

Career & College Planning for Juniors



Oakmont Regional High School
Ashburnham, Massachusetts

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Will you be a job seeker?

Job seekers and workers can access a variety of job assistance services, including working with experienced career counselors, attending workshops and short term training, access up to date local, statewide and national job listings. Use a PC to hunt for jobs, develop your resume, and write cover letters and more.

Where do you go for help? **A Massachusetts One-Stop Career Center**

North Central Career Center

25 Main Street, Gardner MA 01440

978-632-5050

Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 8:00 am-4:00 pm,

Thursday 9:00 am-5:00 pm

Resources for Job Seekers

Career Center Seminar-sign up by calling the automated scheduling system at 1-800-653-5586

Dedicated job counselors can work with you on your job search, help you write your resume, access online job banks, connect you with hiring employers, and recommend training to upgrade your skills and more.

Career Planning services are available which include researching careers, job and employment options in a variety of industries and locations. Career research for career changers as well as those just starting to explore career options.

Massachusetts Labor Unions Apprenticeship Opportunities-Registered apprenticeships programs are available to qualified applicants at Labor Unions across the Commonwealth.

Are you considering Military Service?

If so, sign up to take the ASVAB Test at Oakmont scheduled on April 12, 2018.

The ASVAB stands for Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery. It measures your knowledge in the following 8 areas: General Sciences, Arithmetic Reasoning, Word Knowledge, Paragraph Comprehension, Mathematics Knowledge, Electronics Information, Auto and Shop Information and Mechanical Comprehension.

You are not expected to know everything on the test. All test responses are multiple choice. It is a timed test scheduled during the hours of 9 am-noon.

ASVAB Practice Tests - Free ASVAB Questions

www.asvabpracticetests.com/

No one is under any obligation to the military as a result of taking the ASVAB.

Scores are not released to the military.

Taking the test means that you will have test results should you wish to meet with a recruiter and see what specific jobs you might qualify for in any branch of the service. Those are **Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Reserves and National Guard**. For more information about careers in the service, go to www.careersinthemilitary.com

You can use your ASVAB scores for military enlistment for up to two years after the test is taken.

The ASVAB is required for enlistment.

Check out these websites for more important information:

Today'smilitary.com- "What to Expect" & "Finding the Right Job"

About.com US Military "What the Recruiter Never Told You"

Recruiters do visit Oakmont on occasion. You may want to ask your counselor to join you when you meet with a recruiter, however the enlistment process begins at home with your parent/guardian.

Community College System

Many Oakmont graduates begin post-secondary education and training at our local Community College. Below are some examples of what a person might set their sights on at MWCC.

Certificates-Many certificate programs are intended for immediate career entry. Some certificates require prior knowledge or experience in a field. Some add to a person's skill set and will improve prospects for employment or advancement.

The number of classes/credits a person takes varies based on the specific certificate with most requiring somewhere between 25 & 40 credits.

Accounting/Bookkeeping	25	Allied Health	27
Analytical Lab & Quality Systems	30	Automotive Technology	35
Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing	23	Business Administration	25
Community Health Worker	28	Complementary Health Care	33
Cyber Security	24	Dental Assisting	43
Graphic & Interactive Design	25	Hospitality	28
Human Services Technician	24	IT Support Specialist	24
Law Enforcement	29	Manufacturing Technology	25
Medical Assisting	29	Medical Coding	41
Medical Office	24	Non-Profit Management	27
Office Assistant	24	Paralegal	28
Patient Care	28	Personal Training	29
Photography-professional	27	Practical Nurse (PN)	45
Public Relations Certificate	27	Small Business Management	25
Substance Abuse Counseling Certificate	27	Community Health Care	28

Other Non-Degree Training

Emergency Medical Technician Training	Phlebotomy Training
Radiology Technician articulation agreement w/ Quinsigamond CC	Certified Nursing Assistant Training

Commonwealth Commitment

Governor Baker and leaders of Massachusetts public colleges and universities have a message for students and families worried about college costs: If you can make a commitment to complete your college education in four years, we'll help you save an average of 40% off the cost of a traditional bachelor's degree.

