



Vista Ridge High School

College Workbook

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DECISIONS AND CHOICES: Planning Ahead for College

Let's start with a factoid:

There are over 3,600 two and four-year colleges in the United States.

And you have to choose just **ONE**.

As if your life as a high school student isn't stressful enough, you have to plan for life after high school. Key word in that sentence - PLAN. You don't just graduate from Vista Ridge High School and say, "Well, I think I'll go to state college now." Choosing a college includes researching, evaluating, decision-making, and learning some things about yourself. And that takes time.

We have provided this College Planning Guide as a way to jumpstart your brain and get you to think about life after Vista Ridge. An early start can alleviate panic and stress down the road. But don't think that choosing a college is a complete drag! This can be one of the most exciting times of your high school experience - visiting college campuses, and connecting with your family while doing so, and getting to know your counselor in a new way. Throughout this Planning Guide, you will find direction that will make your life easier as you approach the often confusing, sometimes frustrating, but ultimately fulfilling process of choosing your college.

COLLEGE PLANNING TIMELINE

Freshman Year

- Begin your College Plan with your counselor. This plan is a requirement for all four years which includes your Four Year Plan, Sophomore and Junior Conferences, Senior Interview, and utilizes 'College In Colorado.'
- Take the most rigorous academic schedule possible (Counselor's strong recommendation).
- Get involved!
- Keep in mind that an important part of your college application is how you spend your time outside of the classroom.
- Know that what you gain from high school will be proportionate to what you give it!

Sophomore Year

- Update your Four Year Plan in College In Colorado.
- In the fall, attend college workshops and college fairs to learn more about colleges and find out just how many opportunities are available to you.
- Examine your interests, aptitudes, and activities and assess your strengths and weaknesses.
- Take the PSAT for practice.
- Take the PLAN test. The PLAN is an excellent evaluative instrument for college-bound sophomores which gives predictor scores for the ACT.
- Schedule your Sophomore Conference with your counselor to update your Four Year Plan and start discussing college plans.
- Explore summer opportunities (courses on college campuses, work experiences, volunteer opportunities, travel, etc.).

Junior Year

In the fall, attend college workshops and college fairs, get on mailing lists, and visit with college representatives who visit VRHS.

October

- Attend the College Fairs of Greater Denver and the preceding Out-of-State College Nights at area high schools. Over 250 colleges participate.
- Take the PSAT in October. This is strongly encouraged for all college-bound juniors and necessary for anyone to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship. Sign up in Counseling.
- Plan college visits over Fall Break.

December

- Schedule your Junior Conference. This appointment is extremely important and covers senior year course choices, graduation credits testing results, and the college search.

January

- Receive results of your PSAT. Read material sent with your scores and consult with your counselor to determine how you might improve. This can be excellent preparation for taking the SAT.

February

- Schedule and complete your Junior Conference with your counselor.
- Discuss post graduation plans and begin the formal college planning process.
- Review your transcript and credits. Consider what colleges would be a solid match, considering your academic abilities.
- Start developing a list of colleges that interest you.
- Research what entrance examinations are required for colleges you are considering and register for the SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests.
- Review application deadlines and procedures.

March

- Pre-register for your senior classes.
- Complete Teacher Recommendation Questionnaires (we suggest no more than two academic teachers) and approach them about writing your recommendations.
- Plan college visits over Spring Break.

April

- Attend a College Fair.

May

- Take AP exams if enrolled in AP classes.
- Take SAT Subject Tests if required by colleges of interest.
- Contact appropriate persons for ROTC scholarships and Academy appointments.
- Build a list of 5-15 colleges that meet your criteria.
- Plan for possible summer college visits.
- Complete the NCAA Clearinghouse Eligibility Form online at www.ncaaclearinghouse.net if you plan to participate in a Division I or II sport.
- Research military academies' application process, if interested.

June-August

- Attend college summer academic programs.
- Visit college campuses.
- Start working on your college essay.
- Work, travel, volunteer, or participate in other educational experiences.

Senior Year

September

- Meet with your counselor!
- Update Vista Ridge Plan with resume.
- Verify graduation credits and college entrance requirements.
- Review college choices and their application processes.
- Finalize teacher and counselor recommendations, if required by your chosen colleges.
- Review scholarship and financial aid information.
- Consider retaking the SAT, ACT, and/or SAT Subject Tests, if necessary.
- Meet with college representatives who visit VRHS.
- Complete admission applications and financial aid information.

- Check on military academy and ROTC deadlines, if interested.
- Note Early Decision and Early Action deadlines.

October

- Attend College Fairs and the preceding Out-of-State College Nights at area high schools.
- Meet with college representatives who visit VRHS.
- Complete Early Action/Early Decision applications.
- Begin researching scholarships. Utilize the scholarship listing in 'College In Colorado.'
- Complete and return the CSS Profile Form if your college requires it.

November

- Complete applications with January deadlines.

December

- Complete applications. **REMINDER:** Applications turned in after mid-December will not be processed until after January 1st.

January-February

- Have your parents complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Continue completing college applications, if you have not yet done so.
- Explore financial aid opportunities.
- Submit additional credentials to colleges (mid-year transcripts, new test scores, etc.), if requested.

NOTE: You may start receiving replies from colleges during this time period.

March-April

- Make final campus visits if needed.

May

- Notify colleges of your final decision by May 1st.
- Send tuition and housing deposits to college of your choice.
- Notify the Counseling Center of your plans.
- Request that your final transcript be sent to the college you have decided to attend. (This is done as part of your final senior check-out process.)
- Take AP exams if enrolled in AP classes.

and

- **GRADUATE!**

COLLEGE ADMISSION TRENDS

In order to be a savvy college consumer, you should examine the trends affecting college admissions at the start of the 21st century. First and foremost, colleges are receiving more applications (and more strong applications) than ever before. As a direct result, many colleges have become much more selective, to the point of denying admission to many academically solid students.

Why has this trend developed? A combination of factors are involved:

- You are part of a "baby boom" where the student population is expected to grow by 10% in the next decade.
- More students than ever are pursuing higher education, as our society has shown that a college degree provides greater benefits in terms of careers and lifestyles.
- More students with similar academic backgrounds and test scores are applying to the same top institutions, creating a lower chance of being admitted to these colleges and universities.
- The college application process has also become easier, thanks to the Internet and your "techno-savvy" generation.
- Second and third-tier institutions are overwhelmed with excellent applications, making their admission criteria more selective than in recent years. Similarly, state universities are raising their admission standards. Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado are examples.
- The media in our culture has created "name recognition." Students and parents often limit their searches to colleges that they are familiar with or that they know are selective.

Combine all these factors with the opportunity students and parents have to 'borrow funds' to cover college expenses, and you have a college admission process very different from that of your parents - one that is much more competitive, and subsequently requires more forethought on your part.

Remember that factoid from the beginning

With over 3,600 colleges to choose from, a PLAN needs to be formulated!

JUST WHAT ARE THE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR ANYWAY?

Each year, the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC) surveys colleges and universities to determine the top factors influencing admission decisions. According to the 2001 Admission Trends Survey, the following factors, in order of importance, were:

- Grades in College Prep Courses
- Admission Test Scores
- Grades in All Subjects
- Class Rank
- Essay/Writing Sample
- Counselor Recommendation
- Teacher Recommendation
- Interview
- Community Service
- Work/Extracurricular Activities

With these factors in mind, here are ways you can prepare yourself for the college application process.

Academics:

- Choose a rigorous course load. This means that you should seek out courses that challenge you. Colleges would rather see you get a lower grade in a more challenging course than go for the "easy A." But remember that the best scenario is good grades in challenging classes!
- Make sure that your courses are appropriate and in logical progression. Meet with your counselor to ensure you are on the right track.
- Get to know your counselor and teachers on a more individual basis. These are the people who will be writing your recommendations!
- Keep your best work. Colleges may offer you a chance to submit supplementary material that demonstrates your achievements.
- Establish good study habits. Grades in the academic core areas (English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language) are the best predictors of success in college.
- Read! Studies have shown that one of the best preparations for the college admission tests (SAT and ACT) is to read as much as possible.

Extracurricular:

- Find activities, both in and out of school that you enjoy and that provide an outlet for your non-academic side.
- Avoid being a "joiner." Colleges admire students who put time into one or two activities rather than students who put little time into many activities.

Personal:

- Start early.
- Be yourself.
- Ask the tough questions: Who am I? What do I want to do and be? Where do I want to be? How am I going to get there?

GETTING STARTED: Know Thyself

Just when you've started to get comfortable in high school, when you're finally an upperclassman, you have to make one of your biggest decisions yet: You have to choose that ONE school out of over 3,600 colleges and universities in the country as THE SCHOOL FOR YOU. Yep, that's intimidating. And whether your family has been through this before or not, it's a process unique to you.

So the first person you should probably have a sit-down, heart-to-heart conversation with is not your parents, your school counselor, or your best friend...it's you! You don't have to know what you're going to major in, or what you want to be when you grow up to start the college process, but you should have a general idea about who you are as an individual. **Without a sense of yourself and your needs, how can you possibly pick a college that's right for you?**

Activity #1: TIME FOR SOME SOUL-SEARCHING

There are no right or wrong answers to the following questions, but your answers may give you some surprising insight into that age-old question: Who am I?

1. GOALS: Think about where you are now, and where you want to be in the future.
 - What kind of person are you at this point in your life?
 - What kind of person would you like to become?
2. EDUCATION: This is the whole reason you're going to college, right?
 - What is your learning style?
 - What courses do you enjoy most and least in high school?
 - What do you choose to learn on your own?
 - Would you prefer to learn by listening? Or learn by discussing?
 - What books have had an impact on you?
3. ACTIVITIES & INTERESTS: Fortunately, college is not just academics.
 - If you went home tonight and your homework was miraculously done for the rest of the week, how would you spend your free time?
 - What activities have you wanted to try but haven't yet?
4. THE WORLD AROUND YOU: Your environment says a great deal about you as a person.
 - How are you most like and unlike each of your parents?
 - When and where do you feel your best?
 - What current local/national/global issues are important to you?
5. YOUR PERSONALITY: Think about how you view yourself, and how you think others view you.
 - Are you influenced by others? Or do you influence others?
 - What do you expect from yourself? How often do you meet these expectations?

