

COBRA COLLEGE CAMP



**LIMITED SPACE
AVAILABLE!**

3 Exciting and Informative Sessions!

Introduction to the Application Process

(including College Essays, Resumes, the College Search, After You Submit, Financing Your Education)

ALL SENIORS & PARENTS INVITED - No Registration Required
Saturday, September 9th, 9am-12pm

Common App, SSAR/Spark, College Essays

(Presentations in Rotation - 1 hour for each topic)

SENIORS ONLY - Bring Your Chromebook - Registration Required
Choose ONE of the following times (each limited to 90 seniors)

Wednesday, September 20th, 3pm-6pm OR

Saturday, September 30th, 9am-12pm OR

Saturday, October 14th, 9am-12pm

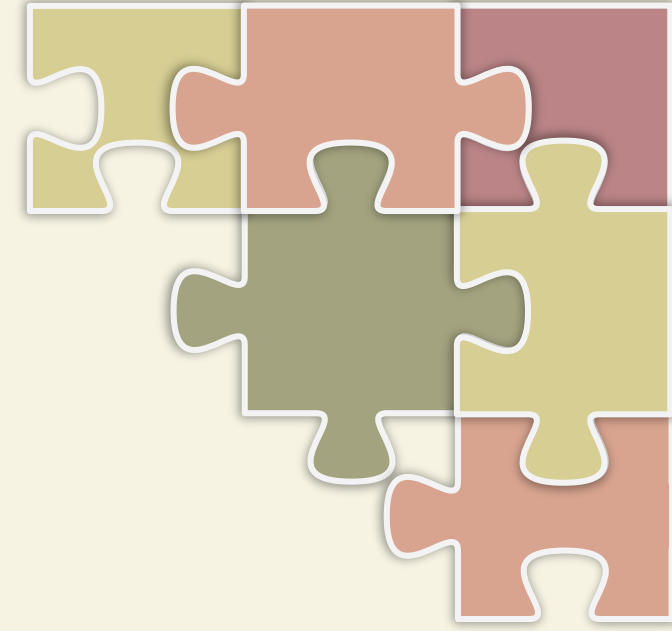
Bright Futures and FAFSA

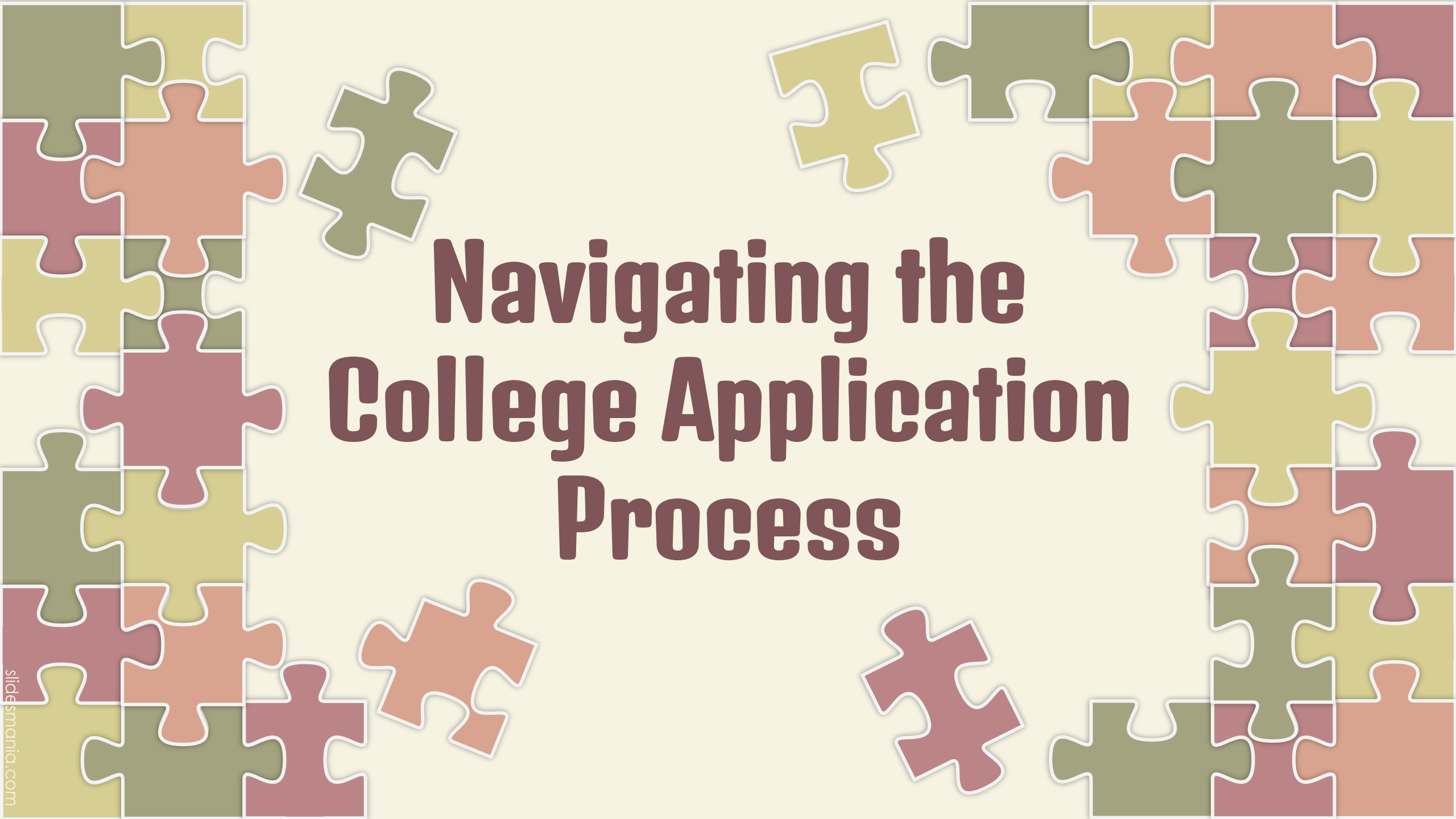
(Experts will be here to answer your questions and guide you in the process)

ALL SENIORS & PARENTS INVITED - No Registration Required
Saturday, October 21st, 9am-12pm

REGISTER NOW

Reservations required for 9/20, 9/30, 10/14
ONLY 90 SPACE AVAILABLE PER DATE
Only Register for One Date

