

myEssay.com College eBook

College Application Guide	2
College Admissions Overview	2
ACADEMIC RECORD	2
EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES	3
PERSONAL PRESENTATION	4
Keys to a Successful Application	7
15 KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL APPLICATION	7
Application Time Line	9
SOPHOMORE YEAR	9
JUNIOR YEAR	9
SENIOR YEAR	10
Insider Tips on College Admissions	11
THE ESSAY	11
RECOMMENDATIONS	12
INTERVIEWS	13
GENERAL ADVICE	14
Recommendation Tip Sheet	14
MYESSAY.COM TOP 10 RECOMMENDATION TIPS	14
Guide to Interviews	16
10 KEYS TO A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW	16
College Essay Guide	18
Insider Essay Tips	18
INSIDER FOCUS ON THE ESSAY	18
Guide to Introductions	20
10 Introduction Techniques	20
Guide to Conclusions	22
Finishing the Essay	23
Final Touches Checklist	23
10 Sample Essays	25
Five Essays with Comments	25
Five Sample Essays	31
Grammar Supplement	37
Parts of Speech	37
The Basic Sentence	39
Problem Sentences	40
General Concerns	43
Punctuation	45
Legal	46
Disclaimer	46
Copyright	46
Trademarks	46

College Application Guide

College Admissions Overview

Your college application can essentially be broken into three parts. Each demands your attention and hard work. Remember, a college only knows what you provide. Make sure they get the whole picture.

The three components of your college application are: 1) academic record, 2) extracurricular activities, and 3) personal presentation.

ACADEMIC RECORD

Grades and Coursework

Throughout your college selection process, keep in mind that colleges are first and foremost, institutions of higher learning. While admissions officers expect a lot from candidates, they are primarily interested in the ability of candidates to thrive as students. If the admissions staff does not think that you can hack it in the classroom, it cannot, and will not, offer you a place at its school.

How do admissions officers know how smart you are? Well, they don't know. College applications don't require an IQ test, but do require a Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT). Intelligence is not the main concern of the admissions officers. In fact, they are concerned only with the kind of student you have been in high school and the kind of student they think you will be in college. By carefully reviewing your academic career—not just your grades, but also the difficulty of your coursework—admissions officers get an idea of your potential as a college student at their school. The SAT is intended to help the admissions officers assess your likelihood of success as a student.

By choosing demanding courses and a full course-load you demonstrate to colleges that you are serious about being a student. By doing well in your classes you show that you are a capable student. For example, getting an A in pre-calculus may not be as impressive as earning a B+ in a more advanced calculus class. Getting great grades in four easier classes may not be as impressive as getting good grades in five harder classes. Colleges will know what classes are available to you—they'll know if you chose the easier class. There's no formula to determine the right balance between good grades and the difficulty of your coursework, but keep in mind that admissions officers will be looking for your willingness to work hard and to embrace challenges.

Test Scores

Whether you like it or not, nearly every college requires that you take one of the nationally administered tests—either the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or the American College Test (ACT). Because the quality and difficulty of high schools and courses varies widely across the country, colleges rely on standardized tests to compare students from varied locales. You may have reservations or doubts about the ability of a test to evaluate your potential for success in college ... tough luck. Do not waste your time griping—get to work.

Though your high school career will be the foremost indicator of your academic ability in the eyes of admissions officers, your test scores are a vital component of your application. The upside of the SAT and ACT is that they give you a chance to shine, particularly if you have some “tarnishes” on your

transcript. You cannot go back and retake a class or get a new grade. However, you can retake the SAT and ACT.

You should prepare for the SAT and ACT. There are numerous books that you can buy to help you prepare. There are also prep classes that you can take (but these can be very expensive). The single best thing you can do is to buy a book of real tests that have been administered in the past. If you're taking the SAT, sit down and take a bunch of practice tests. Have a friend or parent time you to simulate actual test conditions. The same goes for the ACT. Just getting used to the test format is likely to help your performance.

If you are not happy with your score, consider retaking the test. Many students, though not all, see their scores jump up 50 or more points (on the SAT) when taken a second time. But hey, don't go overboard; if you take any test more than three times you're probably going to drive yourself crazy!

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Who are you?

Have you ever been asked this question? Once you get beyond your name, what do you have to say for yourself? Is the first thing you say about yourself that you are a high school student? Maybe. Maybe not. But start to think about the question: who are you?

Your coursework and test scores tell about a piece of you, but there is more to you than the student—there has to be. After all, not a single high school student in the world is in the classroom around the clock. So what do you do with your time?

Some activities are obvious, especially school activities, like sports, yearbook, newspaper, etc.. Your activity outside of the classroom tells the admissions officers more about you. Admissions officers are building a class, not just filling a classroom. Photographer for the yearbook, editor of the paper, class president, member of the chess club—these are all extracurricular activities that should eventually appear in your application. And don't forget any activities outside of school—Sunday school teacher, soup kitchen volunteer, newspaper route, babysitter.

Maybe you are the captain of the football team or editor of the paper. Maybe you are captain of the football team AND editor of the paper – but probably are not. Leadership and success are important, but not the be-all, end-all. Give the admissions staff a full picture of yourself. Did you run for student body president and lose? Think about how you spend your time. Think about the compelling argument you can make to the admissions office. Show them you are more than just a student. They cannot (and would not, even if they could) fill their classes solely with captains and editors.

One of the things admissions officers are looking for is your ability to handle college life. Are you able to balance a full course-load with a full life? College is about much more than what goes on in the classroom. Maybe your parents work long hours or the night shift and you have to come home from school everyday to care for your three younger siblings or your elderly relative. Do not let colleges think that you do not participate in any extracurricular activities just because you do not have the typical high school life.

Though you do want to include all of your activities and strive to present a full picture of yourself in your application, always be honest, with yourself and with the college. Does your one-time appearance at a meeting where they were giving out free doughnuts really make you a member of the Baking Club? You should be able to defend any activity that you claim as your own. Ideally, you participate in activities out of real desire. Of course, in reality, many students become involved in activities only because of the perceived value it will add to their college applications. Keep in mind, however, that if there is a flurry of...

Please visit www.myessay.com to purchase the complete myEssay.com College eBook.