

EMPOWERED ACADEMIC SUCCESS

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SUMMER NEWSLETTER

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CHANGES FROM 2020

Whats new with the SAT, updates on acceptance rates, and the Common App adds a prompt.

Inside this Issue

MAJOR SPOTLIGHT
AND
COLLEGE CONNECTIONS

ESSAY TIPS

Brainstorm, free write, edit for flow, revise for spelling and grammar.

CRAFTING YOUR ACTIVITY LIST

Every college application will ask for an activity list, or a summary of your high school Extra-Curricular (EC) Activities. ECs can be any of the following: sports (school or club), volunteer activities, a job, or school clubs and organizations. Applications will ask when you started and ended the EC, or if you're still currently participating in it. You will also need to list how many hours a week you participated and for how many weeks. For example, if you played high school soccer and there was an hourly practice twice a week after school, you'd indicate two hours a week for 40 weeks (typical school year length). Another example could be that you were a summer camp counselor. In that case, you would list how many hours a day you worked, and how many weeks the camp lasted, and which summers.

Regardless of where you are in high school, start making an activity list now, and add to it as you go along. It's easier than trying to remember everything in the Fall of your senior year. Depending on the application, you will have room for 10-20 activities. If you have more than 20 on your list, pick the EC that you are most proud of or participated in the most. You'll also be allowed a brief description of the EC in order to explain what it was or how you contributed.





WHAT CHANGED IN 2020

Many things changed in the college admissions world last year, but some things will remain the same. Colleges will always be looking for interesting, unique individuals that challenge and engage themselves in the classroom, extracurricular activities, and their surrounding communities.

This year did bring about a unique focus on standardized testing or the lack thereof. The majority of colleges went test-optional during the 2020 application cycle, many will remain test-optional for at least another year, and some dropped standardized tests altogether.

The SAT dropped the essay portion of the exam, as well as the administration of SAT subject tests.

The test-optional landscape and the inability to physically visit campuses created an overwhelming increase in applications to many selective colleges. The size of entering classes did not increase though, so acceptance rates were driven to record lows.

In response to the pandemic, the Common App added an optional Covid essay prompt, allowing students to share their circumstances and how they were affected by the pandemic. It also added a new prompt for the 2021 application cycle that focuses on gratitude. Additionally, over 30 colleges joined the Common App platform for the coming year.

Guiding students through the myriad of changes is what college consultants do best. Reach out if I can help.



TIPS TO WRITE GREAT ESSAYS

- Essays should tell the admissions committee something meaningful about the applicant.
- Essays are used to understand who a student is beyond their data points.
- They are a great way to demonstrate who you are when you are interacting with the world around you.
- Understand the prompts and answer what is asked!
- Brainstorm and then brainstorm some more! A great way to get past common and mundane topics is to spend time on introspection. What makes you unique? What makes you tick?
- Use your first couple of drafts to expand on your ideas and tell your story. Don't worry about spelling and grammar yet!
- Use the essay as a chance to reveal what you value and how you've grown.
- Once you're happy with the story you have written, focus on flow, spelling, and grammar.
- When you think you've got it right, read your essay aloud for flow and revise where there is a lull in the story.
- Get your essay read by someone else for feedback, but keep in mind this is YOUR story. The more people you show the more feedback you will receive. Keep your essay true to you and YOUR voice.

COLLEGE CONNECTIONS



HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY

High Point University is a private college with just under 5000 undergraduates and has been ranked by Best Colleges as the #1 Best Regional College South for nine years and #1 most Innovative College South for six years in a row. It is located about 30 minutes from both Winston-Salem and Greensboro. The Student Center is a hub of student activity on campus, housing fitness and recreation facilities, a climbing wall, a food court, an outdoor swimming pool, sand volleyball courts, and an atrium with billiard tables and sitting areas. Students can participate in many clubs and organizations on campus, including an active Greek community. Undergraduates are required to complete a general education requirement, providing a liberal arts background and allowing for course choices within each discipline. It also offers a number of study abroad programs and grants credit for programs led by other universities.

GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

Gonzaga University is located in Spokane, Washington, a city on the “sunny side” of the state, with far less rain than western Washington. Gonzaga provides students with a Jesuit, Catholic, humanistic education that will challenge and inspire them. It offers 15 undergraduate degrees through 52 majors and 54 minors and 37 concentrations, 23 master’s degrees, and four doctorates. The Criminology program is in the College of Arts and Sciences and introduces students to sociological perspectives on the causes, consequences, and control of criminal behavior.



UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

UNH is a medium-sized public flagship university with a little over 12,000 undergraduate students. Half of its students attend from out of state and about half of the student population live on campus, with housing guaranteed for freshman and sophomores. Strong programs include Business Administration, Biomedical Science, Marine Biology, Biomedical Science, and Nursing. UNH Wildcats love to attend the D1 ice hockey games and social events organized by the Campus Activities Board. A quick walk to downtown Durham has many restaurants and coffee shops. There is also plenty of outdoor recreation to be had so close to the beautiful White Mountains! The Outing Club organizes events around skiing, camping, fishing, and hiking. UNH students rave about the small class sizes, inclusive community, and how easy it is to get involved!

MAJOR SPOTLIGHT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Criminal Justice majors focus on how society responds to criminal behavior. Criminal Justice is a good fit major for those who enjoy helping others, public speaking, and are interested in crime. Characteristics of individuals successful in criminal justice include leadership, organization, problem-solving, teamwork, and keeping a level head in crisis situations.

If you are interested in criminal justice you may also consider majoring in criminology, legal studies, forensic science, or juvenile corrections.



TERMS TO KNOW

COMMON APPLICATION

Known as the Common App. It is one simplified admission application that allows students to apply to over 900 colleges and universities.

BRAG SHEET

A brag sheet is a document that outlines a student's accomplishments and is similar to a student or scholarship resume, as it provides a solid overview of key achievements in a student's life.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

An essay you write to show a college admissions committee who you are and why you deserve and desire to be admitted to their school.



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