Now analyze your answers. Are you:

- Introverted or extroverted?
- a doer or a thinker?
- logical or impulsive?
- independent or group-oriented?
- patient or impatient?
- ready for college? Or scared to death?

As you begin to define who you are as a student and a person, you will hopefully start to recognize certain colleges that fit your personality. And you may find that many schools could be a possible fit

ACTIVITY #2: VALUE-RATED

Below are a list of things that are important to college-bound students. Using initials, rate each item on the list in terms of your own priorities as Very Important (VI), Somewhat Important (SI), or Relatively Unimportant (RU). Remember, the idea here is to put down what you think, not what you think others think you should put down as your priorities.

- ___ Making a lot of money
- ___ Becoming an expert in something
- ___ Making new friends
- ___ Getting a well-paying job after graduation
- ___ Exploring new subjects
- ___ Becoming more independent
- ___ Getting away from home
- ___ Playing on a prestigious sports team
- ___ Learning more about who I am
- ___ Gaining self-confidence
- ___ Becoming recognized as exceptional in some way
- ___ Making a contribution to society
- ___ Making contacts for future employment
- ___ Living up to the expectations of family and friends
- ___ Surpassing the expectations of family and friends
- ___ Meeting new and different people
- ___ Becoming more sophisticated and worldly
- ___ Learning and gaining knowledge
- ___ Being able to be creative and try new things
- ___ Encountering a real challenge
- ___ Becoming more understanding of others

Now, look at the list above and identify all those items you have rated Very Important. Next to each of those items, write down something you have done or committed to in the past year that proves this item is or has been important to you. For example, if "Encountering a real challenge" received one of your top ratings, perhaps the supportive evidence would be that you chose a difficult elective or teacher or undertook a project that had little chance of success.

After trying this, examine your results. Was it easy or difficult to come up with examples to support your priority values? How many blanks did you come up with? A failure to find something you have done that would indicate a commitment to the priority does not mean it isn't important to you. It may mean, however, that there are other things taking up more of your time.

Now take a closer look at what you really value. As you begin to evaluate colleges and what they offer you, this effort will pay off; you'll know what your priorities are in choosing a college.

Return to your list from Activity #2. Identify the five most important statements on the list for you, then rank them from one to five below. Your absolutely top choice should be number one.

YOUR FIVE TOP VALUES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

What do your top values say about you?

If you were meeting with the Director of Admission at your top college, how would you market yourself using these values?

***These exercises are taken from Choosing a College: The Student's Step-by-Step Decision-Making Workbook by Gordon Porter Miller, The College Board, 1990**

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ACTIVITY #3: PERSONAL INVENTORY

NAME _____

My current grade point average is a _____ un-weighted and a _____ weighted.

My PSAT scores are: ____ Verbal ____ Math ____ Writing

My PLAN Composite score is: _____

My SAT scores are ____ Verbal ____ Math ____ year
____ Verbal ____ Math ____ year

ACT Composite ____ year
ACT Composite ____ year

My SAT Subject Test Scores are:

Subject	_____	Score	_____
Subject	_____	Score	_____
Subject	_____	Score	_____

I have taken the following accelerated or honors (S or H) courses:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I have taken these Advanced Placement courses:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Count the number of courses you have taken in the following areas:

English	_____	Social Studies	_____
Math	_____	Foreign Language	_____
Science	_____		

My Colorado Admission Index is a _____.

Based on my admission criteria, I think I should look at schools that are:

Most selective	_____	Selective	_____
Highly selective	_____	Less Selective	_____

I would like to look at schools that are:

Most Selective	_____	Selective	_____
Highly Selective	_____	Less Selective	_____

Compared to my high school program/experience, I am looking for a college academic atmosphere that is:

Rigorous	_____	Relatively easy	_____
Demanding	_____	Easy	_____

When I think about going to college, I dream about

_____.

What are your academic goals?

Short-term _____

Long-term _____

How important will financial aid be in your final decision about college?

Critically important _____

Somewhat important _____

Not at all _____

I would like to be considered for scholarships based on

My academic record _____

My athletic ability _____

My musical talent _____

My theatre ability _____

My activities/community service _____

ACTIVITY #4: WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A COLLEGE?

Put a check in the appropriate box next to all of the following personal criteria.

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	Will Not Accept
1. REGION (Consider Climate!)				
New England				
Middle Atlantic				
Southern				
Midwestern				
Rocky Mountain				
Pacific Coast				
Outside United States				
2. SIZE (Remember that 80% of private colleges have enrollments under 2,500 students)				
Small (Under 3,000)				
Medium (3,000 - 10,000)				
Large (10,000 - 20,000)				
Largest (Over 20,000)				
3. SETTING (What do you want to have access to?)				
Rural or small town				
Near a moderate/large city				
Near or in a major city				
4. DISTANCE FROM HOME (How often and easily do you want to come home?)				
Fewer than 2 hours				
2-3 Hours				
4-8 hours				
More than 8 hours				
5. TYPE OF INSTITUTION				
Public				
Private				
Religiously-affiliated				
Specialized (Art/Design/Technical)				
Liberal Arts				
Research University				
Undergraduate only				
6. SCHOOL CALENDAR				
Quarters				
Semesters				
Block Plan				
7. ACADEMICS				

Selectivity				
Faculty Quality (% with PhD's)				
Classes taught by Graduate Assistants				
Academic Facilities				
Average Class Size				
Faculty/Student Ratio				
Retention Rate (How many freshmen return for sophomore year)				
Graduation Rate				
8. PROGRAMS OF STUDY				
Business				
Communications				
Liberal Arts				
Teacher Education				
Engineering				
Fine/Applied Arts				
Health Professions				
Other Specific Major				
Internships available				
Honors Program				
Study Abroad				
Pre-professional				
9. ADVISING AND ASSISTANCE				
Freshmen Advising				
Learning Disabilities Support				
Career and Placement Center				
Counseling				
10. HOUSING				
Coed Residence Halls				
Single Sex Residence Halls				
Guaranteed On-campus Housing				
Other on-campus housing				
Off-campus housing				
Live at home				
11. COST PER YEAR				
Up to \$10,000				
\$10,000 - \$25,000				
More than \$25,000				
12. DIVERSITY				
Economic				
Racial				
Religious				
Geographic				

Gender				
Other_____				
13. SOCIAL LIFE, ACTIVITIES, AND PROGRAMS				
Active Fraternities and Sororities				
Bands				
Choirs				
Clubs, Organizations and Groups				
Community Involvement				
Drama and the Theatre				
Leadership Opportunities				
Speech and Debate				
14. ATHLETICS				
Recruited Athlete/Sport_____				
Division I				
Division II				
Division III				
Intramural Teams				
Club Teams				
15. CAMPUS SAFETY				

Now, rank your criteria in terms of importance.

Step 1. List your top ten Very Important criteria.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Step 2. In order of importance, choose your top three criteria for a potential college from the list in Step 1.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Step 3. Of your most important criteria, what would you like to have but could live without?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Step 4. Are there things the college must NOT have?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Step 5. Do you have questions about schools that you have been unable to answer?

COMPLETING AN ONLINE COLLEGE SEARCH: Taking it to the Web

Now that you have compiled a list of criteria to help you in creating your college list, it's time to utilize the Internet as a resource. At the end of this Planning Guide is a complete list of the many different web sites we utilize in the Counseling Center, and we encourage you to try several different sites as you research colleges.

Quick Start Guide for students within Falcon School District 49

Sign In

1. Go to www.CollegeInColorado.org.
2. In the Sign In section, enter your information:
 - Account Name: **fsd+your student number** (Example: fsd1234)
 - Password: **your student number** (Example: 1234)
3. Click **Sign In**.
4. Enter additional information as required, **check the box** if you agree to the privacy policy and terms of use of the site, then click **Next**.
5. Click on **Click here to continue** – and start using College In Colorado!

Start On Your Way Now!

Here are some of the helpful features you'll find at www.CollegeInColorado.org...

Career Planning

- Learn About Yourself – Discover your interests, work values, basic skills or suggested Career Clusters.
- Explore Careers – Browse careers using **Career Clusters** or use the **Career Finder** to find careers that might be right for you.
- Get a Job – Build your resume, create a cover letter, practice for a job interview, read career advice, or search job banks.

High School Planning

- Use **Your Plan of Study** to plan your high school courses and track your progress to graduation and college admission.
- What steps do you need to follow? Check the **High School Planning Timeline**.

College Planning

- Prepare for College – In **Getting Ready for College** learn the steps to get there and get ready.
- Test Prep – Practice and prepare for the ACT, SAT, or GRE and use the Vocabulary Builder to improve your word power.
- Explore Postsecondary Schools – Use the **College Matching Assistant** to see schools matching your needs.
- Explore Programs and Majors – Check out the programs and majors that match your career goals.
- Applications – Throw away your pen and **Apply to College** online.

Financial Aid Planning

- Financial Aid 101 – Follow the steps for assistance with paying for college.
- Financial Aid Calculators – Compare college costs with the **Financial Aid Award Estimator** and **College Savings Calculator**.
- Find Scholarships – Complete your profile in the **Scholarship Finder** to see matching scholarships.
- Build Your Financial Aid Plan – The **Financial Aid Wizard** allows you to calculate and plan virtually everything for school.
- Financial Fitness – Learn how to manage your personal finances successfully with Managing Your Money 101.