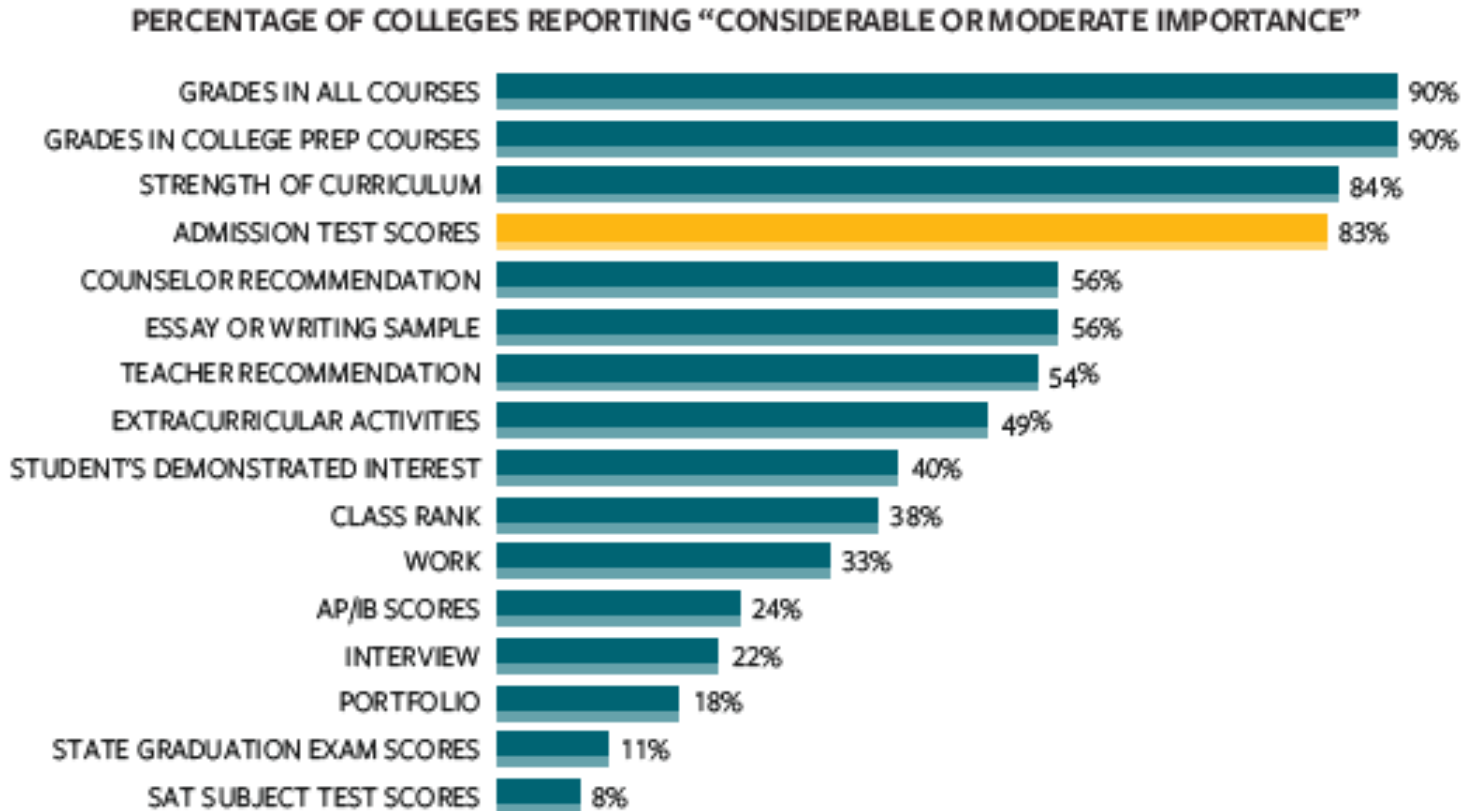




Navigating the College Application Process

What Are College and Universities Looking For?

ADMISSION FACTORS

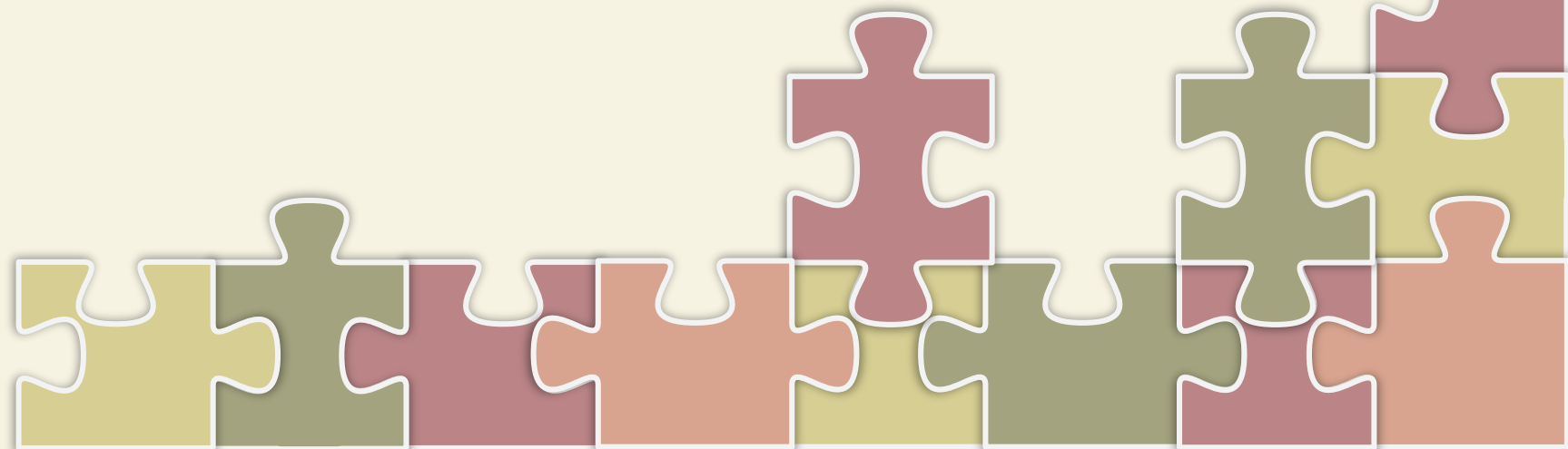


SOURCE: NACAC STATE OF COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

01

Factors to Consider in Evaluating Colleges

[Click here for the most up-to-date info on the Florida Public Universities](#)



Academic Factors

Type of College: public, private; religious affiliation; 2-year, 4-year; university, liberal arts college, specialized college (e.g. art, music, military, architecture, engineering, vocational.)

Admissions Selectivity: percentage of applicants offered admission both in regular admission and through early decision; range of GPAs and standardized test scores.

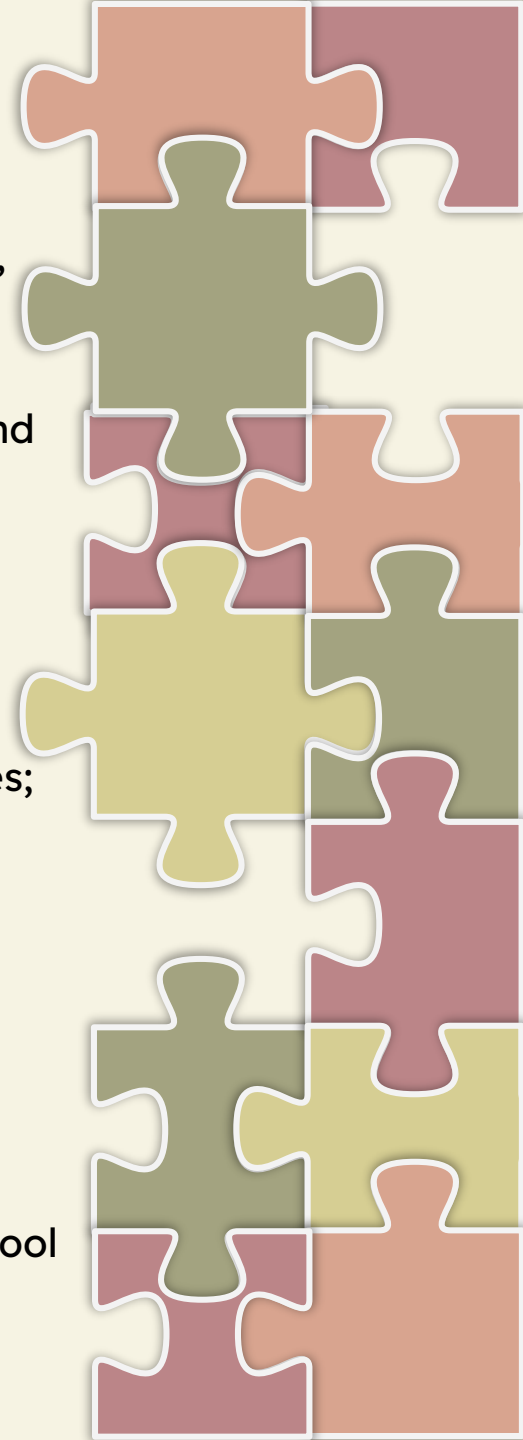
Curriculum: majors; advisement on selection of major; AICE/AP equivalency; strong departments; pre-professional training; course requirements for admissions; courses required for graduation.

Intellectual Atmosphere: flexibility/structure for study; interest in political, social, or world issues; percentage of students who graduate in four years/in more than four years.

Faculty: student/faculty ratio; accessibility of teachers to students.

Academic assistance and support services: type of academic advising; remedial support; tutoring (peer and/or professional); LD programs; learning resource centers.

Career preparation: pre-professional programs and advisement; percentage who enter grad school and jobs; companies and firms recruiting on campus.



Geographic Location and Environment

Distance from Home: ease and cost of commute by car, train, bus, plane.

Rural, suburban, large city: proximity to nearest city; accessibility of community resources; cultural and recreational opportunities.

Climate: high/low temperatures and how long they last!

