank loans. Be prepared with questions to ask about anything which may concern you and ask them. You will be better informed and better able to assist your student in making the best decision.

TYPES OF COLLEGE DECISIONS

Early Decision

Students who are absolutely certain of their college choice may apply as an Early Decision candidate. Choosing this option generally means that the student has entered into a binding agreement with the school to enroll if accepted under this plan. The student would then agree to withdraw all applications to other schools if accepted as an Early Decision candidate. If the student is deferred, then the student is no longer obligated to enroll if accepted under the regular admission procedures. The student need not re-apply if deferred.

Early Action

Many schools offer this option to give students feedback at an earlier date in the process. In contrast to Early Decision, the *Early Action* option does not require a student to enroll if accepted. Students may use this option with several schools. Be sure to read each college's materials to be absolutely certain that they allow multiple Early Action applications.

Rolling Admissions

Some schools render decisions when they feel that a student's profile is complete. These decisions are made throughout the year and at any time – usually by February. They do not require a response until May 1, and a commitment to enroll is not expected until that date.

Waiting List

Students who are qualified for admission but whose profiles are not as strong as other candidates in the applicant pool may be placed on the *Waiting List*. This means that the

students on this list may be offered admission after the May 1, Candidate Reply Date. It is at that point that schools know how many students plan to enroll. The percentage of students offered admission from the list differs from year to year.

Note: The definitions of Early Decision/Early Action have been changing and we suggest discussing this issue with your counselor to keep current and to be sure you understand the limitations and implications of Early Decision/Early Action.

ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY IN COLLEGE

Intercollegiate college athletic programs are regulated by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), an organization founded in 1906 that has established rules on eligibility, recruiting and financial aid. The NCAA has three membership divisions – Division I, Division II and Division III. Institutions are members of one or another division according to the size and scope of their athletic programs and whether they provide athletic scholarships.

If you are planning to enroll in college as a freshman and you wish to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, **you must be certified** by the NCAA Initial-Eligibility Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse was established as a separate organization by the NCAA member institutions in January 1993. The Clearinghouse ensures consistent interpretation of NCAA initial-eligibility requirements for all prospective student athletes at all member institutions.

The NCAA website: www.ncaa.org, contains information regarding eligibility, the application process, as well as the application form.

When to Start the Process

If you want to participate in Division I or Division II athletics, plan to start the certification process early, typically at the end of your junior year of high school.

It is your responsibility to make sure the Clearinghouse has the documents needed to certify you. These documents are:

- Your completed and signed Student Release Form and fee.
- Your official transcript from every high school you have attended.
- Your ACT or SAT scores.

MILITARY CAREER OPTIONS

There are numerous job training opportunities in the military for both men and women. If you would like to travel or earn good wages immediately, the military service may be for you. Representatives from all of the services are available to give you information about career training and/or educational opportunities. If you are concerned about the information that you are receiving or contacts that are being made by you recruiter, see your guidance counselor.

The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB)

The ASVAB is a test used by the military to help with career counseling and job placement. Taking the ASVAB does not obligate you to the military in any way. You are free to use your test results in whatever manner you wish. Additionally, ASVAB results will not be used to enter your name in any draft registration system. You need to be aware that as a result of taking the ASVAB, you may be contacted by a military service representative.

Service Academies and ROTC Scholarship Programs

Student interested in the Military Service Academies and the ROTC scholarship programs must begin as soon as possible to insure that they receive full consideration.

1. Write and ask for a Pre-Candidate questionnaire. Addresses follow:

Admissions Office
U.S. Military Academy
West Point, NY 10996

Admissions Office
U.S. Air Force Academy
U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840

Admissions Office
Naval Academy
Annapolis, MD 21402

Admissions Office
Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, NY 10024

2. Write to each of your senators and your congressperson and ask that they consider you as one of their nominees. In this letter you should indicate your first, second, third and fourth choices for academies as well as the following information.

Name, address and telephone number
Date of birth
Social Security number
High school name and year of graduation
Names of your parents

**FORMAT FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION REQUEST
TO A MILITARY ACADEMY**

This format is intended as a guide. A separate letter must be sent to each Senator and Representative.

**REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION
TO A MILITARY ACADEMY**

Date _____

The Honorable _____ **Or** The Honorable _____
United States Senate House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510 Washington, DC 20510

I desire to attend the (Name of the Academy) and to be commissioned in the class entering in July, 2011.

The following data are furnished for your information:

Name: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Temporary Address and Telephone Number (if different)

Date of Birth: _____

High School: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Names of Parents: _____

I have/have not requested that a pre-candidate file be initiated for me at the Admissions Office.

Sincerely,

***STUDENT COLLEGE INFORMATION
AMERICAN HERITAGE ACADEMY***

1. Student name: _____
2. What have you accomplished in the past three years of which you are especially proud?
3. Is there anything on your transcript that needs an explanation?
4. How have you grown in the past three years?
5. Have you overcome any obstacles in high school? If so, how?
6. Where do you see yourself after college graduation?
7. Is there anything about you that you think I should know?
8. Please feel free to add any other information below or on the back of this form.

***PARENT INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE RECOMMENDATION
AMERICAN HERITAGE ACADEMY***

1. Student name: _____
2. What do you consider to be the outstanding accomplishments of your college-bound student during the past three years? Why do you consider these to be among the most significant?
3. In which areas has your college-bound student shown the most growth and development during the high school years?
4. If you had to describe your son/daughter in five adjectives, what would they be and why did you choose them. Please be specific.
5. Are there any unusual or personal circumstances which have had a negative effect on your son/daughter during their school years? If so, how were they affected and if they have been successful in overcoming those circumstances, please explain what they did and how they are currently functioning.
6. Is there anything more about your son/daughter that you think the counselor should know?
7. Please feel free to add any other information below or on the back of this form.