

Senior Year Check List

Where should you be at this point in the college search process? The following is a list of points you should be able to answer or have already completed:

_____ College and/or your plans after graduation should be the topic of discussion at least three times each week during dinner. If college is your plan, then mapping out your strategy for completing the college application process is advised.

_____ Set goals for attaining necessary tasks. Example: Set up visits to specific colleges. (If this has been decided to be the students' responsibility and it doesn't get done by a certain time, then the parent may need to step in. The idea behind this is...students want autonomy to "do it themselves"; however, as adults, we have to remember they are still teens and don't always follow through. So, students, if you do not complete a "specific task" by an allotted time, expect to be questioned and/or nagged by your parents. It's the way it has to be!)

_____ If you haven't already done so, VISIT, VISIT, VISIT campuses!! Visiting helps students get a feel for a campus, and most likely, they will be able to determine whether they like the culture of the school and if they will "fit in" there. Visiting campuses will help you determine the different characteristics that you like about schools (i.e. large campus, in the city, etc.).

_____ Research thoroughly! With the technology now available, you have the ability to obtain a tremendous amount of information about a college or university before you even step foot on the campus. (Remember search tools such as www.collegeboard.org or www.petersons.com.)

_____ Compare the Student Profile of each campus with what you know about yourself thus far. For example, look at where the middle 50th percentile fell from previously admitted students: standardized test scores, GPA, high school course rigor, etc. Each senior has their personal answers to these questions. This process allows the student to determine whether they have the credentials to be competitive for admission.

_____ Make a list of the schools that you are most interested in. As you research and visit, we suggest that you narrow your list to 6-8 schools. You may want to look at the following suggestions when narrowing your list:

- **2-3 Potential "Reach" Schools:** These are schools that you might be below the middle 50th percentile for their entry requirements (i.e. Your SAT scores might be lower than what is published by the school; however, your GPA might be on or above what is recommended. Still try! **Reach for the stars!**)
- **2-3 "Probable" Schools:** These are schools that you are fairly confident that you would be admitted to. Your profile matches or exceeds the published middle 50th percentile for their entry requirements.
- **1-2 "Safety" Schools:** These are schools that your credentials exceed the minimum requirements for admittance.

NOTE: Remember that schools that are "reach" or "safety" schools for one student are not the same for all students. This is a unique and individual process since each student will present their own specific credentials for admission. While we know that you enjoy talking amongst your friends about schools, keep in mind that you should be looking for the college/university that best fits **YOUR** needs, not your FRIEND'S needs.

- _____ In September, be prepared to specifically list the colleges or universities you plan to apply to. During your “Senior Interview”, your counselor will ask for your list. We hope that at this time, you have the list of colleges/universities you are going to apply to so that we can advise you further.
- _____ Sign-up to retake the standardized tests (SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and/or ACT) if you were not completely satisfied with your scores. At this point, you can be researching the requirements of the schools you are interested in to see their specific requirements for standardized tests. For example, some schools will require a certain number of SAT Subject Tests. Please remember that students can sign-up online to take these tests (www.collegeboard.org or www.actstudent.org).
- _____ Begin to formulate college essays. Obtain applications or begin looking at them online to determine the topics they are requiring you to write about. Also, look to see if the colleges you are interested in use the “Common Application” and then look at the essay topics for this application using the account you created during College Seminar.
- _____ Consider who you will ask for teacher recommendations (if you have not already asked). Be ready to speak to these individuals the second week of school. Teacher recommendations will be completed by the teacher online through Naviance. More information about this process will be explained to you when school starts. Please make sure that you speak personally to your teachers about writing your recommendation and give them a copy of your current resume.
- _____ Non-Teacher Recommendations will be discussed further during Senior Day. Some students may want to supplement their application with a non-teacher recommendation (i.e. coach, employer, club or activity advisor).
- _____ Students will ONLY be allowed to have 3 active recommendations in their Naviance portfolio. It is our recommendation that students secure 2 Teacher Recommendations at a minimum. Some colleges and universities require recommendations specific to an academic discipline. We will work individually with students who this impacts.
- _____ Update your resume. Bring it to your Senior Interview in the fall for more feedback. Use your College Seminar materials for additional suggestions or to get a refresher on what should be included on your resume. Be sure to include any activities or community service you participated in this summer.
- _____ For those students who are interested in playing collegiate athletics, please remember to visit the NCAA Eligibility Center website at <http://eligibilitycenter.org> to register. Even if you are unsure about your plans in college athletics, it is important that you register and become “cleared.” If you want to pursue a Division I or Division II sport, you will NOT be able to play in college without being registered through this organization. You should also let your counselor know about your athletic plans and that you have registered with NCAA so that we can forward your transcript.
- _____ Summer Reading!!! This is your last high school summer reading project! By now you certainly know how important it is to complete the reading before the first day of school. You don’t want to dig yourself a hole before walking in the door.