Hear what Governor Baker has to say about the Commonwealth Commitment in this video: <https://youtu.be/mx1hYsOyNb0>

Here's how it works:

- Start at one of 15 Massachusetts Community Colleges and enroll in one of dozens of A2B Mapped (Associate to Bachelor's) degree programs
- Maintain a 3.00 GPA and finish the program within 2½ years
- Transfer to a State University or UMass campus and continue full time

Students get:

- A freeze on mandatory fees for up to 4½ years
- A MassTransfer tuition credit worth an average of \$1,200 at a state university or UMass campus
- A 10% rebate after each successfully completed semester
- An associate degree and a bachelor's degree at an average cost of \$28,618 before financial aid — less than many students pay to attend college for a single year

When students earn the degrees they need for jobs in health care, technology, and other industries that drive economic growth in our state, everyone in Massachusetts reaps the rewards.

To learn more about the Commonwealth Commitment, please visit the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's website at www.mass.edu/macomcom.

“Associate” Degree Programs @MWCC.

On average these “career” associate degrees require 60 earned credits for completion.

*Commonwealth Commitment Majors

Accounting	Allied Health
Analytical Lab & Quality Systems	Art
Audio Engineering	Automotive Technology
Biology	Biotechnology/Biomanufacturing
Business Administration	Chemical Science
Civic Engagement and Community Leadership	Communications
Complementary Health Care	Computer Information Systems
Criminal Justice-Corrections	Criminal Justice-law enforcement
Dental Hygiene	Early Childhood Education
Earth Systems	Elementary Education
Exercise and Sports Science	Fire Science Technology
Graphic and Interactive Design	Health Information Management
History and Political Science	Human Services
Interdisciplinary Studies	Legal Studies
Liberal Arts & Sciences	Manufacturing Technology
Media Arts and Technology	Medical Assisting
Medical Laboratory Technology	Natural Resources
Photography	Physical Therapist Asst.
Physics/Pre-engineering	Pre-law
Pre-pharmacy	Theatre Arts
Video /Film	

AN OVERVIEW

During the spring of your junior year you will meet with your guidance counselor to complete the selection of your senior year courses, discuss possible career pathways and begin the process of researching colleges that you may be interested in attending. You are encouraged to use Naviance to complete the “Strengths Explorer” and “Career Interest Profile” if you have not already done so. It is worthwhile to review your results prior to meeting with your counselor.

- * Naviance is a comprehensive web-based tool that contains data on colleges throughout the country. Students may search for colleges based on criteria such as size and location, majors, cost and more. Students can look up admission requirements, activities offered and statistics about the student body at the click of a button. Information on specific careers is also available here. You may access Naviance as frequently as you wish- a link is available under the Guidance Tab on Oakmont Web page.
- * Once a list of colleges has been identified and researched, it is recommended that students (and parents) visit a number of these schools. College tours and/or interviews can be arranged through the college admissions office or on-line at the college’s website. The "College Visit Permission Form" is available on Naviance, in the document library. College representatives visit the Oakmont Guidance Department in the fall. Check your Naviance account to see who is scheduled to visit and sign up.
- * Students planning to apply to four year colleges must take the necessary college entrance exam (SAT or ACT) during the spring of their junior year and again in the fall of senior year if not satisfied with test results. Competitive colleges/majors may require an SAT Subject Test. Test requirements are published on the college website under the admissions section. Some colleges are test-optional~
- * It is recommended that three to five applications be submitted in the fall of senior year (on-line at the college website or using the Common Application), no later than the first week of December, even if the college deadline is not until much later.
- * Finally, financial aid forms may be filled out on-line beginning in October of your senior year. Whereas all colleges require the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), most private colleges also require that the CSS/Financial Aid Profile be completed. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of important deadlines. A Financial Aid Night will be scheduled for November 2018.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

The process of choosing a college involves matching your own personality, interests, talents and academic profile to that of any number of colleges which would be "right" for you. Remember, there are many colleges at which you can be both happy and successful. Log in to your Naviance account and use the Super Match College Search.

FIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

- * What type of college would you like to attend and what field of study do you think you want to major in? (It is common to be unsure of this, so don't panic. You might want to consider a college with a variety of majors.)
- * In what climate and how far away from home do you want to be?
- * What characteristics do you seek? What size school are you interested in e.g. small or large, co-ed or single sex, private or public, two-year or four-year?
- * What environment would you be most comfortable in e.g. a rural, urban or suburban campus?
- * What type of organizations would you want to have access to e.g. marching band, fraternities/sororities, Division I, II, III athletics, ROTC, special education services, etc.?

COMPARING COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS

Gathering information about colleges begins with talking to friends, family, teachers, alumni and guidance counselors. College fairs offer an opportunity to collect data on a large variety of schools while minimizing travel expenses. Make sure you sign up to attend this year's college fair in May.

Using the "Super Match College Search" on Naviance you can "pin" and compare schools easily and create a list of schools to visit. Remember that this is the place where you may be living for the next four years. Choose it with your own needs and interests in mind.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Whereas most students at Oakmont tend to apply to three or four colleges, those who apply to highly selective schools sometimes apply to more than five. It is generally recommended that schools from three different categories be considered:

1. "Top" choices which might be viewed as "long shots" or "reach schools";
2. "Realistic" choices or those at which you have at least a 50% chance of getting accepted to;
3. "Insurance" or "safety" schools at which your acceptance would be highly probable.

Although a similar philosophy of choosing a range of schools for financial reasons might be advisable, in reality the Financial Aid process often minimizes these differences.

The most important consideration, however, is that you find a school at which you will be happy, regardless of cost and name recognition - it does not have to be the most prestigious to be the best for *you*!

Some more questions to answer while researching individual colleges...

1. What are the admission requirements?
2. Does the college use the Common Application?
3. Do they have all possible majors you are considering?
4. What are the core classes required to graduate?
5. What are the specific course offerings in the major of choice?
6. Who are the professors that teach in your major?
7. When can you schedule a campus visit or take a tour?

THE COLLEGE VISIT

Once a list of possible colleges has been identified, visiting a number of schools is highly recommended. These visits can be arranged through each college's admissions office. Log on to college websites and look under "Prospective Students" to learn more about individual versus group tours, open houses, and their policy on interviews- some schools require them, some recommend them and many do neither. Plan to visit campus when classes are in session, and to see as much of the campus as possible. Talk directly to any students you meet on campus to get a feel for the place.

College visits that take place during the school day at Oakmont must have Guidance Counselor and Administration's approval, a parent signature, and verification from the college admissions office. Use the "College Visit Form" found on Naviance. Two college visits are allowed junior year and three during senior year. These are excused absences when all paperwork is filed properly.

COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVES AT OAKMONT

Each fall, we are fortunate to have many college representatives come to our school to meet with students. Most often these representatives are from the New England area. If you watch the visitation schedule (on Naviance) carefully you may have a chance to meet an admissions counselor from one of your favorite schools or you might sign up to hear about a new school. Students are encouraged to spend some time gaining information in this convenient way. The schedule for college rep. visits is posted on Naviance, students must sign up in Naviance to attend a meeting.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Because transferring from one college to another requires additional effort and can mean a loss of credit plus extra expense, it is important to think ahead and anticipate what you will need and want from the college experience. Consider whether you might like the opportunity to participate in special programs. For example, you might want to participate in an internship to prepare you for the world of work. You might like an opportunity to study abroad. You may want to consider an ROTC program. Check whether these or other options are available at the schools you select.