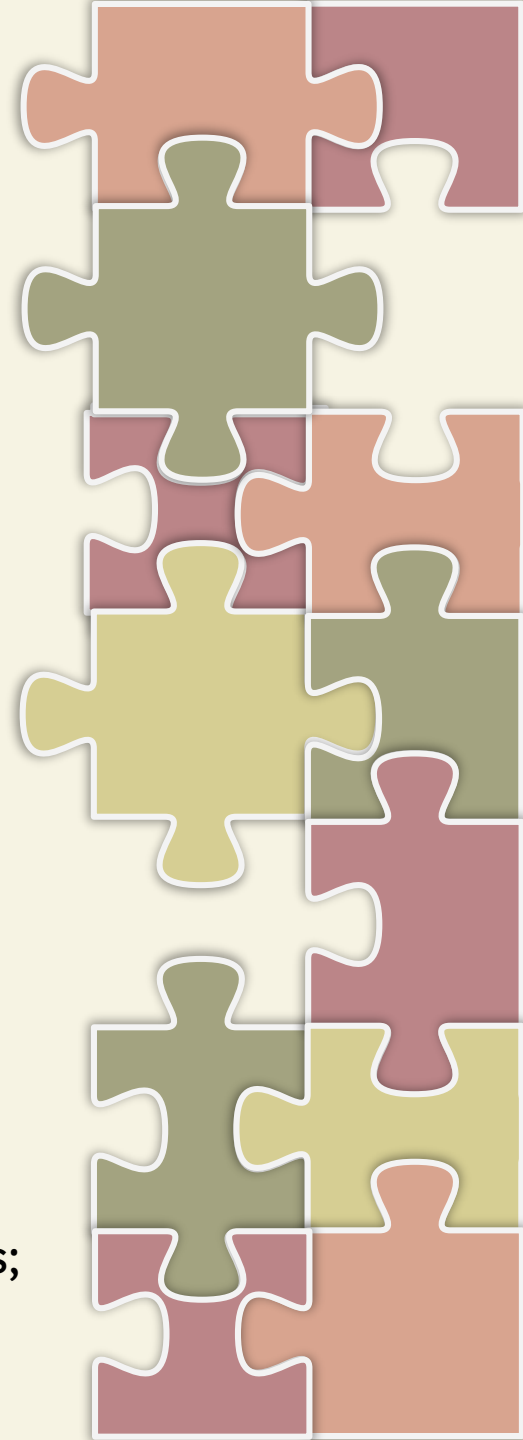
Size of College/University

Small (under 3,000) **Medium** (3,000 – 7,000) **Large** (over 7,000)

Sports

Availability of teams in what sports: male, female, coed.

Division I, II, III, intramural: percentage of students involved; required practice hours; ease of playing club sports; availability and condition of athletic facilities.



Campus and Student Life

Student body: size; diversity and acceptance of differences; geographic, cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, academic, socioeconomic background of students.

Facilities: dorms; alternative residence options; dining facilities; eating plan options; campus appearance; maintenance; library; computer facilities; health services; counseling services; student center; bookstore; laboratories; art/music studios.

Campus activities: availability of and level of participation in activities; social, cultural, athletic, recreational, religious, musical, dramatic; sorority/fraternity life; clubs and organizations; weekday and weekend activities; volunteer and service programs.



Cost

Availability of merit-based scholarships: is aid based on need, merit or both; what are the application procedures for both merit-based and need-based aid?

Costs per year including tuition and fees, room and board, personal expenses, travel costs; importance to you and your family.

How aid is packaged: percentage of the financial aid package that is grant, loan and/or work study; your willingness to borrow money or work on campus to offset the costs.

Bright Futures/Florida Prepaid: will these apply to private and out of state schools?

AP/AICE equivalency: what credits will AP/AICE exams cover?

[Click Here for AICE Equivalencies](#)

[Click Here for AP Equivalencies](#)



Application Options

Rolling Admissions

Completed applications are reviewed in the order in which they are received. Decisions are returned as soon as available or at specific times throughout the admission cycle. Many state universities use this plan, but some private schools do so as well. It is advantageous to apply early as early as possible in the fall of your senior year. Apply no later than October 15th to public universities to optimize your chances of admission.

Early Action (Non-Binding Decision) Plan

Application to your first choice or top choice early in senior year; deadlines are usually November 1 or November 15. Even though you are notified of the decision early, you are not required to attend and have until May 1 to notify the college of your intention.

Early Decision

Application to your first choice college, usually by November 1 or November 15. If accepted, you are **contractually obligated to attend** and must withdraw other pending applications. Dates and plans vary among schools. Your application may be accepted, denied or deferred (have your application held for reconsideration in the regular applicant pool) If deferred and then accepted, you are no longer obligated to attend.

Early Decision II

A second round of Early Decision for those students who either were not ready to commit in time to apply during the first Early Decision period or who were denied admission at their first choice school. Just as noted above, if admitted, you must attend that institution.



Application Options cont.

Early Notification or Priority Plans

Operates in the same way as a non-binding early action plan. Priority deadlines are usually for scholarship consideration.

January Admission

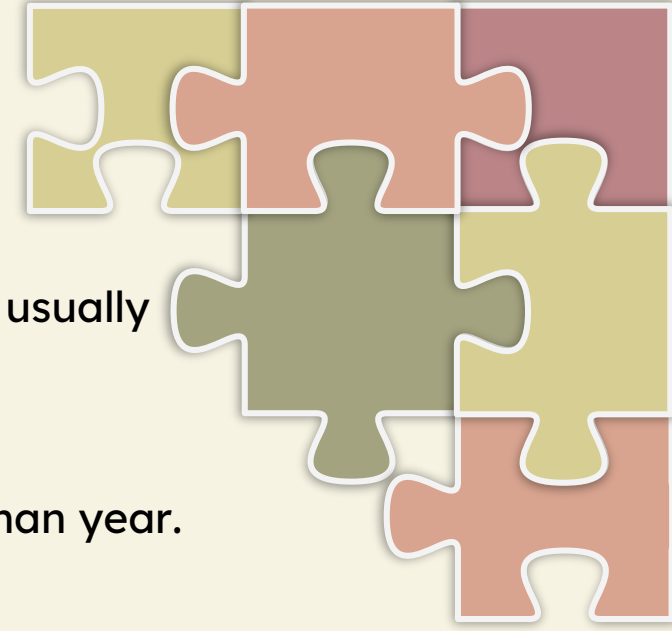
An option offered by some colleges to matriculate in the second semester of freshman year.

Summer Admission

Requires students who do not initially meet a college's admission criteria to attend a summer session in order to prove their ability to succeed before matriculating in the fall. Students usually must maintain a specified grade point average in order to continue in the fall semester.

“Guaranteed” Transfer

A college may offer you transfer admission after satisfactorily completing one or two years at another institution.



02

The College Search





Internet Resources

One of the primary sources for college information and applications is, of course, the Internet! Colleges have home pages which provide in-depth details about their programs, academic majors, financial aid, student life, activities, school calendar, applications, campus tours and maps, and often provide virtual tours. Hundreds of other web resources exist in addition to college web pages, we will look at a few of them here.



BigFuture by College Board

Big Future by College Board is a free college exploration tool that allows students to search for colleges and careers, create a college list, and much more! This is the best one-stop shop for all of your college planning, financial aid and scholarships, test prep and career exploration.

[BigFuture by The College Board](#)



State University System of Florida

Here you will find the most up-to-date and in-depth info about the schools in the State University System of Florida. The interactive MyFloridaFuture tool allows users to explore data at the System-level and by individual institution, including information on salary, graduate employment, student debt, and additional educational opportunities.

[State University System of Florida](#)



Virtual College Fairs

College fairs, including virtual college fairs, are like speed-dating for your college career! College fairs provide an opportunity to gather information from live representatives of the college or university. They typically have a wide variety of institutions in attendance and are sometimes geared toward specific areas of study or student populations. You can seek out colleges in which you are already interested or explore a variety to narrow down your list.

[NACAC Virtual College Fairs](#)

[SACAC Virtual College Fairs](#)

[BigFuture Days College Fairs](#)



In-Person College Fairs

In-person fairs present the opportunity for direct, face-to-face interaction. Students have the chance to engage with representatives from various institutions, ask specific questions, and gain firsthand insights into campus life, academic programs, and extracurricular activities. This personal interaction fosters a deeper understanding of the college experience and helps students make more informed decisions about their future.

Palm Beach County College and Career Fair



Virtual Campus Tours

Virtual campus tours allow students to explore the academic and recreational facilities of a campus, and learn from a virtual tour guide – usually a current student – about what makes each of the components unique. This is a great way to get a feel for a campus you may not be able to visit in person, or to help you narrow down the list of schools you will plan to visit.

