

SCHEDULE FOR COLLEGE PLANNING JUNIOR YEAR

SEPTEMBER

- ✓ Give some serious thought to your reasons for wanting to attend college. Evaluate your goals, your values, your interests and your abilities.
- ✓ Meet with your school counselor to review your courses for junior year and to plan courses for senior year. Be certain you are carrying a solid college preparatory program.

OCTOBER

- ✓ Take the PSAT/NMSQT.

NOVEMBER

- ✓ Keep your grades up.

DECEMBER

- ✓ Receive results of PSAT/NMSQT. Read material sent with your scores and consult your school counselor to determine how you might improve. This is excellent preparation for the SAT I.

JANUARY

- ✓ Decide what type of college you are looking for (two/four year, liberal arts/technical). Determine what factors are important to you (location, setting, size, etc.).
- ✓ Develop your individual SAT I/II testing schedule with your counselor. Remember to register at the appropriate time.

FEBRUARY/MARCH

- ✓ Meet with your school counselor to begin preparing a list of colleges to explore. Use college guidebooks and computer software as resource material.
- ✓ Call or e-mail colleges on your list to request materials such as applications, viewbooks and catalogs.

APRIL

- ✓ Make visits to college campuses for Tours, Open Houses, ect.

MAY

- ✓ Take the SAT I.

JUNE

- ✓ Another chance to take the SAT or ACT.
- ✓ Continue to visit colleges during the summer.

JULY/AUGUST

- ✓ If your spring SAT scores have revealed any weaknesses, plan a program of self-improvement.
- ✓ Visit colleges. Take tours and have interviews. Open communication lines with coaches and/or other representatives of special talent areas.
- ✓ Review your testing plan for the SAT I/II or ACT. If appropriate register for one or more test dates in the fall.

PRE-COLLEGE PLANNING

- Use the following checklist to decide which factors are important to you in selecting a college. Remember, these factors will not be the same for everyone, and should reflect your own personal wants and needs.

CURRICULUM

I would like to major in _____.

_____ I am currently undecided about my field of study.

Even if you are certain about a particular field of study, that may change once you get to college and discover the wide range of choices available to you. In fact, college students change their major an average of three times before graduation

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Be realistic about how far away from home you really want to be.

_____ **Mid-Atlantic** (Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania)

_____ **Midwest** (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia, Wisconsin)

_____ **New England** (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont)

_____ **Southeast** (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia)

_____ **Southwest** (Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)

_____ **West** (Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming)

SETTING

_____ **Urban** (large city setting)

_____ **Suburban** (outskirts of city setting)

_____ **Rural** (country setting)

Do you crave the energy and excitement that a city school can offer?

Are you more comfortable with a campus outside the city limits?

Are you a nature lover who prefers a campus in the woods or mountains?

SIZE

- _____ **Small** (1,000 – 5,000 students)
- _____ **Medium** (5,000 – 10,000 students)
- _____ **Large** (10,000 – 15,000 students)
- _____ **Very Large** (over 15,000 students)

45% of freshman consider size a key factor in deciding where to attend college.

STUDENT BODY

- _____ **Single-Sex**
- _____ **Coeducational** (male and female)

The types of students found on campus are responsible for creating the academic, cultural and social environment.

ADMISSION POLICY

- _____ **Most Competitive** (accepts fewer than 30% of applicants)
- _____ **Highly Competitive** (accept between 30% - 50% of applicants)
- _____ **Very Competitive** (accept between 50% - 75% of applicants)
- _____ **Less Competitive** (accept 85% or more of applicants)
- _____ **Open** (all high school graduates accepted)

Take a personal academic inventory noting your GPA, number of Honors and/or AP classes you've taken and your highest SAT I or ACT

CAMPUS LIFE

List the extracurricular organizations, events or activities in which you will want to participate (e.g., Student Government, Radio/TV Station, Band, Newspaper, Fraternities, Sororities).

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Select schools that offer plenty of activities that match your interest

ATHLETICS

List the intercollegiate, intramural or recreational sports in which you will want to participate (e.g., Football, Softball, Bowling).

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you want to compete at Division I, II, or III? Do you simply want to play for fun and recreation?

