

TO DO:
Give 100% in
and out of
school

What You Do Now Will Affect You Later

Study. Make good choices. Get involved.
Do what you love.

6 Goals

- Goal #1 – Discuss the current trends in college admissions and how Covid-19 has changed the process, potentially forever
- Goal #2 – Give practical advice on what to do now to make a compelling case for college acceptance
- Goal #3 – Discuss how grades/scores can affect college admissions and advice for those who aren't strong in both areas
- Goal #4 – Discuss what counts as extracurricular activities and how students should approach time outside of school
- Goal #5 – Stress the importance of the relationships with the adults in your life
- Goal #6 – Give thought to building your list and finances

Each College is Different BUT Recent Data Suggests This Ranking...

#1 – A rigorous high school curriculum

#2 – Grades

#3 – Standardized test scores (ACT/SAT/SAT IIs) – **Less important now because of Covid-19**

#4 – The Essay

#5 – Passionate involvement in a FEW extracurricular activities

#6 – Leadership in those activities

#7 – Character that will contribute to the student body

#8 – Intellectual curiosity

#9 – Demonstrated interest

#10 – Letters of Rec – **More important because of Covid-19**

Classes and Grades

- If challenging courses are offered, you should challenge yourself by taking Honors/AP classes
 - Colleges look at the school profile and use that to see what you've done
 - However, don't bite off more than you can chew
- Get good grades in your classes
 - Registration for the next year may be based on recommendation from current teacher
- Have a bad year?
 - Show improvement the next year or be prepared to explain what happened

Standardized Tests

- Take every practice test seriously
 - This will tell you what you need to work on for the REAL tests
 - Take the ACT in December of your junior year (and order the TIR); take the PSAT (next fall) and see if the SAT is a better fit
- Read, read, read
 - Jane Austen
 - Rolling Stone
 - Car and Driver
 - US Weekly
- Consider getting an ACT/SAT tutor
 - Why? Higher scores means more scholarship/merit dollars –and even if colleges remain test score optional a great score can help
- Still not the score you want?
 - Consider test score optional schools – www.fairtest.org

Extracurricular Activities

- What do you like to do?
 - Theater? Read? Play scrabble? Play Chess? Go camping?
 - Commitment and depth are more important than number of activities
- Initiate something cool
 - Build On
 - Thrift Shop
- Try to do meaningful summer activities that are **outside** your regular interests
 - Pre-college programs, overnight camp, Habitat for Humanity
- Unable to do anything? Be prepared to tell the colleges why.
 - Story of Angel
 - Story of Kamila
 - Rigorous schedule at the Chicago Academy for the Arts

The Essay

- It absolutely can make the difference. Start thinking about it now.
- Topics?
 - Must be about YOU
 - Can be a simple story
 - Don't make the reader uncomfortable
 - Tell the reader something the transcript cannot
 - CLICHÉS - service trips, any travel, the family move, cultural or religious events, overcoming an injury
- Writing a college essay is different from writing an essay for English class
- Make zero mistakes
- BEST ADVICE - Keep a notebook starting now with you at all times; jot down potential essay topics now even though you won't be writing the essay for a year or so...

Demonstrated Interest...

Yes, Schools Want to Be Wanted

- Open all emails from schools (they track this stuff)
- Ask for an interview... but only if you think you can shine
- Talk to all the representatives who come to The Academy (hopefully this will happen again in the fall)
- Follow that college on Twitter and Instagram
- Like the colleges on Facebook ... but do not become friends
- The MOST important thing to do? Go visit! Obviously due to Covid-19, many campuses aren't open or don't have students present, so you need to take initiative and do things virtually

The Letter of Recommendation

- Most colleges accept one letter, but some more selective schools want up to three letters
- Most colleges want the letters from junior year teachers
- Form meaningful relationships with teachers and ask for the letter early
- BEWARE: A good letter of rec should NOT mention grades, scores, or extracurricular activities
- But what if I'm shy?

Other things to consider when beginning your college search...

- Most important factor in choosing a college: FIT
- LOVE YOUR LIST: 2 - 3 REACH schools, 4 - 5 MATCH schools, 2 - 3 GOOD BET schools
- Look at acceptance rates and the Common Data Set for each school (www.collegedata.com)
- Do NOT depend on ACT/SAT ranges or GPAs but do pay attention to the selectivity of your program
- At all times, keep finances in mind when diversifying your list BUT always IGNORE the sticker price...

Here is information from two award letters – one private, one public

DEPAUW UNIVERSITY		UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI	
COST	\$56,468	COST	\$40,194
INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS	-\$34,320	INSTITUTIONAL GRANTS	-\$7,000
LOANS/WORK STUDY	-\$9,600	LOANS	-\$5,500
-----		-----	
NEW PRICE:	\$12,538	NEW PRICE:	\$27,694

In Sum...

You can go to college.

- Keep an open mind about all the options
- Work hard at all points in your high school career
- Get involved and do the things you love
- Get to know the adults in your high school
- Don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it
- Try to find a story in everything you do and jot in down in a cute little notebook
- Need help? Send me an email! I am happy to help.