[YouVisit Virtual College Tours](#)
[FloridaShines Virtual Campus Tours](#)



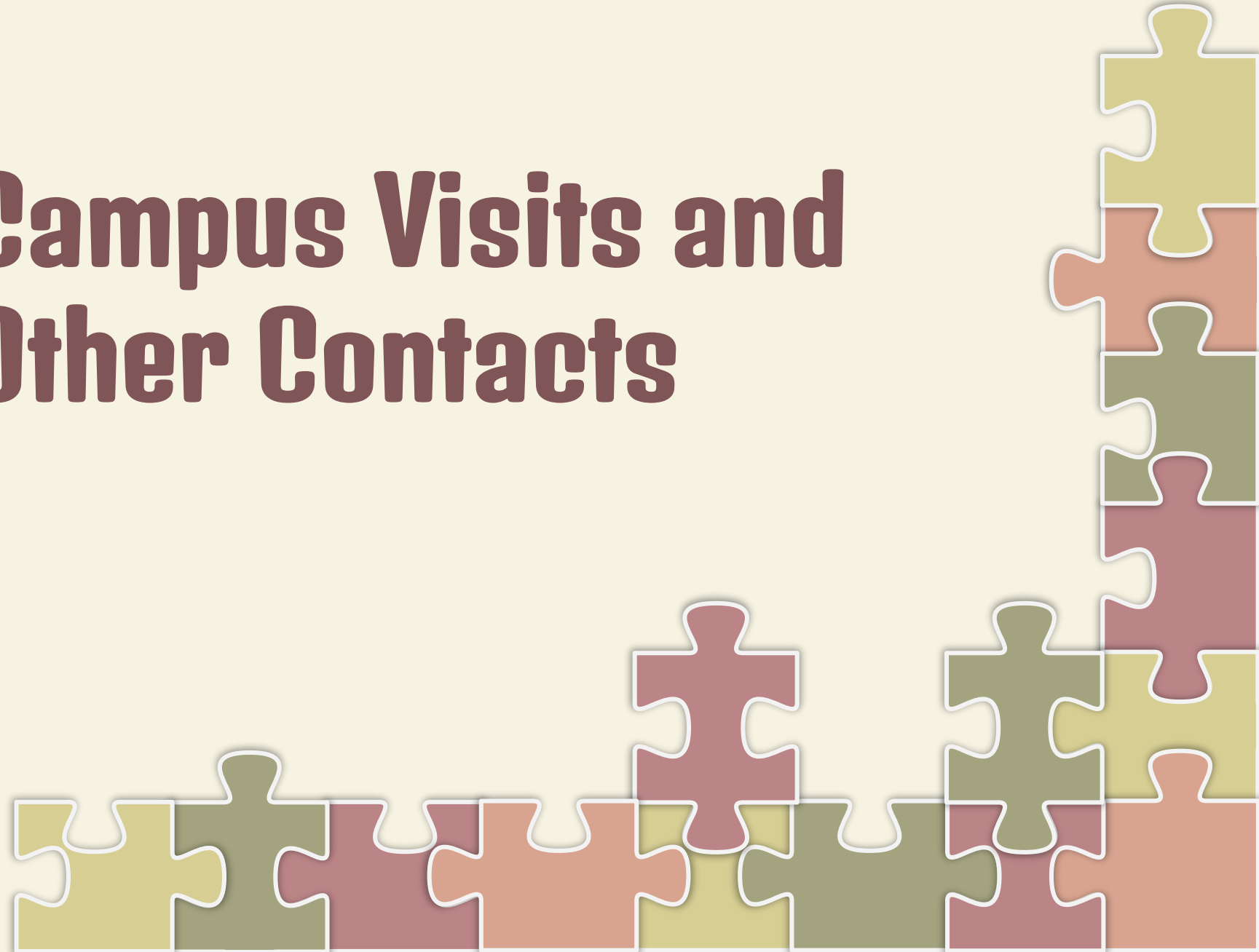
Park Vista School Counseling Department Web Page

The College Information section of the Park Vista School Counseling web page is perhaps the best internet resource for Park Vista families, because we made it just for you! Here you will find all the information you need about college admissions, applications, and research, and it is the **ONLY** place you will find information that is specific to Park Vista, such as on-site college admissions, college planning workshops, and college rep visits to our campus.

[Park Vista College Information Page](#)

03

Campus Visits and Other Contacts





Campus Visits

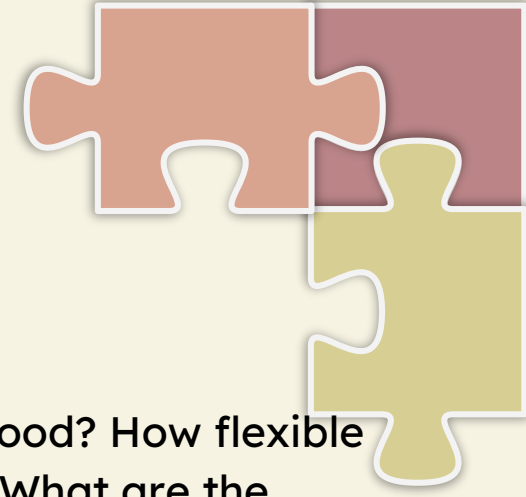
Campus visits are fun and informative and offer the best way to investigate a college and the only way to get a “feel” of the school. The college search process comes alive in the college visit. Seeing different types and sizes of colleges and universities will help educate you about what schools have to offer and what factors appear to be most important to you. **REMEMBER** - campus visits are for the **STUDENT** to get a feel for the campus. Allow your child to take the lead.



Planning a Visit

- Find out when tours and/or information sessions are given by calling the admissions office or going online. Some college tours and information sessions require a reservation.
- If possible, try to visit when classes are in session. Recognize that college campuses are quiet on Saturday mornings because most students are sleeping.
- Decide if you are going to spend the night (some colleges will provide an overnight campus experience).
- Inform the admissions office if you would like to sit in on a class or meet with a professor or coach. If you will require academic support services, you may want to arrange to meet with a staff member who can advise you on accommodations in college.
- You may want to inquire about the possibility of an interview, especially if the school is far away and you may not be able to visit again.

Things to Look For



Facilities

Libraries? Laboratories?
Classrooms? Student Center?
Book Store? Religious services?
Do facilities look new or
outdated/in need of repair?

Dorms

Comfortable? Noisy? Condition?
Freshman housing? Is there enough
housing? Is there enough privacy?
Quiet enough for studying?

Meals

How is the food? How flexible
is the plan? What are the
cafeteria and other eating
areas like? Can they meet your
dietary needs?

Athletics

Who plays? How are the
facilities? Are athletics an
important part of social life?

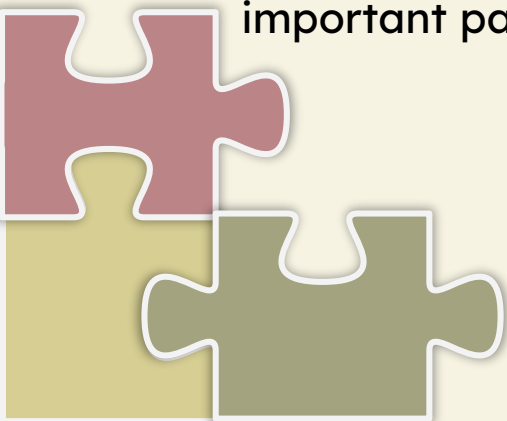
Student Services

Academic counseling? Mental
health counseling? Career
counseling? Campus safety?

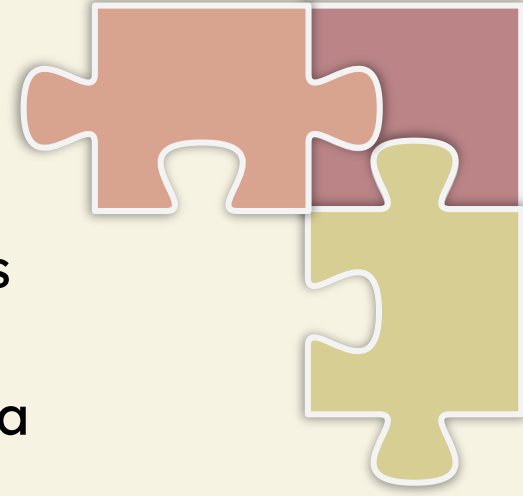
Bulletin Boards/Kiosks

What's going on on campus?
Can you see yourself at these
events? What are the issues
being discussed around
campus and in the student
paper?

Assess the overall atmosphere - is it a good fit for you?



College Rep Visits to Park Vista Campus



Each year, Park Vista guidance hosts dozens of representatives from colleges and universities all over the country, right here on our campus. Interested students must sign up in guidance at least two days in advance to meet with a representative.