Your Portfolio

- Index page – Use the **ICAP Guideway** for your grade as your guide through CollegeInColorado.org.
- Your Profile > **Looking Ahead** – Consider your goals for this year and record your steps to achievement.
- College Planning Portfolio > **Postsecondary Plans** – Keep your college list in order and up-to-date.
- Career Planning Portfolio > **Work Experience** – Describe your job shadowing experiences and part-time jobs.
- Your Planning Milestones – See the milestones you still have to complete and track your progress along the way.

Search

The keyword search on the top of every page of CollegeInColorado.org finds anything and everything you need to know about career and education planning. Just type in a key word and **GO!**

ACTIVITY #5: YOUR PRELIMINARY COLLEGE LIST

Now that you have completed an online college search, examine the top 15 schools which most match your interests. List them below:

1. _____ State _____ Website _____
2. _____ State _____ Website _____
3. _____ State _____ Website _____
4. _____ State _____ Website _____
5. _____ State _____ Website _____
6. _____ State _____ Website _____
7. _____ State _____ Website _____
8. _____ State _____ Website _____
9. _____ State _____ Website _____
10. _____ State _____ Website _____
11. _____ State _____ Website _____
12. _____ State _____ Website _____
13. _____ State _____ Website _____
14. _____ State _____ Website _____
15. _____ State _____ Website _____

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?: Research, Research, Research

The next step in examining schools on your list involves research. This is the time to gather information about individual schools and see how they will meet your needs.

Online Research

The Internet is a powerful tool in your college search and application process, and often one of the best places to start. The 2008 Admission Trends Survey conducted by the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC) shows that 100% of the respondents (colleges) have a web site, and 91% provide an online application.

We encourage you to do your own web research, and visit the websites of the individual colleges you are considering. Some of the things you can do on a college's web site include:

- take a virtual campus tour
- read the student newspaper to discover what is happening on campus
- email professors in departments you are interested in
- ask questions of admission staff
- ask for applications and viewbooks to be mailed to your home

Many of the online college search sites have links to the colleges' websites. Link to them and

learn what you can about the schools through their webpages. Most colleges list their admission requirements, test requirements, degrees and majors offered, housing information,

cost and financial aid information, etc. Most schools also provide statistics about the average

or middle 50% SAT and/or ACT scores of the freshman class, and average or middle 50% HS

GPA's. This information is very important because it helps you rate your chances of admission.

Objective Guidebooks: Just the Facts

In addition to college websites, similar information can be found in a number of different resources available in the Counselors Center. Some good reference books are:

- the Orchard House series, which divides colleges by geographic regions,
- the College Board's College Handbook
- and Peterson's Guide to Colleges.

All of these resources provide objective and statistical information.

Subjective Guidebooks: Rankings and Opinions

Other resources provide opinions about colleges. You may want to check out

- US News and World Report Best Colleges
- 331 Best Colleges
- The Gourman Report
- Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges
- The Insider's Guide to the Colleges
- The Fiske Guide to Getting Into the Right College

Some of these books offer student perspectives and opinions, others rank different programs and fields of study at schools. It is important for you as the consumer to ask how they arrive at the rankings, rather than just look at how schools are listed.

People as Resources

- Your **counselor** is an excellent resource for learning about schools. Our counselors have helped many students through the process. Counselors at VRHS are often invited to visit college campuses and are happy to share information and their impressions with students.
- **Recent graduates of VRHS** are another good resource.
- **Current seniors** who are going through the college admissions process and visiting colleges are also a great resource as you try to gather your own information about schools of interest.
- **Teachers, parents and college alumni** are additional resources to investigate. Remember that everyone will have an opinion. The most useful opinions to you will be from people who know you well and know what you might like in a school.

ASSESSING YOUR CHANCES FOR ADMISSION: Am I Going to Get In?

A critical component of the college research and selection process is a realistic assessment of your chances to be admitted to a particular college or university. You want to be a good match academically, probably in the middle fifty percent or higher of their freshman class. If your admission statistics put you on the extreme high end or extreme low end of the class profile, you should carefully consider whether the college may be too easy for you academically or, on the flip side, may be too difficult for you. Examining a college's freshman class profile will also give you a fairly good indication of your chance of admission and help you decide if you want to apply to that school or not.

No matter what school you attend, you can count on spending a lot of time studying. It's up to you to determine whether you want to spend all your free time in the library, keeping pace with your peers, or if you want to balance your academics with participation in athletics, organizations, Greek organizations, and/or community service.

WHAT ARE COLLEGES LOOKING FOR?

Preparing for college starts as early as the ninth grade, if not earlier. Parents and students often ask counselors, "What does it take for me to get into (Fill in the Blank) College?" That is a difficult question to answer, as competition has intensified for a spot at certain colleges, and it is hard to ascertain what factors colleges will emphasize in a particular year. We do know that colleges, especially those which are most competitive in admissions, seek students who are academically prepared for the rigors of college-level courses, who can contribute to their campus community, and who have a clear sense of why they are a good match for that college.

Top Factors Influencing Admission Decisions

Each year, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) surveys colleges and universities to determine the top factors influencing admission decisions. According to the 2008 "State of College Admissions Report," the following factors, in order of importance, were:

1. Grades in college prep courses
2. Strength of curriculum
3. Admission test scores (ACT, SAT)
4. Grades in all courses
5. Essay or writing sample
6. Class rank
7. Student's demonstrated interest
8. Counselor recommendation
9. Teacher recommendation
10. Interview
11. Subject test scores (AP, IB)
12. Extracurricular activities

Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR)

Students and parents should also be aware that, in 2003, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education adopted the Higher Education Admission Requirements (HEAR) which are entry requirements for students planning to attend any of Colorado's public four-year colleges or universities. Private colleges and universities set their own admission standards, so students should contact those institutions directly for information regarding their enrollment policies. Additionally, public two-year colleges have open enrollment policies, meaning that students applying to these schools do not need to meet the following admissions requirements.

Students planning to attend a four-year college or university in Colorado will need to complete the following classes in order to fulfill the Higher Education Admission Requirements. Meeting the Higher Education Admissions Requirements does not guarantee admission to a four-year public institution. Colleges and universities may have additional requirements.

Academic Area*	2010+Graduates
English**	4 years
Mathematics (Must include Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or equivalents)***	4 years
Natural/Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-3 years based)***	3 years
Social Sciences (at least one unit of U.S. or world 3 years history)	3 years
Foreign Language	1 year
Academic Electives****	2 years

CCHE, CDE, and School Districts are developing standards for alternative demonstration of proficiency to be accepted in lieu of course completion. For course guidelines, see paragraph 4.01 of the Admissions Standards Policy, available online at <http://higher.ed.colorado.gov/Publications/Policies/Current/i-partf.pdf>.

****Two units of ESL English may count for HEAR requirements when combined with two units of successfully completed college preparatory English.**

*****College-preparatory ESL mathematic/science courses that include content and academic rigor/level comparable to other acceptable courses may satisfy HEAR requirements.**

***Acceptable Academic Electives include additional courses in English, mathematics, natural/physical sciences and social sciences, foreign languages, art, music, journalism, drama, computer science, honors, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate courses, and appropriate CTE courses.**

Four-Year Academic Plans and Recommended High School Programs of Study Each year, Vista Ridge counselors meet with students to develop and evaluate their Four-Year Academic Plans, keeping in mind each student's interests, goals, and dreams as they prepare for their postgraduate experience. To best prepare for the college admission process, we encourage students to pursue the sample academic programs below; however, be aware that completion of a sample program like these does not guarantee admission, especially at highly and most selective schools.

Examples of Most Selective Institutions

The Ivy League
Dartmouth
Duke
Georgetown
Stanford

Recommended Minimum Program of Study

English	4 years at the Honors/AP Level
Math	4 years at the Honors/AP Level
Social Studies	4 years, with AP when possible
Science	4 years at Honors/AP Level
Foreign Lang	3-4 years at the Honors/AP Level

Stanford offers the following advice on their website: "We expect applicants to pursue a reasonably challenging curriculum, choosing courses from among the most demanding courses available at your school. We ask you to exercise good judgment here, and to consult with your counselor, teacher, and parents as you construct a curriculum that is right for you. Our hope is that your curriculum will inspire you to develop your intellectual passions, not suffer from unnecessary stress. The students who thrive at Stanford are those who are genuinely excited about learning, not necessarily those who take every single AP, Honors, or Accelerated class just because it has that name."

Examples of Highly Selective Institutions

Colorado College
Emory University
Northwestern
Reed College
University of Michigan

Recommended Minimum Program of Study

English	4 years Honors/AP encouraged
Math	3-4 years Honors/AP encouraged
Social Studies	3-4 years Honors/AP encouraged
Science	3-4 years Honors/AP encouraged
Foreign Lang	2-3 years Honors/AP encouraged

From Colorado College: "We look at your transcript for information about your ability to excel in the classroom and thrive as a scholar on our campus. Your high school course grades, along with the rigor of your chosen academic program, give us insight into your academic preparedness for Colorado College. A successful applicant almost always has excelled in a rigorous college preparatory program including honors, AP, or IB courses, if offered. Most students will have completed at least 16 (but usually 20) solid academic courses by the time they graduate high school."

Examples of Very Selective Institutions

Colorado State University
Knox College
Southern Methodist University
University of Colorado-Boulder
University of Denver

Recommended Minimum Program of Study

English	4 years
Math	4 years
Social Studies	3-4 years
Science	3-4 years, depending on major
Foreign Lang	2 years minimum

From CU-Boulder: "Many factors are considered in evaluating your application for admission to CU Boulder. Although your academic performance in high school (your high school GPA and the quality of your course work) is the most important indicator of success, we also consider college entrance test scores (either the SAT or ACT), the trend in your grades, personal essays, and the extent to which the minimum academic preparation standards have been met."