QUESTIONS for College Admission Counselors

1. When must I declare a major? Is it difficult to switch?
2. Do senior faculty members teach freshmen?
3. Which departments are considered the strongest on this campus?
4. Are off-campus programs available for credit? Co-op programs? Internships? Study abroad program? Inter-college exchange?
5. How diverse is the student body?
6. What happens on weekends? Do many students go off campus?
7. What fraternities, sororities, or clubs are available? What is the effect of choosing to belong- or not- on an individual's social life?
8. What activities (such as lectures, concerts, dances, and informal athletics) take place on campus?
9. What facilities are available for organized athletic programs? For individual exercise? Is the college involved in intercollegiate sports? Is there an intramural program?
10. What publication, drama, choral, and music groups, etc. are available on campus?
11. What kinds of counseling and placement services are available if I need them? What is the job placement rate after graduation?
12. What religious facilities and organizations are involved with the campus?
13. How do you see the campus/college changing or growing?
14. What are the current social issues that students are discussing?
15. What kind of housing is available? Are all freshmen housed on campus? What percentage of students live off campus? Is housing guaranteed for all four years?
16. How would you describe school spirit at this college?

Get The Most Out Of A Campus Visit In 6 Steps

1. DECIDE WHERE AND HOW

See if your school arranges group trips to colleges or if you could get a group of friends together and visit the campus. A family trip is another option and allows you to involve your family in the process.

2. PREPARE FOR YOUR VISIT

Before you set out, get a map of the college campus and pick out places of interest. Call the college's admission office to schedule a guided tour of the campus.

3. TAKE YOUR OWN TOUR

Just wandering around the campus on your own or with friends can be the best way to get a feel for what a college is like.

4. EXPLORE THE FACILITIES

Finding the spots on campus where students gather or asking a student where the best place to eat can give you a feel for the character of the college. Visit the library and check out the gym or theater. Ask an admission officer if you can tour a dorm and a classroom.

5. MAKE CONNECTIONS

Talk to current students. Ask the students at the next table or sitting nearby what they like best about the college.

6. TAKE NOTES

During your visit, write down some notes about your experience. What did you see that excited you? Are there aspects of the college that you don't like? If so, what are they?

Questions to Ask During Your Visit:

ASK TOUR GUIDES/STUDENTS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- What's it like to go from high school to college?
- What do you do in your free time? On the weekends?
- What do you love about this college?
- What do you wish you could change about this college?
- Why did you choose this college?
- What is it like to live here?
- What does the college do to promote student involvement in campus groups, extracurricular activities, or volunteerism?

ASK PROFESSORS

- What are the best reasons to go to this college?
- Can a student be mentored by professors, graduate students, or upperclassmen?
- How are professors rated by the college? Does the college think mentoring and meetings for project guidance are important?
- How does the college help students have access to professors outside class? Do professors join students for lunch, help with community service groups, or guide student organizations?
- How many students do research or other kinds of projects for a semester or more?

ASK FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

- How much has your total college cost for each student risen in the past year?
- How much do your students usually owe in loans when they graduate?
- What is the average income of graduates who had the same major that interests me?
- Will my costs go up when your tuition goes up, or can we use the same tuition rate I started with so I'll know the costs for four years? What should I expect in terms of increases in living expenses?
- How many students usually graduate in the major that interests me? How long do these students usually take to get their degrees? In what ways does the college help students graduate in four years?

FACT SHEET FOR ADMISSIONS TESTING

Dates to remember

Junior Year SAT Reasoning Test and/or
SAT Subject Tests* May 5 or June 2, 2018

*Check to see if the essay portion of the SAT/ACT is required by colleges you are considering,(very few require it) also check whether a Subject Test is required by your specific college.

ACT April 14, 2018

Senior Year SAT Reasoning Test August 25, 2018
October 6, 2018
SAT Subject Tests* November 3, 2018
December 1, 2018

ACT September , 2018
October , 2018
December , 2018

Special Notes

In order to schedule a college readiness test, students must register on-line at www.collegeboard.com (SAT) or www.act.org (ACT). Students who get free or reduced lunch please see your counselor for a fee waiver.

PLEASE BE AWARE that SAT and ACT registration **deadlines** are *more than one month* before the actual test date.