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

These opportunities can add another dimension to your college experience and deserve strong consideration

- _____ **Honors Program** (a program offering special enrichment opportunities for students with high academic ability)
- _____ **Independent Study** (a program where the student works on special topics of interest without attending class or fulfilling regular class assignments)
- _____ **Internships** (a program where the student gets college credit and work experience while attending school)
- _____ **Cooperative Education** (a program where the student gets college credit and a salaried work experience while attending school. The two most common programs are the alternating – student alternates between semesters of school and work; and the combined – student studies and works during the same semester)
- _____ **Study Abroad** (a special arrangement where the student completes part of the degree program in a foreign country)
- _____ **ROTC** (Army, Navy, Air Force)

SERVICES

One or more of these services may be important to you.

- _____ **Remedial Instruction** (credit or non-credit courses that help students strengthen basic skill areas)
- _____ **Counseling** (individual or group counseling addressing personal and/or social issues)
- _____ **Career Development** (individual or group counseling addressing decision-making and career planning skills)
- _____ **Job Placement** (services offered to help students secure employment during college or after graduation)
- _____ **Support for Learning Disabled or Physically Handicapped** (services offered to students including special course scheduling and tutorial assistance).

HOUSING

Some colleges offer theme-style residences such as wellness halls, honor halls, etc.

- _____ **No Housing Available**
- _____ **Primarily Commuter School** (some housing available)
- _____ **Primarily Residential School** (most students live on campus)
- _____ **Off-Campus Housing Available**

OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS

YOUR PRELIMINARY LIST

- ❑ Make a preliminary list of 15-25 schools that match your wants and needs. This list can include schools you've always dreamed about, your counselor's recommendations, or colleges that friends and siblings have attended. Be open to schools you haven't heard of. Upon further investigation, one of these schools may be a good match for you.
- ❑ Next, meet with your counselor. At this time you'll need to reduce your list to a workable number. In order to do this, take the following steps:
 - ✓ Send for literature to get comprehensive information on a particular school. You can simply call or use your e-mail.
 - ✓ Make informal visits to different kinds of college campuses. Attend Campus Tour Days, Open Houses, etc.
 - ✓ Attend college fairs, college nights, and individual meetings with college representatives. The following questions are a sample of important areas to discuss:
 - What programs of study does the college offer? What is unique about the college?
 - Is the location of the school rural, urban or suburban? Is public transportation available?
 - How many undergraduates attend the college full-time/part-time?
 - What is the average class size for freshman?
 - What are the admission criteria? What are the application deadlines?
 - How much is tuition? How much is room and board?
 - What types of financial aid are available?
 - What academic and/or athletic scholarships are available?
 - What is the social and cultural environment? How many student organizations are on campus?
 - What counseling services are available? What tutoring or other support services are available?
 - What is the percentage of graduates who find jobs in their field of study?
 - What percentage of freshman return for sophomore year?

ADMISSION TERMS

- ❑ The following are terms you should be familiar with as you continue the college application process.

Early Decision

Students may apply to *one* participating college or university, usually by mid-November. The decision for admission is generally made by mid or late December.

Depending on the school, early action has two forms:

1. The student is not permitted to apply to other colleges until the early decision school has made its decision.
2. If they are permitted to apply to other colleges, once admitted early decision, they must withdraw all other applications.

Most early decision candidates have strong credentials. Non-accepted students are almost always deferred to regular decision.

Regular Decision

Students submit an application to a college by a specific deadline date.

Rolling Admissions

This indicated that there is no set deadline. Applications are accepted at any time. Students are accepted if they met a set criteria; and when the quota for each department (major) is filled, admissions is closed.

With rolling admissions it is a good idea to apply early.

On the other hand, if a school has not yet met its quota, applications may be accepted late in the year.

Early Action

This non-binding plan allows students to apply early, decisions are made early, and there is no restriction on the number of other applications.

Standards are high, and unlike early decision, applicants may be rejected and not deferred to regular decision.

Wait List/Alternate List

A response to an applicant indicating that his/her application is acceptable, but the limit of accepted students has already been reached; wait-listed students may be admitted after May 1, if space becomes available.

Conditional Acceptance

Admission offered on the condition that the student successfully complete specified requirements such as attending summer school, taking remedial courses, or maintaining a certain GPA during the first semester of study.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❑ Many colleges require teacher, counselor and/or principal recommendations as part of the application process.
- ❑ If recommendations are needed:
 - ✓ Consider who will give you a good recommendation.
 - ✓ Ask the person (or persons) well ahead of the deadline date. It is a good idea to put your request in writing, including relevant information.
 - ✓ Some applications provide recommendation forms. Make sure you have neatly printed or typed your name on the form.
 - ✓ If there is no form, the person writing the recommendation will need to know where you are applying and any relevant information.
 - ✓ Let the person know what to do with the recommendation once it is done. Usually the Guidance Office will collect the recommendation and send everything needed with the application.
 - ✓ If the recommendation must be sent separately, you should provide and envelope with the address of the admissions office and put a stamp on it.
 - ✓ A thank you note would be a nice gesture.