Examples of Less Selective Institutions

Adams State College
 Fort Lewis College
 Metropolitan State College
 Northern Arizona University
 Western State College

Recommended Minimum Program of Study

English	4 years
Math	3 years
Social Studies	3 years
Science	2-3 years
Foreign Lang	1 year, per HEAR requirements

Vista Ridge counselors also offer the following guidance to help students prepare for the college admission process:

- **Choose a rigorous course load.** Seek out courses that are challenging. Colleges would rather see a lower grade in a more challenging course than the "easy A." But remember the best scenario is good grades in challenging classes.
- **Make sure your courses are appropriate and in logical progression.** Meet with your counselor often to ensure you are on the right track.
- **Enroll in four core classes** (English, social studies, math, science, foreign language) in each semester of your high school career.
- **Get to know your counselor and teachers on a more individual basis.** These are the people who will be writing your recommendations.
- **Keep your best work.** Colleges may offer you a chance to submit supplementary material that demonstrates your achievements.
- **Establish good study habits.** Grades in the academic core areas (English, math, science, social studies, and foreign language) are the best predictors of success in college.
- **Read!** Studies have shown that one of the best preparations for the college admission tests (SAT and ACT) is to read as much as possible.
- **Find activities, both in and out of school that you enjoy** and that provide an outlet for your non-academic side.
- **Go for quality rather than quantity.** Colleges admire students who put significant effort into one or two activities rather than students who put little time into many activities.

CHOOSING YOUR "FOUNDATION" SCHOOL: Your Most Important Task

Many students are tempted to start their college list with their "dream school"—the school they would love to attend, but that might be a long shot in terms of admission. We often hear students say, "Well, I'm applying to State U, but I don't really want to go there."

We recommend a different approach: your first priority should be finding one or two schools that you are sure you can get into—your foundation schools--and that you would be very happy to attend. For some students, this is the hardest school to find; for others, it's the easiest. But starting your college list with your "foundation" school allows you to build a list where, no matter what schools admit you, you should be happy with your final choice.

To find your "foundation" school, look for schools that meet your basic criteria, and where you easily fit the academic profile of students who attend that school. It should also be a school that will challenge you academically, and that offers majors that interest you. Remember, selectivity does not equal quality: in other words, just because it may be easier to get into a certain college does not mean that the education you'll receive there won't be strong. We'll say it again: there are over 3,600 colleges and universities in this country, and each one can offer a solid education to their students, regardless of how selective they are.

ACTIVITY #6: COMPARING YOUR CHOICES

Now is an excellent time to start comparing your colleges! Use the worksheet below to do just that.

COLLEGE NAME			
LOCATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distance from home Ease in traveling to/from Denver 			
TYPE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public or Private Religious Affiliation 			
UNDERGRADUATE ENROLLMENT			
ENVIRONMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Setting (Urban? Suburban? Rural?) Coed? Male? Female? Location & size of nearest city 			
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deadline Tests required Average test scores, GPA, rank Notification 			
ACADEMICS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your major offered Special requirements Accreditation Student-Faculty ratio Average class size 			
COLLEGE EXPENSES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tuition, Room, and Board Estimated Total Budget 			
FINANCIAL AID <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage receiving aid Scholarships available Required Forms 			
HOUSING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residence Hall Requirement Guaranteed Housing? Food Plan 			
FACILITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Recreationa Other 			
ACTIVITIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to get involved? Available clubs/organizations Greek Life Athletics, Intramural Sports 			

• Other			
OTHER CRITERIA YOU MIGHT HAVE			

ACTIVITY #7 MEET & GREET—VISITING with College Representatives at College Fairs and in the Post Graduate Center

Visits provide opportunities for:

- Receiving an application, viewbook, or other material
- Asking questions about admission, financial aid, academic programs, housing, etc.
- Finding out about interviews or receptions in the Colorado Springs area
- Meeting the admission counselor who may be reading your application
- Filling out an interest card so you will get on the mailing list

Try to learn what you can about a college before you meet with the representative, so that you can make good use of the limited time you may have with the rep. Some questions you may want to ask:

1. What is the campus like on weekends for students from out-of-state?
2. What research opportunities are available in my area of interest?
3. What other programs are available to students (study abroad, honors programs, internships, etc)?
4. Housing and transportation questions - requirements and availability of on campus housing, parking costs and availability, off campus housing opportunities, etc.
5. Questions about your particular field(s) of interest and study
6. What percentage of students live on campus?

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL: The Campus Visit

There is no substitute for seeing a college campus first-hand. Sure, viewbooks and web sites can give you a lot of information and glossy photos, but meeting professors, and seeing classrooms and residence halls, and eating the food—that's what gives you a true feeling of a college.

WHEN TO GO

A campus visit is informative any time, but it's best to see the school while it's in session and students are in classes. If you can only visit during the summer, on a weekend, or when the school is on a break, that's okay—just be prepared to visualize what the school looks like with students and professors in the classrooms and residence halls.

BEFORE YOU GO

Plan ahead! We recommend giving an admission office at least two weeks advance notice of your visit. Also, read up on the college and think about possible questions you'd like to ask.

You may want to do any of the following while you're visiting a college:

- Tour the campus, including residence halls
- Schedule an interview with an admission officer, if it is offered, or attend an information session
- Sit in on a class
- Meet with a professor in your interest area
- Meet with a coach if you're interested in participating in a sport
- Eat lunch or dinner in one of the cafeterias
- Spend the night in one of the residence halls with a current student host
- Attend a special event, like a lecture, play, or concert, if available
- Talk informally with current students to get their impressions

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

- Talk to as many students as you can and don't be bashful about asking questions.
- Prepare for your interview and take along your list of questions.
- Be on time!
- Take time to explore the campus on your own and absorb the atmosphere.
- Pick up a student newspaper to find out what the issues are on campus.

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

When you talk with your tour guide or other students, ask:

- What other colleges did you apply to?
- Why did you decide to attend this college?
- How many hours a week do you study? Is that typical here?
- Approximately how many students were in your freshman classes?
- Approximately how many students are in your current classes?
- Do many students go home on weekends?
- Are faculty members accessible outside of class?
- Is there easy access to computers? Where are they located?
- How easy is it to get the classes you want?

- What three things would you change about this college?
- What three things would you not change about this college?
- Where do students go to socialize?
- What is the surrounding town or city like?

In an interview or information session, you could ask:

- Does the college have academic programs that fit my interests?
- Will I have access to special equipment (such as an electron microscope) as a first-year student?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the college's advising system?
- How many students will there be in courses I'm likely to take my first year? Are those courses taught by professors or graduate students?
- Will there be any new programs or facilities in the next two years?
- What are the college's recent graduates doing now?

AFTER THE VISIT

Whether you're visiting just one campus, or doing a marathon trip across the country, write down your impressions right after you see a college! Make copies of our "Campus Visit Notes" form on the next page. Ask yourself:

- Were the people you met friendly? Did they answer your questions fully and candidly?
- Did the college offer the programs you're interested in?
- What do you think of the quality of instruction and the academic atmosphere?
- Were the students the kind of people you'd like to get to know?
- Did you like the social atmosphere?
- Would you be happy with this college as your "home" for four years?

WHAT IF YOU CAN'T VISIT A CAMPUS?

Sometimes a campus visit just isn't feasible. Don't worry! There are ways to get a feel for a specific college's atmosphere without setting a foot on campus.

Try these ideas:

- First, read as much as you can about that school. Read the school's viewbook and catalog, and read reviews of the college in *The Fiske Guide* or *The Insider's Guide*.
- Visit the college's web site. You'll be amazed at the depth of information available there.
- Ask questions of the admission officer at that college who works with applicants from Vista Ridge High School, either when they visit VRHS, or at a college fair, or by phone or email.
- Ask the college if they have current students who are willing to speak with prospective students via phone or email.

ACTIVITY #8: CAMPUS VISIT NOTES

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY _____ DATE _____

Rate each college from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent)

1. SIZE (Just right? Too big? Too small?)	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

2. **SETTING & LOCATION** (Did you like the environment? Is this part of the country comfortable for you?)

Comments: _____

3. ACADEMIC PROGRAMS	1	2	3	4	5
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

4. ACCESSIBILITY OF FACULTY	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

5. ACADEMIC FACILITIES (Labs, classrooms)	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

6. RESIDENCE HALLS AND CAFETERIAS	1	2	3	4	5
-----------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

7. **STUDENT BODY** (Did you feel comfortable among the students?)

Comments: _____

8. **ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT** (How competitive is the student body? Are students encouraged to meet with faculty?)

Comments: _____

9. **ACTIVITIES** (Is it easy to get involved? Are there clubs or organizations that you're interested in?)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

10. SUPPORT SERVICES (Career Planning? Academic Advising? Health Services?)

1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

11. ATHLETICS (Are the facilities accessible and open? Are there sports and/or intramurals available that you are interested in?) 1 2 3 4 5

Comments: _____

12. **CAMPUS** (Are the buildings and grounds in good repair? Is there any new construction going on?)

	1	2	3	4	5
--	---	---	---	---	---

Comments: _____

13. OTHER FACTORS OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU:

	1	2	3	4	5

	1	2	3	4	5
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

THE COLLEGE INTERVIEW: Making a Good Impression

How important is the interview? Although there is a difference of opinion on the impact of the interview on a student's admission, there is no question that an enthusiastic report by an interviewer is bound to help your application. If you fall into the middle group of applicants, the interview might be the one final "clincher" to secure your admission. Small and medium-sized schools continue to invite the interview, and there are still a few schools that require it before an admission decision will be made. Local alumni often conduct interviews with prospective students.

Call the Admission office for an interview appointment, often done while you are on campus for a tour, at least two or three weeks ahead. Ask what you need to bring with you to the interview.

Top 10 Things To Do in an Interview

- Arrive on time.
- Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake.
- Introduce your parents.
- Smile!
- Be comfortable, but not too comfortable.
- Take a list of questions with you.
- Speak directly to the interviewer.
- Open your mouth and talk.
- But don't forget to breathe!
- BE YOURSELF!