Students are responsible for sending their SAT/ACT scores to the colleges for which they are applying during the senior year.

Be aware of college application deadlines as the college will need your scores in time to review your application for admission.

FACT SHEET FOR JUNIORS/SENIORS CONCERNING COLLEGE BOARDS

Whether you sign up for the essay is based on the individual college requirement. California State Colleges and the Ivy league colleges are still requiring the essay portion.

SAT Fees

2018-2019 Fees are:

\$46.00 SAT Reasoning Test (no essay)

\$60.00 SAT with essay

\$26.00 *SAT Subject Tests Basic Registration Fee (\$26.00) plus *\$21.00 extra per test; up to 3 tests may be taken on any given test date.

ACT Fees

\$46.00 ACT Assessment (No writing)

\$62.50 ACT Plus Writing

Note: Late registration fee is \$29.50 for the ACT. Late registration for the SAT is \$29.00 in addition to the basic test fee.

SAT/ACT Fee Waivers are available to students who qualify for free/reduced lunch. See your counselor before registering.

Remember

The School Code for Oakmont is **221958** (also referred to as the CEEB code.) This is used on registration forms and on the college application forms as well.

The New SAT Reasoning Test is a 3 hour test that measures reading, writing and mathematical abilities (plus 50 minutes for essay).

SAT Subject Tests measure knowledge of particular subjects as well as one's ability to apply that knowledge. Some selective colleges require one or more of these tests for admission or placement. Some colleges will specify which test(s) to take. Others permit students to choose their own.

The ACT is a 4 hour test without the written portion; it measures skills in English, Mathematics, Reading and Science. Add 1 hour for the written portion. We often recommend students who are interested in studying science or those who have completed physics to take the ACT.

ADMISSIONS STANDARDS MASSACHUSETTS STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE) admissions standards for the state colleges and UMass system emphasizes a strong academic high school background so that students enter college ready to learn. The standards were adopted in the fall of 1996 and have been amended and represent the following requirements. These standards represent the minimum requirements for admission and could be higher based on program and college selectivity. (For example: Physical Therapy, Nursing, and Engineering programs may require higher grade point averages.)

Freshmen Admission:

I. Grade Point Average Requirement for State College and Universities: 3.0

The grade point average requirement for admission consideration to any four-year public college or University in Massachusetts is 3.0. The admissions officers at each public college will re-calculate the student's high school grades of all college preparatory courses. Calculations include additional value for Advanced Placement and/or Honors courses. These grade point average re-calculations may reflect a different overall average than that reported by the high school.

II. SAT Sliding Scale Range: The Scale applies only when students fall below the minimum grade point average listed above. For example, a student who has a

Applicant G.P.A.	SAT score must be for:		ACT Score
	State College	University	
3.00-4.00	NA	NA	NA
2.51-2.99	920	950	19
2.41-2.50	960	990	20
2.31-2.40	1000	1030	21
2.21-2.30	1040	1070	22
2.11-2.20	1080	1110	23
2.00-2.10	1120	1150	24

No State of Mass.College or University will admit a student with a GPA below 2.0

III. Academic Unit Requirements: 17 Core Courses must be successfully completed. Only courses designated as College Preparatory levels or above are counted.

English	4 Units	
Mathematics	4 Units	(Algebra 1, Geometry & Algebra 2) & Math Senior Year
Sciences	3 Units	(including 2 courses with labs)
Foreign Language	2 Courses	(in a single language)
Social Sciences	2 Courses	(including 1 course in U.S. History)
Electives	2 Courses	(from the above subjects or from Arts & Humanities areas or Computer Science.)

MASSTRANSFER A2B DEGREE- The Commonwealth Commitment

Student must pursue one of the designated majors to participate, there are more than 16 and over 70% of all students study one of those.