Students Should

Come prepared with intelligent questions that cannot be easily answered by visiting the college website.

Keep in mind that the person visiting our campus is likely the same person who will be reading your application.

Come meet the rep even if you cannot stay for the visit.

Email the rep after the visit to thank him/her for visiting and to express interest in the school.

Students Should Not

Use college visits as an excuse to miss class.

Behave in a manner that reflects poorly on yourself or Park Vista.

Use as a substitute for a campus visit.

Interrupt the representative with questions or comments until invited to do so.

[Click here for our current college visit schedule](#)



EEmailing Admissions

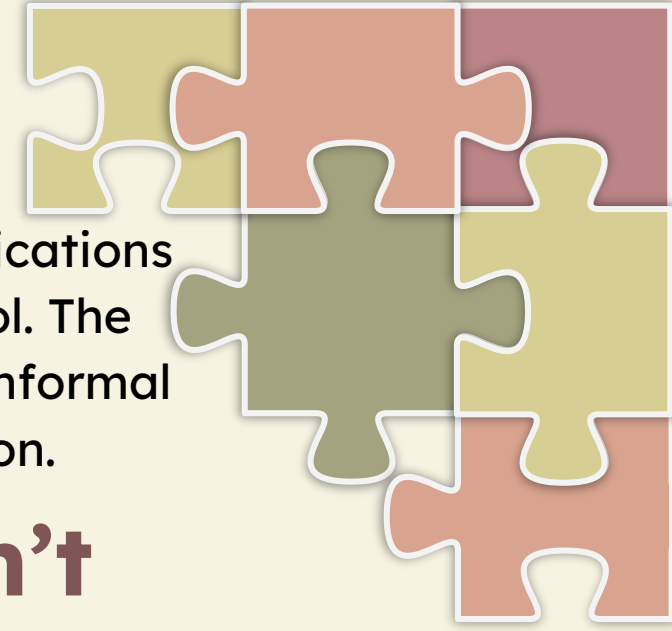
It is ok to email the admissions office or even the regional rep who reads applications for Park Vista to ask for specific information or to express interest in the school. The nature of e-mail is informal compared to standard business mail, but when is informal too informal? Here are a few “dos and don’ts” to help electronic communication.

Do

- Remember that your e-mail messages may be added to your admissions file.
- Choose an appropriate email address. You may want to rethink addresses like partygirl@hotmail.com or hatetostudy@yahoo.com.
- Give your full name, phone number, and high school on each message.
- Spell check your email and use proper punctuation.
- Be polite and respectful.
- Check the school’s website if you have a lot of questions before sending an email.

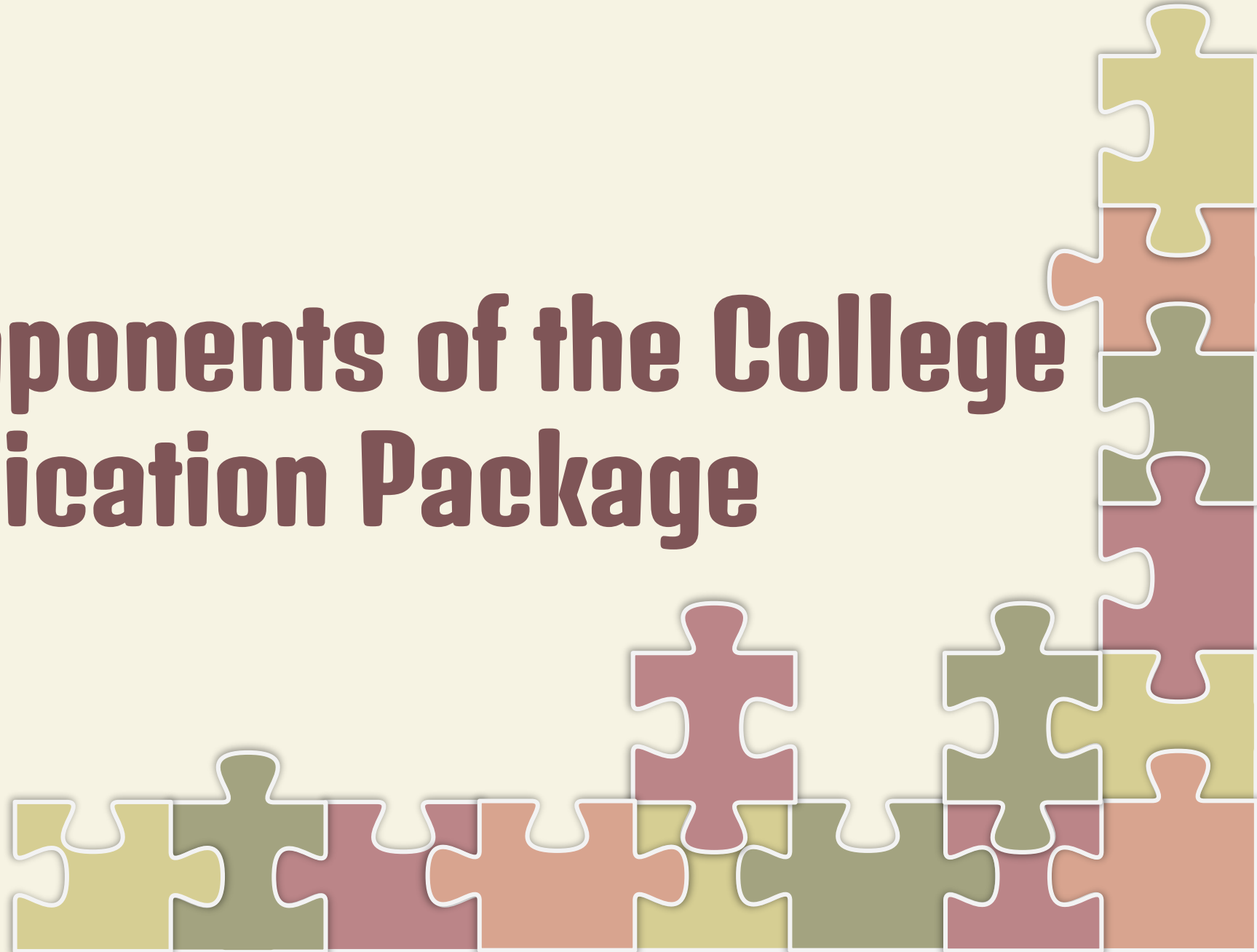
Don’t

- Use all lower- or upper-case letters.
- Use “IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!” or “Please read” as subjects for your email. These are commonly used for “junk email” or viruses.
- Use attachments. Schools are wary of attachments since they may carry viruses.
- Send anything confidential in an email.
- E-mail too often. Colleges like to hear from you to assess your interest, but not on a daily or weekly basis.



04

Components of the College Application Package



The Application

- Much older (1975), more familiar to colleges
- Seven essay prompts, 650 words max
- Allows for ten activities, 150 characters

- Fairly new (2016)
- More flexibility for multimedia and essay uploads
- Five essay prompts, 500-550 word guideline, colleges can set limit
- Allows for eight activities, up to 255 characters