Remember

The writer needs to know:

- a. Where you are applying
- b. Any specific information needed
- c. Due date
- d. What to do with recommendation when it is completed

Sample Recommendation Letter Request

Dear _____:

Would you please write me a recommendation for Syracuse University? Please mention my involvement in the play that our class wrote and performed.

The deadline for the application is _____. Please return the recommendation to the Guidance Office.

Sincerely,

John Doe

THE COLLEGE VISIT

The College Visit

The college visit is a very important step that should not be excluded in the college decision making process. Meeting with school personnel, and students, seeing the physical campus, and observing overall activity at the college can make a big impact on you.

In order to see the college at its best, visit during the spring of your Junior year or the fall of your Senior year during the week when classes are in session and the campus is on full swing.

How to Set Up the College Tour

Call the college at least two weeks ahead to set up a date and time for a tour.

If interested in having an interview, set up an appointment at the same time.

At the time you make your reservation for the college tour inform the school that you would like to see a dorm room, sit in on a class, inspect science labs and the library. These are not necessarily included on all college tours.

BEWARE!

Your college tour guide may be in a bad mood, just failed a test, etc. and may therefore not give the best or most positive tour. Try not to let this effect you.

It may be raining! Don't let this affect you!

Don't let the personality of the tour guide affect your feelings about the school.

Get Answers to Key Questions

- Does the college have an active Career Center to help me prepare for a successful job search after graduation?
- What percentage of graduates are accepted to graduate, medical, or law school?
- Will I have ready access to computers other equipment on campus?
- What is the typical class size, and how much individual attention will I receive?
- What intramural or intercollegiate sports are available?
- What is the "atmosphere" on campus? friendly? relaxed? competitive? pressured?
- What is the faculty like? caring? friendly? aloof? rigid?
- Do professors or graduate students teach freshman course?

Of course, your questions and concerns may be different from those listed above, but be sure that all your questions are answered fully before making your final decision. The Admissions Office and other college offices will, in most cases, be happy to provide you with the information you want.

HOW TO TAKE A CAMPUS VISIT AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- I. Overall Impression of the Physical Campus
 - a. Upkeep of the buildings and grounds
 - b. General aesthetic impression of the campus as a whole
 - c. Proximity to nearest town

- II. Evaluation of Specific Facilities
 - a. Library
 - b. Academic classrooms and labs
 - c. Dorms
 - d. Recreation Facilities
 - e. Computer facilities
 - f. Facilities for commuting students (if important)

- III. Areas to Probe with Student Guide and Admissions Officer
 - a. Social Information (fraternity/sorority situations, drinking regulations, automobile regulations, dormitory regulations, etc.)
 - b. Academic Information (most popular majors, graduation requirements, off-campus programs available, internships/co-op programs available, etc.)
 - c. Financial aid information (special scholarships, use of FAFSA forms, job opportunities, etc.)

The College Visit

The College Visit Checklist

Name of College _____

Location _____

Size _____

Comprehensive Costs _____

Name of Tour Guide _____

Name of Dean of Admissions _____

Telephone # of Admissions Department _____

Rate the following criteria and circle appropriate number for each line

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
I. Overall Impression of the Physical					
Campus	1	2	3	4	5
A. Upkeep of building and grounds	1	2	3	4	5
B. General aesthetic impression of Campus as a whole	1	2	3	4	5
C. Proximity to nearest town	1	2	3	4	5
II. Evaluation of Specific Facilities					
A. Library	1	2	3	4	5
B. Academic Classrooms & Labs	1	2	3	4	5
C. Dorms	1	2	3	4	5
D. Recreation Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
E. Computer Facilities	1	2	3	4	5
F. Facilities for Commuting Students	1	2	3	4	5
III. Other _____					
A. _____	1	2	3	4	5
B. _____	1	2	3	4	5

Chart Your College Choices

Have trouble selecting a number-one choice from your list of college possibilities? Use the chart below to rank your favorite schools according to six criteria (column headings). Then award points to each school according to the rankings.