Other Important Interview Tips:

- Prepare for your interview! Read up on the college and compile an appropriate list of questions.
- First impressions are important, so dress appropriately. Think clean and comfortable.
- Be honest and open about your academic background and interests.
- Avoid monosyllabic answers.
- Send a Thank You note to your interviewer.
- Be prepared for a variety of questions, ranging from "Tell me why you're interested in our college" to "What current issues are important to you and why?" A typical interview offers you time to talk about yourself and your interests, and why you're interested in that particular college. It also offers time for you to get your questions answered.

POSSIBLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

- What are your reasons for going to college?
- If admitted to several colleges, how will you make your final choice?
- Describe your ideal college.
- What do you feel you can add to our college community?
- What three things do you want to emphasize on your application?
- What do you see as your academic strengths? Weaknesses?
- What is the most significant contribution you've made to your school or community?
- What extracurricular activities have been most important to you? Why?
- Who influences you the most and how?
- If you could change anything about your high school, what would you change?
- Let's discuss your views on politics/religion/other controversial issues.

LEARNING YOUR WAY AROUND THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

While there seems to be a great deal of emphasis on college entrance exams, they are only one of the many factors colleges look at in making their final decisions. Some of these tests are used in the admission process as indications of academic potential; some are used for educational placement; others are designed as preliminary opportunities to develop good test taking skills. Many students choose to retake some of these tests to enhance their scores. Be sure to find out which exams are required by the colleges you are considering. The following descriptions may be helpful in understanding more about college admission testing.

PLAN: The PLAN is a comprehensive assessment service designed to help tenth graders make academic and college plans, as well as practice for the ACT. All sophomores take the test in November or December. The PLAN consists of (1) a battery of four tests of educational development, (2) an interest inventory, (3) a study skills assessment, and (4) a questionnaire about students' educational and career plans, background, and special educational needs.

PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT): The PSAT is administered to interested juniors and sophomores in October. If you wish to be considered for the National Merit Scholarship and recognition, you must take the PSAT during your junior year. Students can register in Counseling Center.

SAT: The SAT measures verbal and quantitative (math) ability, as well as writing skills via an essay. It is administered periodically during the year at SAT test centers throughout the United States and is required by many colleges and sponsors of scholarship programs. We recommend that you take the SAT in the spring of your junior year and retake it, if necessary, in the fall of your senior year.

SAT Subject Tests: Subject Tests measure your knowledge and skills in a particular subject and your ability to apply that knowledge. Subject tests fall into five general areas: English, history and social studies, mathematics, science, and foreign languages. Some colleges, such as the University of California system, require subject tests. We recommend that you check individual college requirements for Subject Tests and plan appropriate times to take these tests. For example, if you are studying for an AP Biology test, it may be advantageous for you to take the Subject Test in Biology around the same time.

ACT: The ACT is more achievement-oriented than the SAT, measuring skills and knowledge in English, math, reading, and science reasoning. It is currently administered free of charge to all juniors at Vista Ridge High School in April, and is administered nationally on several other dates throughout the year. Like the SAT, it is required of applicants by many colleges and sponsors of scholarship programs. Most colleges accept either the SAT or the ACT. We recommend that you take this test in the spring of your junior year and retake it, if necessary, in the fall of your senior year. Some colleges require that you take the ACT with the optional Writing portion. The Writing portion is not offered during the April administration of the test.

Extended Time SAT & ACT: For students with documented learning disabilities, an extended time SAT and/or ACT is available. If a student is unable to complete the regular SAT/ACT in the three hours allotted and has a documented learning disability, he/she may apply for an extended time administration of either test. Students who may benefit from or qualify for this option should check with their counselor for information.

Advanced Placement (AP): A college may permit a new student to skip or even receive credit for an introductory course if he/she demonstrates readiness for an advanced course. One way to prove competence is by enrolling in AP courses in high school and achieving an acceptable score on the Advanced Placement Exam given by the College Board. These tests are graded from 1(low) to 5 (high), and many colleges grant advanced placement and/or credit for a score of 3 or better.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): Some colleges require the TOEFL of students whose first or native language is not English. This test either alone or in combination with the ACT and/or SAT will give colleges information needed to make admission decisions.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL TESTING

✂ Registration Forms are available online at www.collegeboard.com and the ACT online at www.actstudent.org.

✂ Be aware of deadlines!

✂ Test scores are returned approximately three to four weeks after a test date. You will receive your SAT, SAT II, and ACT scores either online or in the mail.

✂ Some colleges require a report of your scores directly from the testing agency. You may send your scores for free to four schools when you register for the SAT and ACT. Additional score reports cost up to \$9.50 for each school.

✂ If you are applying Early Decision or Early Action to any college, we recommend that you have your test scores directly reported to the college.

✂ Most colleges will take your highest SAT Verbal and Math score, and your highest ACT Composite (average) score.

ACTIVITY #9: NARROWING YOUR LIST

After doing your Internet college search, reading a couple guidebooks, talking with your counselor, parents, and friends, and comparing your college choices thus far--you may find that your college choices and ranking have changed. Perhaps you've found one school that you want to apply to and you're sure you'll get in. Perhaps you've discovered several schools that excite you, but you're very uncertain about your chance to be admitted.

A well-thought-out college list should include schools in each of the following categories:

- **Your Foundation School(s)** - A college or university that you are sure you can be admitted to, and you would be very happy attending.
- **Likely to be Admitted** - Your gpa, scores, and class rank fall within the average of students attending that school, but there is a small chance that you may not be admitted.
- **Not a Sure Thing** - Your gpa, scores, and class rank may be below the profile, or the college is highly selective.

Your College List Thus Far: The Frontrunners

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Remember, your college list may change several times. After you visit the campus, and talk with admission staff, current students, and professors, you may change your mind about a school. We encourage you to continue researching your college choices throughout the process, even after you have applied.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS: Blood, Sweat, and Tears...

College applications usually consist of a biographical/informational form to be completed by the student; academic information, including coursework, grades and transcript; activities and other involvement; teacher and counselor recommendations; essays and personal statements and an application fee.

Most colleges have their own applications which are generally available on the college's website. If you apply on-line, be aware of other supporting documents and information which you must send in separately. Often your application is incomplete and will not be considered unless all documents are received by the admission office. This may include official test scores, high school transcripts, and letters of recommendation.

Some colleges, mostly private, participate in the **Common Application**, which is a generic application which a student completes one time and sends to the institutions which participate in the Common Application. These applications are available through their website: www.commonapp.org. Be sure to check carefully for supplemental essays/materials required by the individual schools.

Deadlines

Application deadlines are critical in college admissions. Missing a deadline often means you have lost your chance to apply at all. Remember that the Counseling Center has its own deadlines you must meet as well, generally 3 weeks before your college's deadline. Since we must gather, complete and mail many supporting documents for each application, and many VRHS students are applying to schools at the same time, **we insist on at least 3 weeks in advance of your deadline.** The Counseling Center staff and counselors do not work when school is not in session, so extra time must be factored in around holidays and breaks.

Early Decision, Early Action and Regular Decision Applications

The use of multiple admission plans by colleges and universities often results in confusion and concern among students, parents, and high school counselors. In an effort to help reduce this confusion, the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC) has developed the following definitions of admission decision options.

Early Decision is the application process in which students make a commitment to a first-choice institution where, if admitted, they definitely will enroll. Students must withdraw all other applications as soon as they have been admitted. Should a student who applies for financial aid not be offered an award that makes attendance possible, the student may decline the offer of admission and be released from the Early Decision commitment. Talk this option over carefully with your parents and counselor if you are planning to consider an Early Decision application. Many Early Decision applications are due as early as November.

Early Action is the application process in which students make application to an institution of preference and receive a decision well in advance of the institution's regular response date. Students who are admitted under Early Action are not obligated to accept the institution's offer of admission or to submit a deposit until the regular reply date (not prior to May 1).

Restrictive Early Action is the application process where students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They are restricted from applying ED, EA, or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm. Two schools—Yale and Stanford—utilize this option.

Regular Decision is the application process in which a student submits an application to an institution by a specified date and receives a decision within a reasonable and clearly stated period of time, but not later than April 15.

Rolling Admission is the application process in which an institution reviews applications as they are completed and renders admission decisions to students throughout the admission cycle.

Wait List is an admission decision option utilized by institutions to protect against shortfalls in enrollment. Wait lists are sometimes made necessary because of the uncertainty of the admission process, as students submit applications for admission to multiple institutions and may receive several offers of admission. By placing a student on the wait list, an institution does not initially offer or deny admission, but extends to a candidate the possibility of admission in the future, before the institution's admission cycle is concluded.

Currently, all of the public colleges/universities in Colorado use rolling admission. Under rolling admission, if you are a strong candidate for a college and have met admission requirements, there is no reason not to send in your application early. Often your chances of admission and eligibility for particular programs are increased by applying as early as possible.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Early Application Programs

The advantage to colleges with early application options is that they often get a strong pool of early applicants who are either committing to attend or indicating a very strong interest in attending their school. In fact, some colleges are taking fairly large percentages of their freshman classes through their early programs. Students who apply under an early option sometimes have a better chance of admission as part of a smaller early applicant pool. Being accepted early can also alleviate the stress of the college application process much earlier in the school year. Disadvantages to students include completing campus visits, research, and applications early in the school year, and being ready to commit to one school through Early Decision. Early Decision is not for students who are unsure about how they will finance college (you will not be able to apply to other colleges and then compare financial aid packages), or who are still not sure that this one college is the best fit for him/her, or who had a weak junior year and may need a strong senior year to help their application.

APPLICATION PLANNING GUIDE

This section of the College Planning Guide is designed as a handy and easy reference to help in filling out your college and scholarship applications.

Listed below are some tips to keep in mind when completing your applications. Remember that it is extremely important to leave a favorable impression with the admissions office by sending them a well prepared application.