Common App

~900 Colleges

FAU	UCF
FGCU	UF
FSU	FLPOLY
NCF	UNF
USF	UWF
FIU	FAMU

Coalition App

~150 Colleges

UF

Common Black College App

67 HBCUs

One Application and
One Fee

Institutional App

One College Per App

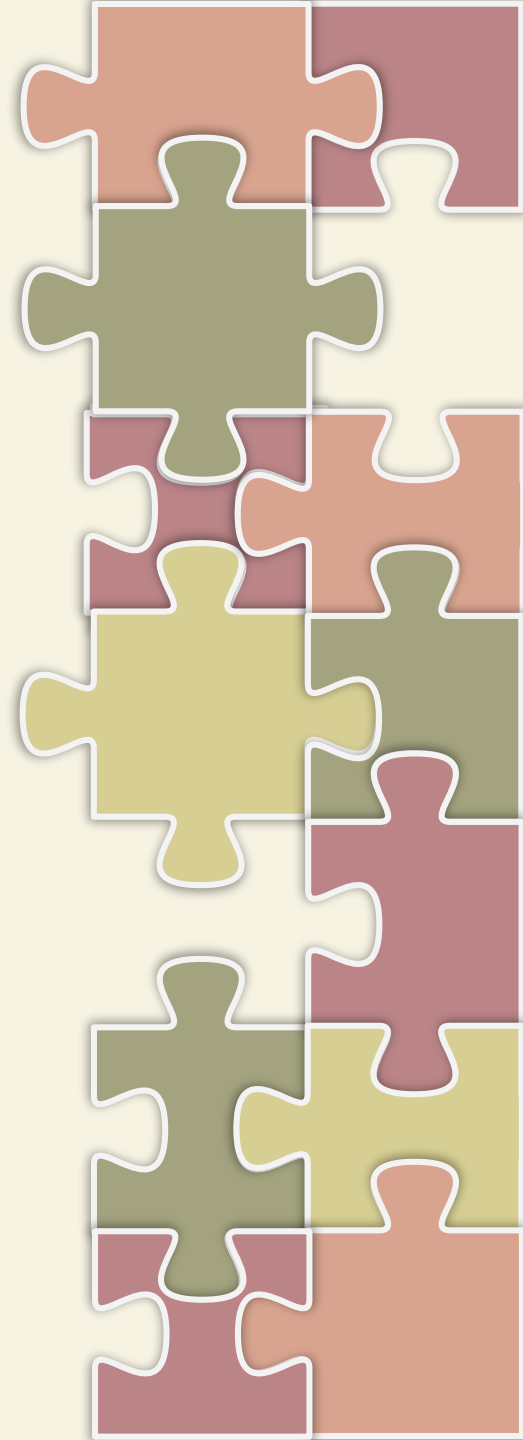
FAU	UCF
FGCU	FSU
NCF	FLPOLY
UNF	USF
UWF	FAMU
FIU	

If a school offers more than one type of application, choose **ONE!** Your review will be delayed if you complete multiple applications.

- Application is made available to 68 member institutions for one fee (\$20)
- No required essays, students are encouraged to contact each school to determine if essays or letters of recommendation are required separately.

All Florida Universities are on Common App

[Click here to go to the Common App](#)

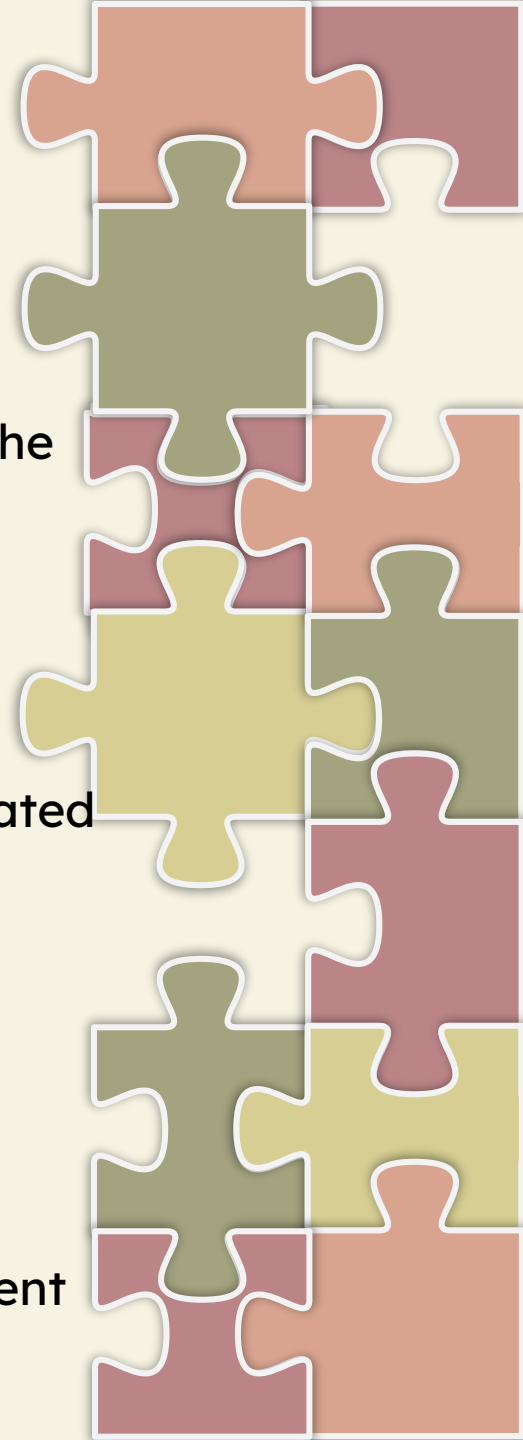


Transcripts

- Uploaded by counselor/self-reported by student/ordered through Parchment Or SSAR - Student Self-Reported Academic Record [Click here for the SSAR](#)
- Shows specific courses taken and the final grades earned through junior year
- Strength of program and grades earned are the most important components of the application
- Lists senior year courses in progress
- Pattern of grades, or trend from ninth grade through senior year, is always considered
- Senior year grades are an accurate predictor of success in college and are evaluated closely in the admission process

Test Scores

- Ordered from College Board/ACT or self-reported
- Are generally considered in relation to your overall performance
- Either validate an existing record or demonstrate greater potential for achievement



Counselor Recommendation

- A comprehensive report based on insights into your personal and academic qualities gleaned from personal interaction and review of your records
- Your activities and interests
- Teacher reports on your classroom performance
- Highlights your most positive traits and explains any inconsistency in your transcript.
- May be required, recommended, optional* or not used at all

Teacher Recommendations

- Describe your strengths as a student and the growth you achieved throughout the course
- Reflect on projects undertaken, quality of written work, nature of your class participation
- Focus on your potential for academic growth and development
- Include observations on your personal qualities
- May be required, recommended, optional* or not used at all

Recommendations should be requested in person, at the end of junior year or no later than September senior year.



Essay(s) and Supplements

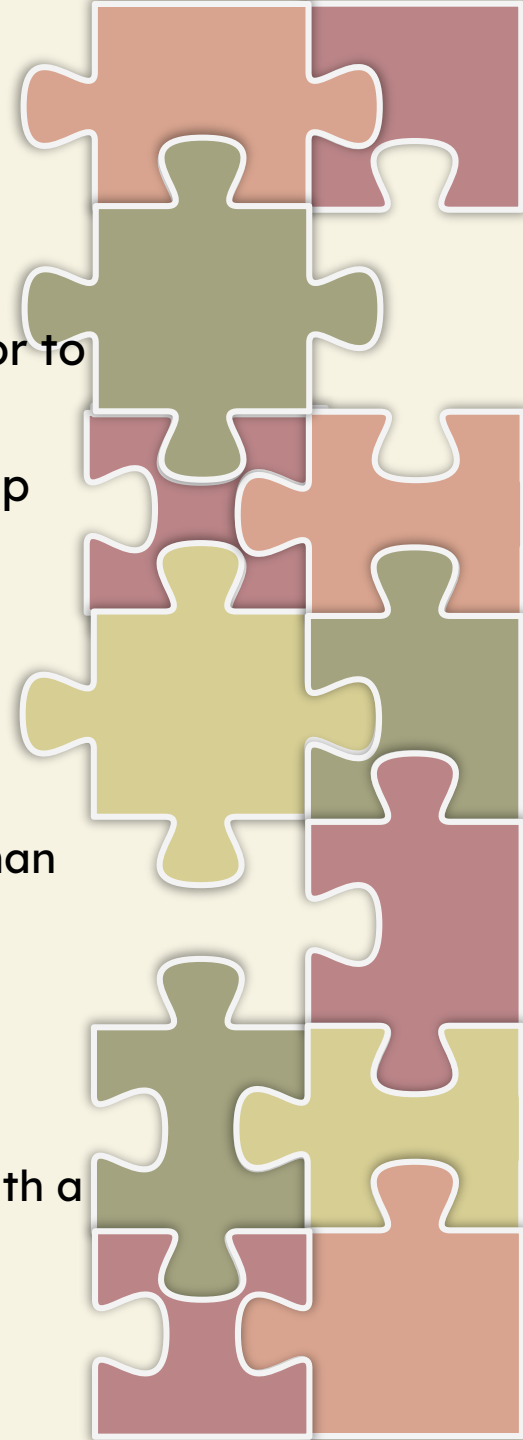
- Main essay provides important information about who you are as a person and also provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate your writing skills
- Supplements are shorter prompts, often used to gauge student interest in the school or to elaborate on interests and activities
- Question about how COVID has impacted the student has been added to Common App

Activities/Resume

- Evidence of your participation and achievement outside the classroom
- Reflect what is important to you and how you choose to spend your time
- Greater involvement and achievement in a few significant activities are more impressive than superficial involvement in many.
- Resume upload may be optional*, in addition to application activities section

