

The Inside Track on College Admissions

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Basic Information

- 3000+ Four-Year Colleges in America
 - 25 Four-Year Colleges in NJ
 - 19 Community Colleges
 - 5 Proprietary Institutions
- Class of 2016 – 95,736 High School Graduates
 - 80,400 (84%) attended college

Advice: The College That's Right For You

- Make Choices Based on Who You Are
- Size matters: You don't have to go to a college bigger than high school
- Name Brand vs. Generic – college pedigree doesn't always count
- You don't need to pick a major to pick a college
- Don't be scared by the stories
- Most Importantly – Make Sure the College is a FIT!

What to Look for in a College

- Location
 - City vs. Country
- Large vs. Small
- SAT Averages
 - SAT vs. ACT / SAT-Optional
- Class Rank and GPA
- Average Class Size
 - Lecture Halls / Teaching Assistants
- Retention
 - % of students that return after first year

MYTH: *Anyone can get into a public university, but it's harder to get into a private college.*

REALITY: Some public universities are among the most competitive to get into, while other public universities are required to take nearly all applicants.

Different Methods of Applying

- Regular Admissions – you can apply to as many schools as you'd like, and weigh financial-aid packages before making a decision.
- Early Decision – you apply in the fall and find out in December if you are admitted.
 - The decision is binding; if you are admitted, you must withdraw all your other applications.
- Early Action – apply early and find out in December.
 - The decision is nonbinding; you are also allowed to apply to schools through the regular admissions.

MYTH: Courses and grades in the spring of senior year aren't important because students already have been accepted.

REALITY: Most colleges make statements in their admissions materials that they will look at a senior's spring grades. If the student's academic performance has dropped off substantially, colleges can cancel an offer of admission.

What Should I Have Taken in High School?

- English – 4 Units
- Social Studies – 3 Units
- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Algebra II
- Foreign Language – 2 Units
- Laboratory Science – 3 Units
- Academic Electives – 3 Units

MYTH: If my SAT scores are super strong, I'll be admitted to highly selective colleges

REALITY: While you clearly need to prepare for your standardized exams, it's important to remember that they are **NOT** college entrance exams.

They are simply one piece of the admissions puzzle.

Standardized Testing

- 920+ schools that have dispensed with the standardized testing requirement
- SAT-Optional doesn't mean “easier” admissions
 - More emphasis on GPA and rank
- SAT – Evidence-Based Reading/Writing, Math
- ACT – less sections and shorter in time than SAT

MYTH: The college with the lowest price will be the most affordable.

Some of the colleges with a high “sticker price” have raised significant amounts of money for scholarships from their graduates and friends. As a result, they have more money to give to students in the form of scholarships.

After taking financial aid into consideration, a seemingly more expensive college may be more affordable than a college with a lower price list.

Types of Financial Aid

- Grants
 - Tuition Aid Grant (TAG) - \$7,236/year
 - Pell Grant - \$5,920
- Loans
 - Stafford Loan – student is borrower; \$5,500-\$7,500
 - PLUS Loan – parent is borrower; COA – Fin Aid
- Scholarships
 - Need-based – financial situation is primary determinant
 - Merit-based – recipient may determined by students' athletic, academic, artistic or other abilities

QUESTIONS?

Thank you!

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