- **Apply early.** In general, the more selective the college, the earlier the deadline. Make sure you meet the deadline.
- **Neatness is important.** Many students type or word process their applications. You may want to make a "working" copy of your application before you fill out the original.
- **Spelling counts.** Spelling errors leave a very bad impression.
- **Be thorough and complete.** Rather than leave a question blank, indicate "not applicable".
- **Honesty is a virtue.** Don't pretend to be something you are not.
- **Colleges want to see your effort, not someone else's.** Prepare the application yourself. Colleges may become suspicious with a "too perfect" application or essay.
- **Be proud of your accomplishments and let them know about them.** This is not the time to downplay aspects of your life. Present yourself and your activities openly and honestly. Don't minimize or exaggerate.
- **Supplementary material should be submitted only if it is relevant or adds to your application.** Don't get carried away.
- **Let your uniqueness shine through.**
- **Your essay or personal statement is the key avenue to let the college see your individuality, maturity, and experiences.** Make the most of this opportunity.
- **Double check everything before you turn it in and save a copy of everything.**

ACTIVITY #10: APPLICATION WORKSHEET

Though applications vary, most applications will ask the same general information. If you know the following information, you should be able to complete almost any college application.

VISTA RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

6888 Black Forest Rd. Colorado Springs, CO 80923

Counselor's Name: _____ Phone /Ext.: _____

Full Name: _____ Class of: _____

Complete Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ SS#: _____ - _____ - _____

Home Phone: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Mother's Occupation: _____

Mother's College/Degree (if any): _____

Father's Name: _____

Father's Occupation: _____

College/Degree (if any): _____

Family Situation: If not with both parents, with whom do you make your permanent home? _____

Are parents separated? Yes /No

Divorced? Yes /No

Other: _____

Brothers and Sisters (first names/ages): _____

Previous Schools Attended Since 8th Grade

School Name	Location	Dates Attended
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Possible major or career plans: _____

Academic Information:

Grades: Unweighted GPA: _____ Class Rank: _____

Grades: Weighted GPA: _____ Class Rank: _____

SAT: Date taken/planned: _____ Scores: (V) _____

(M) _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Scores: (V) _____

(M) _____

SAT II: Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

ACT: Date taken/planned: _____

Composite Score: _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Composite Score: _____

AP Exams:

Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Date taken/planned: _____

Subject: _____ Score: _____

Senior Year Courses

1st Semester

2nd Semester

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

College Courses: (list any courses you have taken or are taking at a college or university)

Date Taken: _____

Course Title: _____

Institution: _____

Course Grade _____

Date Taken: _____

Course Title: _____

Institution: _____

Course Grade _____

Date Taken: _____

Course Title: _____

Institution: _____

Course Grade _____

Teacher Recommendations:

Teacher's Name: _____

Subject: _____

Date Requested: _____ On File in Post Grad Center? Yes No

Teacher's Name: _____

Subject: _____

Date Requested: _____ On File in Post Grad Center? Yes No

Essays or Personal Statements:

General Topic or Subject Content:

Rough Draft Date: Completed Date:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

ESSAYS AND PERSONAL STATEMENTS: Telling Your Story

Students often find the essay to be one of the most frightening parts of the college application. In order to ease your mind, most colleges do not expect you to create an exhaustive novel in your college essay. They simply want to know you better and discover your unique qualities. Yes, you do have unique qualities!

- When writing a personal statement, a short and original essay is desirable.
- If a choice of topics is given, choose a topic, make a list of ideas to be covered in the essay, develop an outline, and write a first draft.
- Be certain the personal statement is broken into paragraphs. One long paragraph does not look good in a personal essay.
- Vary the structure and length of your sentences to provide interest.
- Use intelligent sentences and common sense.
- Use your own style and write in a direct, conversational manner.
- Make certain you have a smooth transition from one idea to another and from one paragraph to another.

Take advantage of the opportunities your English class offers to work on essays, and ask your English teacher, counselor, and parents to help you. Finally, edit your work.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND EVALUATIONS: Your Reputation Precedes You

Some colleges either require or encourage that your application include two to three school-related recommendations. Two evaluations by academic teachers (often one closely related to your intended field of study), and an evaluation by your counselor will cover all of the necessary requirements. Occasionally you may want to also include a special recommendation from a coach, activity sponsor, or non-academic teacher who can provide an exceptional view of a particular area of interest or strength. If you are applying to public institutions in Colorado, and meet the admission index, recommendations are generally not necessary.

***No evaluations will be written about you without your expressed request. The Counseling Center provides standardized forms that you can give the teacher. You may also need to have them sign an individual college's special form at a later date. In order to have a greater level of rapport and understanding, you should take some time to sit down with a teacher and your counselor before you ask them to do an evaluation/recommendation. They will appreciate the opportunity to update their knowledge of your interests, activities, and educational goals. In asking teachers to write recommendations, you should ask those for whom you have accomplished positive outcomes and who also know you on a more personal level.

Recommendations can give the college admissions office a more complete view of you in such areas as academic potential, personal character, leadership, motivation, self discipline, and interpersonal skills. If you don't feel comfortable asking a teacher for an evaluation, it may be best not to do so; but now is the time to begin to develop a stronger bond with at least one of your teachers. **You will be amazed at the overall benefits this type of relationship can bring!**

FINANCING YOUR EDUCATION: Show Me the Money!

One of the major hurdles in the college application process is financial aid. With the cost of funding a college education high and getting higher, many families are understandably concerned about how to swing that expense for their children. However, do not eliminate a college strictly on cost alone until you have applied for assistance and been told how much financial aid you will be receiving.

The financial aid office of the college you are interested in can also provide you with valuable information, and you should contact them about your special needs and concerns.

NEED BASED AID

Most students rely on federal programs for funding and that aid is based on evidence of financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

So, how do you get started? In order to receive financial aid, you must apply each year you are in college. If you don't think you qualify, try anyway. You may have more options than you think. You will be ahead of the game if you collect your income tax information throughout the year so it can be compiled and ready right after January 1.

STEP 1

Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The FAFSA will determine how much money you and your family must contribute each year for your education. Some schools require you to fill out their own application. Check with each school you are considering to find out what they require. Both the student and parent must apply for a PIN number prior to completing the FAFSA. You can do this at www.pin.ed.gov.

NOTE: Some colleges also require families to complete the CSS Profile. The Profile is available online at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/>.

STEP 2

Check out as many sources as you can find for scholarships. Your counselor and College in Colorado are excellent resources. **NOTE: These financial aid resources are free; do NOT pay for this information.**

STEP 3

Complete and submit the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1 of the year you plan to attend school.

STEP 4

Your FAFSA will be evaluated using a standard formula that takes into account you and your family's income, assets, and other special circumstances. This need analysis will determine the amount you and your family will be expected to contribute for your education. Your NEED is the difference between the cost of your education and your family's contribution.

Say your EFC is \$5,000. At a college with a total cost of \$8,000, you'd be eligible for up to \$3,000 in financial aid. At a college with a total cost of \$25,000, you'd be eligible for up to \$20,000 in aid. In other words, you'd be contributing the same amount at both colleges.

STEP 5

You will receive electronically a Student Aid Report that lists all the information you provided on the application. Be sure all information is correct and send corrections back to the processor.

STEP 6

Your school's financial aid office will receive the results of the FAFSA analysis. If you qualify for aid, you will receive an award package detailing the types and amounts of financial aid for which you are eligible.

STEP 7

When you receive your financial aid packages, consider your options carefully. When you have made your decision, reply to that school by their deadline. Don't hesitate to call your school's financial aid office if you have questions.

Need-based aid packages that colleges offer students may include a combination of three types of financial aid:

Loans : These may be federal, state, or institutional, and interest rates are usually low. Repayment may not start until after graduation depending on whether it is a student loan or a parent loan.

Grants: These are usually gifts or aid in the form of tuition and/or fee reduction.

Work Study: The college will provide the student with a job on campus to earn money to help defray costs. These jobs usually pay minimum wage, have limitations on working hours, and require that the student apply and be accepted for a particular work-study placement.

Amounts of Need-Based Aid - The package may meet all or part of the need as computed by the FAFSA and/or CSS Profile. While most colleges will try to meet a high percentage of your need, the packages from different schools may vary. You will want to consider all your options carefully.

Federal Programs - Most of the federal money that is available for higher education assistance is disseminated directly by the college. The PELL GRANT is a major exception, however, and is a direct federal entitlement program.

Several pointers:

- If you are curious about your level of possible need, you can use a need estimator at www.fafsa4caster.org.
- Apply early. Most aid is awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Print a copy of every form you complete.

- If there is no way your taxes can be filed right after January 1, you are allowed to send an estimate as long as you can verify those figures if asked at a later date.
- Families who cannot qualify for financial aid based on the FAFSA can **usually** get loans.
- Putting savings in your student's name **can** affect need. If that is the case in your family, ask your college what happens after the money is spent.

APPEAL PROCESS

The appeal process is your opportunity to present additional information that may not have shown up in the FAFSA. For example, you may have experienced recent changes in your finances related to the economy. You must work with each college's financial aid office individually if you are appealing your financial aid package.

NON-NEED OR MERIT-BASED FINANCIAL AID

Scholarships, grants, and financial aid that are non-need based are divided into two major categories: Talent Based Scholarships and Private Scholarship Programs.

TALENT-BASED SCHOLARSHIPS: These scholarships are usually given by the college as an inducement or reward for demonstrated or proven talents. The most common ones are academic, athletic, and artistic/musical scholarships. You typically have to continue to participate in these areas during college to maintain the scholarship.

Applying for Talent-Based Scholarships: Inquiries regarding talent scholarships may go through the respective departments at the college of your choice or the admission office itself. The college's financial aid office can be of help in contacting the appropriate individuals. You will want to receive written confirmation of scholarship awards prior to making a final choice of colleges.

PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS: A large number of community, religious, professional, and ethnic groups sponsor scholarship programs. Some may have special qualification requirements, restrictions on fields of study or particular institutions, and/or requirements that the student or parents be members of a certain group. You should check the eligibility requirements and stipulations carefully.