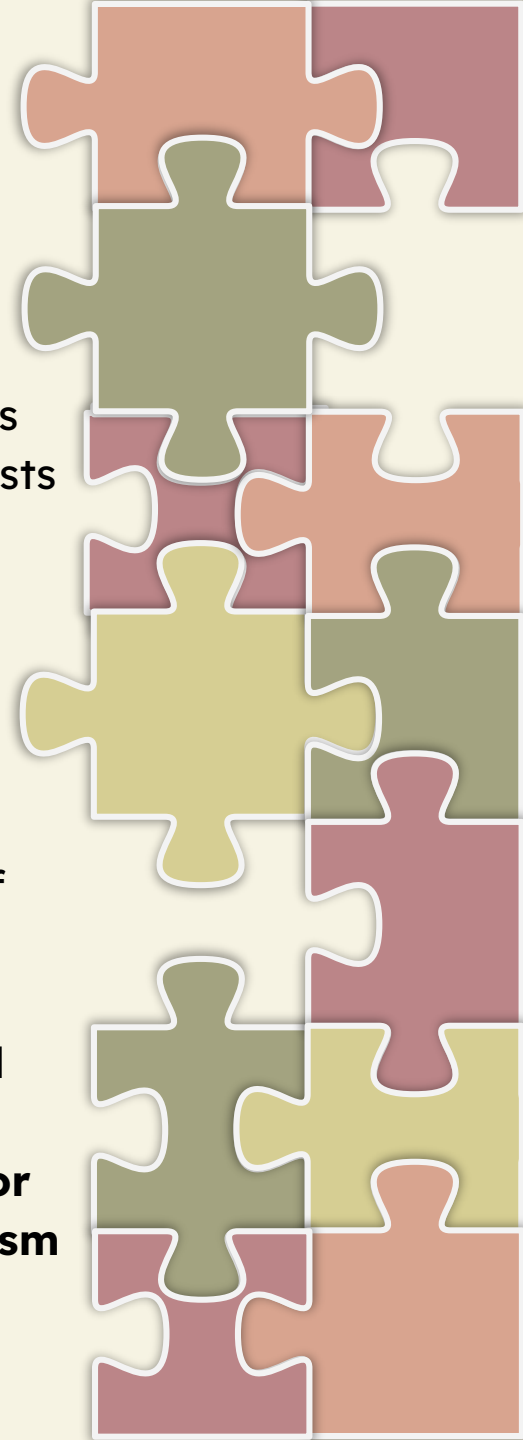
Interview

- Provides an opportunity to personalize your admission file and also provides the student with a chance to ask questions of specific concern (Evaluative vs Informative)
- Not all schools require or offer interviews



The “Why Do You Want to Go Here” Essay

- **Research:** Thoroughly research the specific college or university. Understand their mission, values, academic programs, and campus culture.
- **Personal Fit:** Explain how the college aligns with your academic and personal goals. Discuss specific resources, extracurricular activities, or opportunities that resonate with your interests and aspirations.
- **Campus Visit or Experience:** If applicable, mention any previous visits or experiences on campus that left a positive impression and contributed to your desire to attend.
- **Community and Culture:** Describe how you see yourself contributing to the campus community and benefiting from the environment. Mention any clubs, organizations, or initiatives that pique your interest.
- **Career Opportunities:** Explain how the college’s reputation and connections in your field of interest align with your long-term career goals. Highlight any internships, research opportunities, or career services that stand out.
- **Be Specific and Genuine:** Avoid generic or cliché statements. Instead, provide specific and honest reasons that genuinely resonate with you.
- **Remember, your response should reflect your authentic interests and aspirations. Tailor each answer to the specific institution you’re applying to, and showcase your enthusiasm for becoming a part of their academic community.**



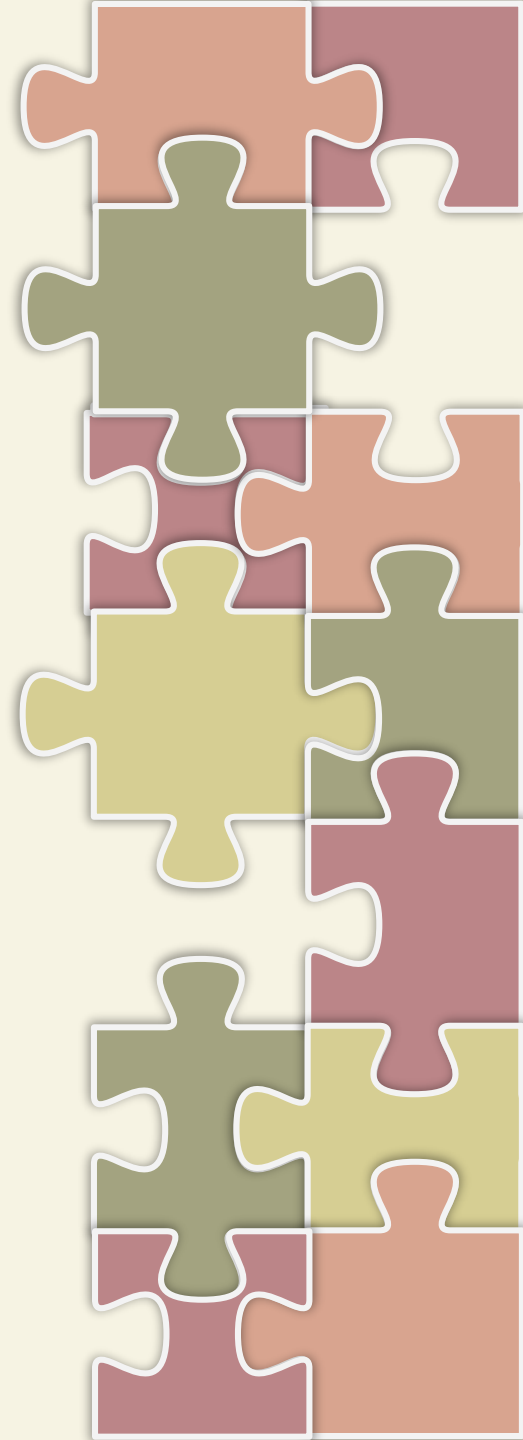
Supplementary Materials

Some colleges welcome supplementary materials while others discourage this. Check with individual colleges as to their specific policies.

Supplementary information may include the following:

- A recorded performance from areas such as music, dance, athletics, drama, etc.
- An art portfolio (often required for art programs)
- Original creative writing
- Additional letters of recommendation (often from an employer, coach, peer or another teacher)

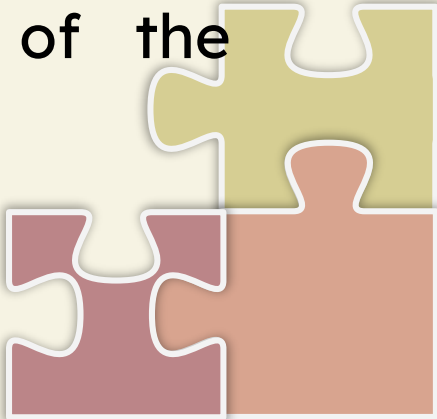
REMEMBER: NOTHING IS OPTIONAL!





The College Essay

Almost all colleges require at least one essay and will use your writing for two different purposes. First of all, they want to see that you can write; effective communication skills are valued in all career fields and are requisite for college success. Additionally, the essay provides you with an opportunity to personalize your application and to convey to the college what you want them to know about you apart from your grades, scores, and activities. The essay is the place where you can come alive and distinguish yourself as a unique individual, not just an accumulation of accomplishments. The essay is the only component of the application over which the student has complete control.



