College Application Meeting: Part 1

Mercy High School
Spring 2024

Let us take one day at a time, merely making a resolve for tomorrow – Catherine McAuley

Goals for today

- Exploring colleges/creating that list
- ACT/SAT
- Things to do on SCOIR
- Essays
- Letters of Recommendation
- Things to do in the summer (if you want)

Creating Your College List

Consider these questions (courtesy of Janet Stetson, Associate Director of Admissions at Bard College):

- Have you really researched the schools (online and/or by visiting the campuses?)

- Does the college have the courses/programs that you want to study?

- What are your (and your family's) financial needs?

- Are the colleges on your list a good match, considering your academic and social needs and interests?

How Many Colleges Should I Apply To?

- 5-7 (on average)
  - This range depends on the fit of the colleges in relation to the student's academic record and circumstances.

  - List should include a combination of Safety, Target, and Reach schools.

Target Schools

A "target" school is one that the student feels will fulfill her needs and desires and one that she could happily attend, even though it may not be her first choice college. The student should fit the general admissions criteria in both academic and social areas. A good rule of thumb is to have 2-4 Target schools under consideration.

Safety Schools

A college is considered a "safety" school when the applicant's academic record far exceeds the admissions requirements for that school. Students may want to consider applying to both an academic and a financial Safety school.

Reach Schools

These schools are the most selective in their admissions practices and competition for the limited spaces in the freshmen class is intense. Students should have 1-2 schools in this category.

Elements of an Application

Counselor Responsibilities

- Transcripts

- Letters of Recommendation

- Secondary School Report

Teacher Responsibilities

- Letters of Recommendation

Student Responsibilities

- Application

- Test Scores

- Essays

- Requests
  - Letters of Recommendation
  - School Report
  - Transcripts

Different Application Types

- The Common Application
- The Common Black College Application
- The SCOIR/Coalition Application (limited use this year)
- School-specific Applications

  - Some colleges give students the option to complete either the Common Application or their own school-specific application. If there is more than one application type, there is no preference for the type you use.

Note: The College's Admissions information page will tell the applicant what type(s) of applications are used. Students can also go the Common App's website to view a list of participating schools.

ACT/SAT Testing

- Testing policies <u>will vary</u> by institution.
- The best resource for learning about a college's testing policy is the college's website.
- Some colleges have a "test-optional admission policy."
- Some colleges have a "test-free" policy.
- Some colleges will still require the ACT/SAT as a required component of their application.
- It is your responsibility to confirm a college's testing policy.

DO NOT SEND YOUR SCORES TO A COLLEGE UNTIL YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE SENDING TEST SCORES AS PART OF YOUR APPLICATION.

Test-Optional Admission Policy

- "Test-Optional" means the college is NOT requiring the ACT/SAT for admission.

- Students will have a choice about whether or not to submit ACT and/or SAT scores as part of their application.

- The college will take a holistic approach when reviewing the student's application -- Thus, focusing on grades, curriculum, writing skills, extracurricular activities, and possible letters of recommendation.

- Something to consider -- Although some colleges may have a test-optional admission policy, they "may" still require an applicant to submit ACT or SAT test scores if the applicant wants to be considered for merit-based scholarships.

Test–Free Admission Policies

Schools with "test-free" policies never consider standardized test scores as part of the application.

- Even if a student has test scores they want to submit, they will be ignored.

Colleges Requiring ACT or SAT

- Colleges want the test the student performs best on.

- Submitting multiple scores is welcomed (ACT and/or SAT) (if available)

- Some schools may only use the highest composite score, other schools may superscore.

- ACT/SAT tests taken Oct or later, we encourage you to send scores directly to the colleges that **require** them -- especially if the college has a Nov. 1 deadline.

- When registering, you must add code 231-005 to have scores sent to Mercy.

Things to do on SCOIR

- As you confirm which schools you want to apply to, move the colleges to the "applying" column in SCOIR

- Sign FERPA Waiver and Release of Records- We recommend you waive your rights.
  - I grant permission to send records
  - I grant permission to waive my rights

Letters of Recommendation

- Build College List to see letter of rec requirements by school.

- Many schools do not require/accept letters of recommendation

- We only want to send colleges what they ask for.

- Most schools only want one letter, if any at all. Very few schools require 2 letters, so only ask for 2 if your school requires 2.

Letters of Recommendation

Steps -

1. Ask the teacher (in person is best)
2. Complete FERPA in SCOIR
3. Complete Teacher Recommendation Survey in SCOIR
4. [Add Recommendation Request in SCOIR](#)

Main essay

- English class head start

- Tips:
  - The what of the story should be short (what happened)
  - Focus on the "So What" - why is it important you are sharing this story, how do you use the lessons or how have you made changes.

- Show don't tell - examples go along way

Supplemental Essays

- Not all schools have supplements (U of M has 2, MSU has 0).
- These are finalized on the school website and on the Common App or School App on August 1st.
- Be specific about how a school or program meets your goals.
- Use the "Why Essay" document in SCOIR Drive as a guide.

Essay Resources

- [Essay Brainstorming video](#)
- [How to structure a personal statement video](#)
- [4 Qualities of an outstanding essay video](#)

These resources are provided through a partnership with SCOIR and Ethan Sawyer, The College Essay Guy

Summer Work

- June – Jump on Going Merry for Scholarships (financial talk with parents).

- June - Register for NCAA (if necessary).

- July – research your schools and track application requirements. Use the trackers on SCOIR or in Schoology

- July – apply for scholarships.

- June - August – start filling in Common App data if you apply to a Common App school.

NCAA Eligibility

- If you are an athlete interested in playing a Division 1 or Division 2 sport at the college level, you must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center

  - Register at www.eligibilitycenter.org.

  - Request a transcript through the NCAA website.

  - For step-by-step instructions, see the NCAA Registration Checklist.

What happens after summer?

- August - Student class meeting to go over the nuts and bolts of the application process

- September - Colleges begin visiting Mercy

- September - Parent meeting

- September - Student individual meeting with counselor
  - purpose to see where you are to make a plan

Questions?

Thank you for your participation today!

We hope you have a wonderful summer and we will see you back at Mercy in the Fall!!