For more info about those: www.mass.edu/masstransfer

Students commit to:

- Begin at one of the Massachusetts Community Colleges
- Complete associate degree within 2.5 years
- Transfer to one of the Massachusetts State Universities or UMass
- Complete a bachelor's degree within 2 more years
- Maintain full-time, continuous enrollment and a cumulative 3.0 GPA

Commonwealth Commitment to Students:

- Freeze on all tuition & mandatory fees on program entry
- A 10% rebate off tuition and mandatory fees
- Guaranteed admission
- Guaranteed transfer of credits
- No application fee or essay

Learning Disabled Applicants

Applicants with professionally diagnosed and documented learning disabilities are exempt from taking standardized tests for admission to any public institution in Massachusetts. Such students, however, must complete the 17 academic units with the required minimum grade point averages above. Students with documented language based disabilities are not required to complete the foreign language requirement. Students may also present other evidence of the potential for academic success. According to the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education eligibility for admission to a public four-year college is not an entitlement for any applicant, including learning disabled students.

Individual Enrichment Programs

Students who display the ability to succeed at a four-year institution but do not meet the minimum standards for admission set by the MBHE may be considered for admission to an Individual Enrichment Program. These programs, often called "bridges" are typically held in the summer, offer students a four-week residential pre-enrollment experience designed to enhance their academic skills.

ADMISSIONS TERMINOLOGY

- **Regular Admission**- Applications are filed based upon the college's specific deadlines. Students are typically notified no later than April 1st.
- **Rolling Admissions** - This is a common practice in college admissions where specific deadlines are not used. Instead, applications are processed when, and in the order that, they are received. Applicants are usually notified of the decision within a matter of weeks. (Please note that with rolling admissions, competitive or popular programs often fill up early.)
- **Early Decision**- A plan wherein students apply early in the fall (usually by November 1st) to one college which is their first choice. If accepted, there is an ethical obligation to attend that college providing that a reasonable financial aid package can be worked out. One advantage to this program is that students are notified in December as to whether or not they have been accepted. A disadvantage is that you have no other financial aid packages to utilize for comparison. Early decision applicants may be outright rejected, or in many cases they are "deferred". This means that they are reviewed again with the regular deadline applicants.
- **Early Action** - Like Early Decision, this program requires application early in the fall with notification coming in December. It is different, however, in that students:
 - a. may apply to more than one college offering this program
 - b. are not ethically obliged to accept or attend a particular school
 - c. do not have to commit themselves until spring (usually May 1st)

If rejected, your application is usually returned to the regular application pool.

- **Early Admission** - A program which allows students to apply to college during their junior year in high school. This is a unique program usually reserved for exceptionally talented students and rarely is utilized as an application option.
- **Deferred Admission**- College: On "early decision applications" the admission action is postponed for re-evaluation as part of the "regular" application pool.
- **Deferred Admission** - Student: Admitted student delays or defers enrollment for one year or one semester with a guarantee of enrollment at the time he/she chooses.
- **Confirmation of Intent** - Students should submit a deposit - by May 1st - to the school that they plan to attend, and notify their other schools that they will be attending elsewhere. At schools where housing is in short supply students may benefit by submitting their deposit prior to the May 1st deadline.

To Interview or Not?

Some colleges **require** an interview as part of the admissions process. Usually very competitive schools or programs may require them. If the school is a good distance from home, say over 200 miles, the college may have a local alumni interview you locally instead of you having to travel there.

Contact the admissions office to see if they schedule interviews spring of junior year or fall of senior year. If you are traveling a distance to visit a campus, it is recommended that you contact admissions early. Let them know you are coming in case they want to interview you while you are there, especially if it's unlikely you will return again before admission decisions are made.

Some colleges recommend an interview as part of the admissions process. This is often the case for smaller private colleges. We strongly suggest that you schedule an interview and believe it will only help your chances for acceptance. Apply the same rules if you are traveling a good distance.

Larger universities do not often have the ability to interview candidates simply because of the sheer number of applicants. Some exceptions would include fields of study that are very competitive, ie Computer Science, Engineering, Nursing
Contact the admissions office to inquire.

Special Note: Those students who are studying Music or Dance may have to audition for acceptance. Contact admissions to understand the scheduling process. Usually an admissions application must be submitted prior.