The College Essay

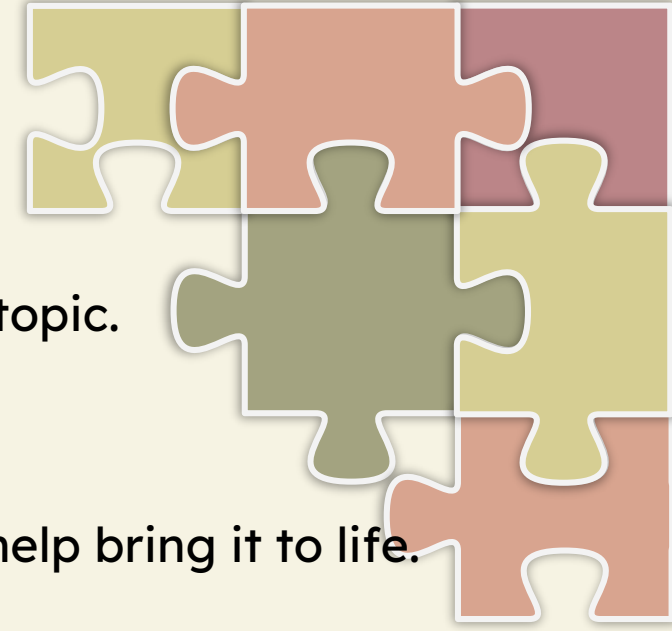
Writing a
strong college
admissions essay

Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions
Brown University



Khan Academy

Tips for Students: Writing the Essay



Please do:

- Answer the question asked – sounds simple, yet sometimes essays are off-topic.
- Organize your thoughts before sitting down to write.
- Think small and write about something you know.
- Reveal yourself in your writing.
- Show rather than tell. By giving examples and illustrating your topic, you help bring it to life. Include sights, sounds, smells, and textures.
- Write in your own “voice” and style.
- Make it personal.

Please don't:


- List your activities or accomplishments that are noted in other parts of your application.
- Write what you think others want to read.
- Exaggerate or write to impress.
- Use a flowery, inflated, or pretentious style.
- Neglect the technical part of your essay (grammar, spelling, sentence structure).
- Ramble – say what you have to say and conclude.
- Throw in “big words” to impress; it doesn't work.



Testing for College Admission

College admission tests, like the SAT and ACT, are standardized tests typically taken in junior and/or senior year. Colleges use scores from these tests to help them make admission decisions. Each college has its own policies, and they use scores differently. Test scores are just one part of your college application. Colleges place the most weight on your high school grades and whether you're challenging yourself. We recommend that students try both the SAT and the ACT and retake the one with which they are most comfortable.

More and more colleges and universities are moving to test optional admissions, meaning they do not require test scores. There are currently over 1,800 schools that do not require test scores. You can find a full list of test optional institutions at [fairtest.org](https://www.fairtest.org).



SAT vs ACT

	SAT READING	ACT READING
Time allotted	Approximately 1/2 of the Reading and Writing Section, about 32 minutes	35 minutes
Number of passages	1 short passage per question	4 long passages
Number of questions	25-30	40
Passage length	Approximately 25-150 words	Approximately 700-900 words
Section Structure	<p>Two domains, each comprised of three skill areas.</p> <p>Craft and Structure: words in context, text structure and purpose, and cross-text connections</p> <p>Info and Ideas: central ideas and details, command of evidence, and inferences</p>	<p>The four passages come in the same order and from the same categories: (1) literary narrative or prose fiction, (2) social sciences, (3) humanities, and (4) natural sciences.</p> <p>One passage will be a paired passage.</p>
Order of questions	Easy to hard within each skill	Random

	SAT MATH		ACT MATH
Placement	3rd stage	4th stage	2nd section
Calculator	Graphing calculator included		Calculator
Time allotted	35 minutes	35 minutes	60 minutes
Number of questions	22	22	60
Question types	Multiple-Choice and Student Produced Responses		Multiple-Choice
Topics tested	Emphasis on Algebra I and II topics		Broad but shallow approach to math topics ranging from Pre-Algebra to Trigonometry



CLT (Classic Learning Test)

BREAKING NEWS


Florida's Board of Governors voted Friday 9/8/23 to approve the use of results from the Classic Learning Test, or CLT, in college admissions. This test was previously approved for Bright Futures and for meeting graduation testing requirements. Information on the CLT can be found at <https://www.cltexam.com/>



AP and AICE Exams

AP and AICE exams can be used to show mastery in college level courses and can be self-reported on the application. If a school requires an official report of AP scores, the student may pay to send only the tests on which a 5 was earned. It will not benefit, and may even hurt a student, if scores below a 5 are submitted. 5s on a variety of AP exams can help differentiate students at highly selective colleges, and can validate the grades you earned in your AP classes.

Although AP and AICE exam scores will not "make or break" an application, this does not mean that AP and AICE classes are not important. The weight of your curriculum and the grades you earn in those classes are the most important component of the application package, so students should always challenge themselves by taking the highest level courses appropriate for them and earning their best possible grades. If a student does well on these exams, they may get college credit or test out of prerequisites at many institutions which will save lots of time and money.



05

Financial Aid





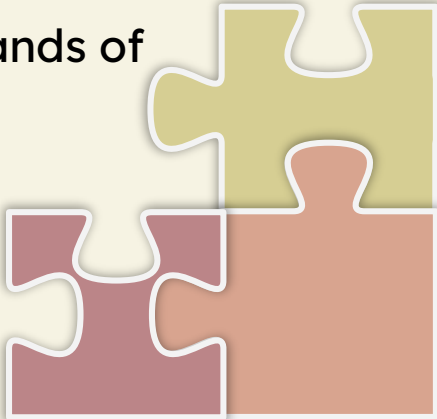
Types of Financial Aid

Loans: If you apply for financial aid, you may be offered loans as part of your school's financial aid offer. A loan is money you borrow and must pay back with interest.

Grants: Grants can come from the federal or state government, the college or university, or a private or nonprofit organization. Most types of grants, unlike loans, are sources of financial aid that generally do not have to be repaid.

Work-Study: Federal Work-Study provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study.

Scholarships: Scholarships are gifts. They don't need to be repaid. There are thousands of them, offered by schools, employers, individuals, private companies, nonprofits, communities, religious groups, and professional and social organizations.






Applying for Financial Aid

FAFSA: To apply for federal student aid, such as federal grants, work-study, and loans, you need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®). Completing and submitting the FAFSA is free and easier than ever, and it gives you access to the largest source of financial aid to pay for college or career school. In addition, many states and colleges use your FAFSA information to determine your eligibility for state and school aid, and some private financial aid providers may use your FAFSA information to determine whether you qualify for their aid. This will be available in October of the student's senior year at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

FFAA: Students must submit a completed Florida Financial Aid Application (FFAA) to apply for State Scholarship & Grant Programs, including Bright Futures. This will be available in October of the student's senior year here: [FFAA Information and Application](#)

Scholarships: There are many resources for searching for and applying to scholarships, and some colleges will offer scholarships called “merit aid” if the student meets certain criteria. You can find search engines for scholarships and much more information on scholarships and financial aid on our website here: [Scholarships and Financial Aid](#)

CSS Profile: The CSS Profile is an online application used by colleges and scholarship programs to award Institutional (their own) aid. Check your colleges' information to determine whether they require the CSS Profile. A list of participating schools can be found here: <https://profile.collegeboard.org/profile/ppi/participatingInstitutions.aspx>



GET PERSONAL HELP FROM A FAFSA EXPERT RIGHT ON PARK VISTA'S CAMPUS!

HAVE YOU COMPLETED THE FAFSA?



The FAFSA begins accepting applications in **DECEMBER 2023**

COBRA COLLEGE CAMP

Saturday, October 21, 2023—9:00 a.m.

FAFSA & Bright Futures

FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIP NIGHT

October 24, 2023—6:00 P.M.

PARK VISTA HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

GET THE SCOOP ON \$\$ FOR COLLEGE/CAREERS

FAFSA COMPUTER LAB NIGHT

January 23, 2024—6:00 P.M.

PARK VISTA MEDIA CENTER COMPUTER LAB

FAFSA Help All Year

TRIO Educational Opportunity Center

<https://www.palmbeachstate.edu/student-development/TRIO/eoc.aspx>

561-868-3681

Prior to attending the computer workshop, please make sure to:

Establish your FSA ID and password 3-5 days prior to attending either workshop by visiting <https://fsaid.ed.gov/npas/index.htm>. This will help the process.

Gather parent's/guardian's and student's following information and bring to workshop:

To complete a FAFSA for the academic year your child enters college, you will need financial and tax information from your most recent tax return (both parent and student)

- W-2 forms from the previous year or other records of money earned.
- Federal Income Tax Return from the previous year. This may be IRS 1040, 1041A, 1040 EZ, or another form.
- Untaxed income records from the previous year.
- Current bank statements and investment records.
- Social Security Card if you do not know your Social Security Number.
- Driver's license if you have one.
- Alien registration or permanent resident card if you are not a citizen of the United States.

*If student plans on attending Summer semester of college following high school graduation, parent/guardian needs to bring tax document as well.

YOU WILL BE WORKING DIRECTLY WITH A FAFSA EXPERT!!!





QUESTIONS?