Most of these scholarships have their own forms and are available from the group offering the scholarship. Deadlines vary a great deal and most are announced and have deadlines early in the calendar year.

There are several scholarships available specifically to Colorado.

THE BOETTCHER SCHOLARSHIP awards Colorado students who meet the following criteria with a full-ride scholarship to any of Colorado's colleges or universities. Students are recommended for the scholarship by their counselor. Students must:

- ③ Be seriously interested in attending college in Colorado
- ③ Rank in the top 5% of the senior class
- ③ Have a strong community service and leadership record
- ③ Score 1200 or higher on the SAT; 27 or higher on the ACT

Other Ways to Reduce Your College Cost

Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE): WUE is a program through which students in participating states may enroll in designated two-year and four-year institutions and programs in participating states at a special, reduced tuition level. Tuition for WUE students is the regular in-state tuition plus 50 percent of that amount. In all programs, the cost to WUE students is substantially less than non-resident tuition. Students do not need to demonstrate financial need to receive the WUE tuition benefit. WUE participating states are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. There are many restrictions and limitations in the WUE program, so we recommend that you get updated information at www.wiche.edu/sep/wue.html.

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC): ROTC is offered through all four military branches (Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy). Students who are interested in a career in the military after college will take required military science courses, in addition to their regular college courses, and will benefit from scholarships offered by ROTC. Information on all four military branch ROTC programs is available in the Post Graduate Center.

THE FINAL CHAPTER: Making Your Decision

Senior year tends to fly by pretty quickly, and as the snow starts to melt and the trees start to bud, your acceptance letters will come in the mail. You hopefully have several colleges to which you have been accepted. Congratulations!

Here are some final tips to help you make a decision you're happy with:

- If you haven't visited your college choices yet or need to take a second (or third) look, now is the time to go.
- Talk again with your parents, and current students and/or recent graduates at the colleges you are considering. Talk with your counselor and teachers and ask what they think of the fit.
- Discuss financial aid packages to determine what your best value is.
- Go back and look at your values and criteria lists to remind you why you applied to these schools in the first place.
- Then trust your good judgment and make a decision!

May 1st is what is known as the Candidate Reply Date. Do not assume that this date is flexible! If you do not commit to a college by that date, you may lose the chance to do so. Typically, committing to a college requires a tuition deposit of \$100 to \$300. You should also complete each form the college sends you, including financial aid forms and documents.

Navigating the Wait List

If you have been wait listed at a college, you should protect your own interests by ensuring that you have committed to a college by May 1st, as the other college may not let you know if you are off the wait list until after that date. If it is truly your first choice, you may want to send a letter to the admission director stating your interest. You may also want to include any new information, such as recent grades, impressive school work, or new recommendations.

It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over...

Now that you've made a decision, don't give in fully to senioritis! Colleges have been known to withdraw their offers of admission upon receipt of final grades, so don't let up.

But you can take time to congratulate yourself. You were accepted to college, made it through one of the biggest decision-making processes of your life, and are now ready to move on to one of the most fun and exciting phases of your life.

Remember to thank those who supported you throughout the process: your parents, teachers, counselor, and friends. And remember to enjoy your last few weeks of high school!

SCHOLARSHIP RESOURCES

BROKESCHOLAR.COM

www.brokescholar.com

Search engine of more than 850,000 local, state and national scholarships and grants. Identifies scholarships based on academics, community service activities, talents and interests.

CAPPEX

www.cappex.com

Search engine of colleges and scholarships tailored to students' individual needs. Also includes a "Cappex for Counselors" section.

CAREERS AND COLLEGES

www.careersandcolleges.com

Free scholarship search of more than 1.7 million scholarships worth over \$7 billion.

CAREER ONE STOP

www.acinet.org/acinet/scholarshipsearch/ScholarshipCategory.asp?searchtype=category&nodeid=22

Scholarship search database of more than 5,000 scholarships, fellowships, loans and other financial aid opportunities.

COLLEGEANSWER.COM

www.collegeanswer.com

Provided by Sallie Mae, gives families, children and school counselors information on how to find scholarships and navigate the financial aid process.

COLLEGE BOARD SCHOLARSHIPS & AID

www.collegeboard.com/student/pay/scholarships-and-aid/index.html

Includes information on where the college scholarships are, how to apply for scholarships, a free scholarship search engine.

COLLEGES, COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID

www.college-scholarships.com

Free college scholarship and financial aid searches, SAT and ACT test preparation tips and more.

COLLEGEDATA.COM

www.collegedata.com

Provides assistance for applying for college admission, selecting a college, scholarship search engine and cost calculator.

COLLEGESCHOLARSHIPS.COM

<http://2010.CollegeScholarships.com>

Includes a list of currently open scholarships, as well as a free online searchable database. Also breaks scholarships down by topics.

COLLEGESCHOLARSHIPS.ORG

www.collegescholarships.org

Allows students and counselors to browse scholarships by category. Also provides resources regarding how to write scholarship essays and more.

FASTAID FREE SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH

www.fastaid.com

The largest and oldest private-sector scholarship database, with 20 years of scholarship research, constantly updated.

FASTWEB

www.fastweb.com

Includes tools to help students search for college scholarships by interest. Allows students to search, find and apply for scholarships.

FINAID

www.finaid.org/scholarships/

Links to a free scholarship search engine, but also provides list of less commonly found scholarships.

FREE-4U.COM

www.free-4u.com

A national database of scholarship listings includes scholarship lists based on majors, religion, athletics, minorities, state, military, Greek life and more.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

FINANCIAL AID

www.iefaf.org

Financial aid, college scholarship and grant information for U.S. and international students wishing to study abroad.

MEXICAN AMERICAN LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND

http://maldef.org/leadership/scholarships/2008_Scholarship_List.pdf

Extensive list of scholarships that may not inquire about immigration status or require a valid Social Security number.

MERITAID.COM

www.meritaid.com

A comprehensive listing of merit scholarships and academic scholarships from colleges and universities across the United States.

NACAC FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES

www.nacacnet.org/StudentResources/OnlineStudentResources/Pages/FinancialAidResources.aspx

The National Association for College Admission Counseling provides a list of resources regarding how to pay for a college education, as well as links to specific scholarships and scholarship databases.

NEXT STUDENT

www.nextstudent.com/directory-of-scholarships

Includes a directory of scholarships based on college majors, skills, interests, ethnic and racial background, religious affiliation and more.

PETERSON'S PAY FOR SCHOOL

www.petersons.com

Provides a free, searchable scholarship and grant database.

SCHOLARSHIPS.COM

www.scholarships.com

Students can search for state, local, and national scholarships and can review results by deadline, dollar amount and more.

SCHOLARSHIP AMERICA

<http://scholarshipamerica.org>

Provides information on currently open scholarships based on their availability to the public or special-interest groups.

HUNTER'S ABRIDGED COLLEGE REFERENCE BOOK BIBLIOGRAPHY

Excerpted from 14-page annotated bibliography of recommended college reference books

COMPREHENSIVE, OBJECTIVE COLLEGE "PHONE BOOKS"

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, Barron's Educational Series, Hauppauge, NY, 2000. CD-ROM included in new 24th edition. Index of majors, college admission selector, state lists popular features. College Admissions Data Handbook, Wintergreen Orchard House, Riverside Publishing, Itasca, IL 2000. Four comprehensive regional editions, bound or looseleaf on heavy paper. Pricey, but best resource. The College Catalog, Kaplan Educational Centers, Newsweek, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 2000. Full-page descriptions for 1100+ colleges, plus guidance counselor survey suggestions. 4th edition. The College Handbook, College Board, New York, NY, 2000. 3600+ two-year and four-year colleges, indexes by size, type, religion, sports, early plans. Great introduction, CD-ROM included, venerable. Peterson's Competitive Colleges, Peterson's Guides, Princeton, NJ, 2000. Profiles nearly 400 colleges, overview of paying for college, admissions process. Good starting place for high achievers, no ads.

NARRATIVE, SUBJECTIVE COLLEGE GUIDEBOOKS

Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools You Should Know About Even If You're Not a Straight-A Student, Loren Pope, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 2000. Required Reading preface is must reading, newly revised 2nd edition adds Agnes Scott, Ursinus, Wabash, drops Bard, Franklin & Marshall, Grinnell. Cool Colleges for the Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming, and Just Plain Different, Donald Asher, Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, CA, 2000. Great new book of "schools where you'll be challenged and inspired" includes narrative profiles of 30+ distinctive colleges, brief paragraphs on many more. The Fiske Guide to Colleges, Edward Fiske, Three Rivers Press, New York, NY, 2000. Most widely respected and accepted book in growing category began life as controversial NY Times Guide. Guide to the Best Colleges in the U.S., Kaplan Educational Centers, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 2000. Clever titles for college groupings, brief essays on 170+, third edition of popular new book. The Hidden Ivies: Thirty Colleges of Excellence, Howard Greene and Matthew Greene, Greenes' Guides, Cliff Street Books, HarperCollins Publishers, New York, NY, 2000. Father-son consultant team. The Insider's Guide to the Colleges, Yale Daily News staff, St. Martin's Griffin, New York, NY, 2000. Written by students, excellent "College Spectrum" introduction. Breezy, upbeat tone, good Fiske complement. 100 Colleges Where Average Students Can Excel, Joe Anne Adler, Arco, Macmillan, New York, NY, 1997. Average defined as C grades, 950-1050 SAT or comparable ACT. Two-page profiles, great resource.

PRELIMINARY COLLEGE LIST-BUILDER BOOKS

College Admissions Index of Majors and Sports, Wintergreen Orchard House, Riverside Publishing, Itasca, IL, 2000. Very useful and comprehensive index for both majors and sports, great companion volume. The College Finder: Choosing the School That's Right for You, Steven Antonoff, Fawcett Columbine Book, Ballantine Books, New York, NY, 1999. Recently updated book of lists in ten category groups. Index of Majors and Graduate Degrees, College Board, New York, NY, 2000. Very popular resource, but carefully watch the C,A,B,M,D abbreviations after each college. Brief major descriptions included. Rugg's Recommendations on the Colleges, Frederick E. Rugg, Rugg's Recommendations, Fallbrook, CA, 2001. Great brainstormer, grouped alphabetically by major, 18th edition from former counselor.