	Academic Program	Location	Student Body Size	Campus Facilities	Campus Activities	Comprehensive Cost
1 st Choice (4 pts.)						
2 nd Choice (3 pts.)						
3 rd Choice (2 pts.)						
4 th Choice (1 pt.)						

INTERVIEWS

The Personal Interview

An interview with an admissions counselor or alumnus is a real opportunity to personalize the application process. Interviews can take place at the college, at school, or even in your home. An interview can “make or break” an application, so here are some points to consider.

- ✓ Is an interview necessary or desirable? If you have a hard time with an interview, *don't* do one unless it is necessary. (They are rarely necessary).
- ✓ Dress neatly, but comfortably. Tuxedos and gowns are out, as are jeans and t-shirts.
- ✓ Your parents might accompany you to the interview, *not in* the interview. The admissions counselor wants to meet *you*.
- ✓ Shake hands with your interviewer and introduce your parents if they came with you.
- ✓ Do pre-interview homework. Look over information on the college and think about where you are on the following:
 - Scholastic standing and coursework – Your GPA, rank, record of courses, etc. Think about how you have done, what have you learned in your coursework. An unofficial transcript might be helpful.
 - Extra curricular activities can be important as colleges seek well-rounded men and women. Include in-school and out-of-school activities and work experience. What have you *learned* from these experiences?
 - Personal questions will arise. What are your plans for the future? Why do you wish to attend *this* college? Why *this* major? What is important to you?
 - All of these areas are fair game. If you give them some thought beforehand, you will be better prepared.
- ✓ Arrive *early* for the interview. Rushing in at the last minute will only create tension.
- ✓ Be careful of your posture during the interview. Keep your hands and fingers away from your mouth. If all else fails, just fold your hands on your lap.

INTERVIEWS

- ✓ Look your interviewer in the eye.
- ✓ Respond to every question, even if you find them difficult. If you are stumped by a question, admit it. It is better to be honest than to try and fake an answer.
- ✓ *Never* answer with one word. Consider this a conversation and answer in sentences.
- ✓ Ask questions yourself if the occasion arises. Forget the “how many students are on campus” kind of question. Be different!
- ✓ Be enthusiastic about your record, activities, and school, but do not brag. Coming on *too* strong is a mistake just like trying to impress the interviewer with who your family is or who your friends are.
- ✓ Share experiences significant to you – like teamwork in school reports or an after school job you have held for a long time. Tell the interviewer what these experiences have taught you or how they have helped you in school.
- ✓ Don't argue with the interviewer over a particular subject – it won't serve any constructive purpose.
- ✓ Don't knock your high school too much. To admit it is not perfect is one thing, but to describe it as lousy with bad teachers and students that are all wimps is something else.
- ✓ Don't play games – be honest. Interviewers can spot a phony
- ✓ Be open to your interviewers suggestions – even if it is to consider another school.
- ✓ Don't be concerned if the interview is fairly brief. Success of an interview is not measured by its length.
- ✓ Don't judge a college by the interview(er).
- ✓ Always thank the interviewer for his/her time, and send a follow-up thank you note, if possible.

College-Bound Student-Athlete

- ✓ Every prospective student-athlete who is attending an NCAA Division I or II institution **MUST** be certified by the clearinghouse.
- ✓ You can register and complete the amateurism questionnaire at the beginning of your junior year. The athletics participation section should be updated regularly. Transcripts should be sent your senior year.
- ✓ There is no registration deadline **HOWEVER** prospective student athletes must be certified before they receive an athletics scholarship, attend an 'official visit', practice or compete at a Division I or II institution.
- ✓ Review the new 2007 Amateurism Rule online at www.collegeboard.com
- ✓ SAT's must be sent **DIRECTLY** to the Clearinghouse using the code 9999.
- ✓ Use worksheets to keep track of your eligibility requirements.

Division I Requirements

- 16 Core Courses
- 4 yrs English
- 3 yrs Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 yrs Natural or Physical Science
- 1 EXTRA year of English, Math or Science
- 2 yrs Social Science
- 4 yrs extra core courses

Division II Requirements

- 14 Core Courses
- 3 yrs English
- 2 yrs Math (Algebra 1 or higher)
- 2 yrs Natural or Physical Science
- 2 EXTRA yrs of English, Math or Science
- 2 yrs Social Science
- 3 yrs extra core courses