Those students who are pursuing Art as a field of study must often submit a portfolio for review. Some colleges have Portfolio Review Days expressly for that purpose. Other colleges require that you submit your portfolio on-line.

SURVIVING THE INTERVIEW

The best preparation for the interview is to be familiar with the two subjects most likely to be discussed: the school and you. Reread the college catalog and your resume before each interview. You may want to ask your guidance counselor for a copy of your transcript for review. Below are some tips to help.

- Be on time!
- Be yourself.
- Speak clearly.
- Relax! An interview is an exchange of information, not something you pass or fail.
- Your presence on the campus and your readiness to talk about yourself and your school plans are indications of your seriousness. The interview can help you determine if that school is the right place for you. The exchange of information and the impressions gained on both sides – yours and the interviewer – should be meaningful.
- Be prepared. The interviewer may encourage you to "just talk," so you should be ready to discuss topics ranging from the very general ("Tell me about your school experience") to the very specific ("How do you feel about nuclear disarmament or capital punishment?").
- Respond directly and articulately to questions. Keep the "you knows" and the "likes" to a minimum- none. It is perfectly alright to say "I don't know" or "I need to think about that" in response to a question.
- Be familiar with your academic record. This will enable you to answer general questions about your academic performance in school and your scores on your SAT or ACT tests.
- Know your interests and your areas of strength. Look over your list of extracurricular activities and be prepared to talk about them.
- Have plausible explanations for any weakness in your record. Remember, an explanation is different from an excuse.
- Be prepared to discuss one or two books you have read. Think about why they meant something to you.
- Be aware of current events.
- Thank the interviewer before you leave and consider sending a brief thank you note.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO EXPECT

A large part of being prepared is knowing what to expect. The questions below are typical of the kinds of questions school and college interviewers ask. You may want to write out your answers on a piece of paper.

1. How would you like to see yourself grow over the next four years?
2. What might your teachers say is your greatest strength?
3. Do you have a hero or heroine? Who, and why?
4. If you could reach for a telephone and talk to any living person, who would you call? Why?
5. Have you ever thought of not going to college? What might you do instead?
6. If your best friend was asked to describe you, what would he or she say?
7. What events this year have made you feel indignant? Involved?
8. What do you do in your spare time?
9. How do you contribute to the school or local community?
10. Why are you considering this school/college?
11. What do you enjoy reading? What books did you read this year that influenced your thinking? What newspapers and magazines do you read regularly?

Essay Preparation-*Summer is a great time to get started!*

Many colleges require that an applicant submit an essay or personal statement as part of the college application. In general, the essay helps the college assess your critical thinking and writing abilities. It is also designed to shed light on your special interests or experiences, values, attitudes and expectations of the future.

Make sure you are aware of the essay requirements for each college to which you are applying. If you apply to multiple colleges that require a supplement (Think Common App), you may need to write additional essays. As always, the best source for this information is a college's website.

The Essay: Step by Step

You may see the college essay as another hurdle you must jump over on the way to being accepted at the college of your choice. The essay isn't a hurdle but an opportunity for you to "talk" directly to the college's admissions committee and help them "see" you as a person, rather than as a set of impersonal statistics. Except for the interview, it is your only chance to share your thoughts, insights and opinions, to highlight your accomplishments and to convey your maturity and outlook on life. If you see the college essay in this way, as an opportunity, then it is clearly worth the effort to put some extra time, thought and energy into writing it.

Purpose of the Essay

The college essay is extremely important for two major reasons:

1. It enables the college admission office to evaluate your communication skills. Through your essay, they can assess the clarity of your thinking and your ability to convey your thoughts in written form.
2. It enables the admissions officer to learn more about you as a person, beyond what grades and SAT scores can convey. A well-written essay can speak volumes about your attitudes, feelings, personal qualities, imagination, and creativity. For the admissions staff, it adds another important piece to the puzzle because it distinguishes you as an individual and differentiates you from other applicants.