CAMPUS VISIT, COLLEGE INTERVIEW BOOKS

Campus Pursuit: How to Make the Most of the College Visit and Interview, G. Gary Ripple, Octameron Associates, Alexandria, VA, 2000. Excellent short booklet from Lafayette, William & Mary dean. Peterson's Guide to College Visits, Peterson's, Princeton, NJ, 1999. New second edition is much improved, presents campus visit information on 600+ colleges including quick facts, travel, airports, lodging, etc. Road Scholar: An Investigative Journal for the College-Bound Student, Risa Elkind Nye, No Flak Press, Oakland, CA, 1996. Excellent spiral-bound notebook with journal prompts from Bay Area counselor. Visiting College Campuses, Janet Spencer and Sandra Maleson, Princeton Review, Random House, New York, NY, 2000. Good planner with detailed maps, mileage, directions, B & B ideas for 250+ schools.

INTERNET, WORLD WIDE WEB RESOURCE BOOKS FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION

College.Edu: On-Line Resources for the Cyber-Savvy, Lisa Guernsey, Octameron Associates, Alexandria, VA, 2000. Cleverly noted as Version 4.0. Very comprehensive, under 150 pages, best buy at \$8.

How to Get Into the School of Your Dreams Using the Internet and Online Services, Michael Wolff, Wolff New Media, New York, NY, 1996. Great introduction, helpful resource, first book in new category.

The Internet Guide for College Bound Students, Kenneth E. Hartmann, College Board Publications, New York, NY, 1998. Excellent resource from former College Board technology guru, new 2nd edition.

Researching Colleges on the World Wide Web, Kerry Cochrane, Franklin Watts, Grolier Publishing, Danbury, CT, 1997. Loyola University of Chicago reference librarian, many sample web pages

HOW COLLEGES ADMIT STUDENTS, "WHO GETS IN" BOOKS

Behind the Scenes: An Inside Look at the Selective College Admission Process, Edward B. Wall, Octameron Associates, Alexandria, VA, 2000. Great, concise resource from former Amherst dean.

Opening College Doors: How to Make the Admissions Process Work for You, Pat Ordovensky and Robert Thornton, USA Today, Harper Perennial, New York, NY, 1992. Comprehensive case-by-case review of five fictitious college applications. Great admissions "case study" program ready to go for groups.

Playing the Selective College Admissions Game, Richard Moll, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 1994. Updated edition of classic work first published in 1979. First chapter depicts committee at work.

Questions and Admissions: Reflections on 100,000 Admissions Decisions at Stanford, Jean H. Fetter, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1995. Eloquent retrospective from widely respected former Stanford dean of undergraduate admission, very instructive regarding all the "most selectives."

COLLEGE ADMISSION STRATEGY BOOKS

The College Admissions Mystique, Bill Mayher, Noonday Press, New York, NY, 1998. Great advice and agenda-setter from respected college counselor retired from high-pressure Northeast prep schools.

College Match: A Blueprint for Choosing the Best School for You! Steven R. Antonoff and Marie A. Friedemann, Octameron Associates, Alexandria, VA, 1999. Excellent booklet, great tone and advice.

College Planning for Dummies: A Reference for the Rest of Us! Pat Ordovensky, IDG Books Worldwide, Foster City, CA, 1999. Poor title, but great icons, cartoons. Late author was USA Today writer.

The Complete Idiot's Guide to College Planning, O'Neal Turner, Alpha Books, Macmillan USA, Indianapolis, IN, 1999. Newly updated and revised edition from respected Culver Academies dean is very helpful.

The Fiske Guide to Getting Into the Right College, Edward B. Fiske and Bruce G. Hammond, Times Books, Random House, New York, NY, 1999. Includes brief capsules of colleges grouped with peers, several Rugg's-like college lists. Excellent advice throughout, new title updates Fiske's 1988 book

How to Get Into the Top Colleges, Richard Montauk and Krista Klein, Prentice Hall Press, Paramus, NJ, 2000. Very comprehensive new resource runs 600+ pages, helpful chapter on British U. admission.

Looking Beyond the Ivy League: Finding the College That's Right for You, Loren Pope, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 1995. Best book on the market in any category! Sage consultant offers wisdom. 20 Myths.

COLLEGE ESSAY AND APPLICATION BOOKS

College Applications and Essays: What to Say and How to Say It - In 10 Easy Steps! Susan Drachman Van Raalte, Arco Book, Macmillan, New York, NY, 1997. Recent fourth edition under new title. First published as Apply Yourself! Understanding the Questions, Recycling Your Essays, Electronic Apps.

Do It Write: How to Prepare a Great College Application, G. Gary Ripple, Octameron Associates, Alexandria, VA, 1999. Excellent compact booklet under 50 pages. Seventh edition, great value.

The College Application Essay, Sarah Myers McGinty, College Board, New York, NY, 1997. Excellent book includes detailed analysis of 11 essays, 50 sample questions, presents six steps in writing. Third ed.

Essays That Will Get You Into College, Amy Burnham, Daniel Kaufman, and Chris Dowhan, Barron's Educational Series, Hauppauge, NY, 1998. Half "essays, graded and ranked," half essay advice.

PARENTS GUIDEBOOKS TO COLLEGE ADMISSION

College Admissions: A Crash Course for Panicked Parents, Sally Rubenstone and Sidonia Dalby, Arco Book, Macmillan, New York, NY, 1998. Excellent resource, revised edition from Smith College team.

The College Guide for Parents, Charles J. Shields, College Board, New York, NY, 1994. Retired Chicago area public school counselor, very good resource, informative, reassuring tone. Phi Beta Kappa list.

50 College Admission Directors Speak to Parents, Sandra F. MacGowan and Sarah M. McGinty, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, NY, 1988. Not updated since, many have moved, but still great advice.

Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years, Karen Levin Coburn and Madge Lawrence Treeger, Adler & Adler Publishers, Bethesda, MD, 1997. Recently revised and updated third edition with new subtitle. First half discusses what to expect, second half covers adjustment.

CREDITS, BACKGROUND

Thanks to Borders Books, Barnes & Noble Books, Sam Weller's Books, and to the University Bookstores in Madison, WI and in Salt Lake City, UT for allowing me to consult their books when compiling and updating this resource. Please direct all correspondence, including factual corrections, suggestions for future updates, and the like to me at Rowland Hall-St. Mark's School, 843 Lincoln Street, Salt Lake City, UT 84102 (801) 355-7494, ext. 316. brucehunter@rowland-hall.org www.rowland-hall.org The complete 14-page annotated bibliography can be found on the school website and includes more titles in each category, fifteen book categories not presented here, and the names, addresses, and telephone numbers, where available, for the publishers of all books recommended. Thank you. 7/2001

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TABLE 1: Commission's Admission Standards For First-Time Freshmen

	SAT range	400	500	550	610	690	750	800	840	880	930	970	1010	1050	1080	1120	1160	1200	1240	1280	1310	1350	1400	1440	1490	1550	1600
	ACT	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
Rank	GPA																										
0-1	0-1.3	45	47	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	93	95	97
2-3	1.4-1.5	49	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	67	69	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	97	99	101
4	1.6	51	53	55	57	59	61	63	65	67	69	71	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	99	101	103
5-6	1.7	52	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	100	102	104
7-8	1.8	54	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	102	104	106
9-10	1.9	56	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	104	106	108
11-12	2.0	58	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	103	106	108	110
13-15	2.1	60	62	64	66	68	70	72	74	76	78	80	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	103	105	108	110	112
16-18	2.2	61	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	109	111	113
19-22	2.3	63	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	111	113	115
23-26	2.4	65	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	113	115	117
27-30	2.5	67	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	115	117	119
31-34	2.6	69	71	73	75	77	79	81	83	85	87	89	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	114	117	119	121
35-38	2.7	70	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	93	95	97	99	101	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	118	120	122
39-43	2.8	72	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	95	97	99	101	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	117	120	122	124
44-48	2.9	74	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	97	99	101	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	117	119	122	124	126
49-53	3.0	76	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	99	101	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	117	119	121	124	126	128
54-58	3.1	78	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	101	103	105	107	109	111	113	115	117	119	121	123	126	128	130
59-62	3.2	79	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	102	104	106	108	110	112	114	116	118	120	122	124	127	129	131
63-67	3.3	81	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	104	106	108	110	112	114	116	118	120	122	124	126	129	131	133
68-72	3.4	83	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	103	106	108	110	112	114	116	118	120	122	124	126	128	131	133	135
73-76	3.5	85	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	103	105	108	110	112	114	116	118	120	122	124	126	128	130	133	135	137
77-81	3.6	87	89	91	93	95	97	99	101	103	105	107	110	112	114	116	118	120	122	124	126	128	130	132	135	137	139
82-85	3.7	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	111	113	115	117	119	121	123	125	127	129	131	133	136	138	140
86-89	3.8	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	113	115	117	119	121	123	125	127	129	131	133	135	138	140	142
90-92	3.9	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	115	117	119	121	123	125	127	129	131	133	135	137	140	142	144
93-100	4.0	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110	112	114	117	119	121	123	125	127	129	131	133	135	137	139	142	144	146

TABLE 2: Index Score and Eligibility

Adams State College*	80
Colorado School of Mines	110
Colorado State University	101
Colorado State University-Pueblo	86
Fort Lewis College	92
Mesa State College*	85
Metropolitan State College**	76
University of Colorado at Boulder	103
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs	92
University of Colorado at Denver	93
University of Northern Colorado	94
Western State College of Colorado	80

* Applies to students admitted to four-year programs only.

** Applies to students 19 years old or younger.