Choosing a Topic

Regardless of whether you are writing an essay to meet the requirements of the Common App or a college's supplemental application, here are a few general hints about the most effective way to approach your topic:

- Narrow your topic and try to be as specific and illustrative as possible.
- The easiest topic to write about is you. No one knows more about you than you. Since one important purpose of the essay is self-revelation, this is not a time to be shy or modest, although you should not exaggerate. If you choose to write about yourself, remember that little incidents and facts are often the most revealing of one's character and outlook.
- Do not be afraid to write about something you think is a little different. A unique topic or approach is often refreshing to a college admissions officer who has been reading applications all day. Further, an unusual or offbeat essay may be an excellent way to show your creativity.

Preparing To Write

Before sitting down to write a first draft of your essay, spend time organizing your thoughts. Develop a framework for your essay so it will have a smooth and logical progression from one idea or incident to the next. Decide on a style that is comfortable for you, not one that you think the admissions committee prefers. Finally, remember that organizing your thoughts and deciding on a framework does not mean you must be overly rigid at the start: leave room for flexibility and creativity as you actually begin writing.

Writing the Essay

You do not have to get it right the first time! Instead, write the first draft of your essay with the focus on having the content communicate your thoughts. Then set it aside for a day or two, reread it with a fresh perspective and make any necessary changes. This is also the point at which you should consider organization, style, grammar, spelling, and tone. Once you have rewritten your first draft you may wish to try it out on your family, friend, English teacher, or school counselor. While automated spellcheck is helpful, do not solely rely on it. Find a person to proofread your essay. While the final product and final "voice" should be yours, outside readers may be able to offer helpful suggestions for technical or other improvements and see what kind of impression you would make on someone who doesn't know you as well.

Note that while you can type the essay directly into the Common App form, it is best to write it in a Word document (or other editing software on your computer) and cut and paste it into the Common App. This strategy allows you to use the advanced spellcheck and format capabilities of your editing software. It also makes the essay available to you for use elsewhere if necessary.

WARNING: When using the Common Application, do not personalize your essay for a particular school. Supplemental questions for individual colleges will allow you the opportunity to express your interest/creativity.

If you are fortunate enough to have English 12 first semester you most likely will have an assignment related to the college essay. Get a head start and you will be finished with the most important part of the college application.

If you are unfortunate with English scheduled second semester, you'll be happier still that you have taken a crack at this! Get busy~

2018-2019 Common Application Essay Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma — anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

More About the Common Application-It is in the student's best interest to wait until the fall of senior year to create a Common Application account. Counselors meet with seniors in September and take them to the computer lab to create a Common App and re-introduce Naviance. A student must use their school email address so that counselors can send transcripts electronically.

APPENDIX-A

MILITARY ACADEMY ADMISSION PROCEDURE

The application process to a U.S. Military Academy such as West Point, Annapolis, the Coast Guard, or the Air Force, must be started in the spring of the junior year. If a student wishes to apply to a military academy, a congressional nomination request must be submitted to your Senator and State Representative (not applicable for the Coast Guard).

A sample format for the Congressional nomination request is as follows:

REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION TO A MILITARY ACADEMY

Date

The Honorable

The Honorable

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

OR

House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510

I desire to attend the _____ Name _____ and to be commissioned in the class entering in July 2019.

The following data are furnished for your information:

Name:

Permanent Address:

Telephone Number:

Temporary Address and telephone number (if different from preceding):

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,

PASSWORD MANAGER

Students please note password/account information on your phones!

Naviance Email acct: Username: Password:	Collegeboard Email acct: Username: Password:
Common Application Email acct: Username: Password:	ACT Email acct: Username: Password:
FASFA (do not use student email) Student email: Student password: Parent email: Parent password:	FSA ID: Student Email acct: Username: Password:
Other: _____ Email acct: Username: Password:	FSA ID: Parent Email acct: Username: Password:
Other: _____ Email acct: Username: Password:	FastWeb/other scholarship Search engine Email acct: Password:

