The College Application

INTRODUCTION
An admission application is your voice to the admission committee. It will serve as your proxy.

Each application consists of many components:
  • Background Information
  • Transcript
  • Test scores
  • Essay/Personal Statement
  • Short Answer Questions
  • Resume/Activity Sheet
  • Letter(s) of Recommendation
  • Interview (usually optional)
  • Supplemental Materials

All of these elements put together help you present yourself to an admission committee.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
  • Gives the admission committee a quick snapshot of where you come from

TRANSCRIPT
The admission committee is looking not only at your grades but also:
  • The rigor of your curriculum
  • The fullness of your curriculum
  • Have you met minimum entrance requirements or gone beyond?
  • Grade trends
  • Strengths in particular subject areas and whether they correlate with the intended major

Of course, all of these factors are considered within your school’s context

Keep your grades up in the senior year. In some cases, the fall grades will be considered in the admission decision. And, the spring grades should be strong because admission is always conditional!

TEST SCORES
  • Scores will always be considered appropriately
  • Visit www.fairtest.org to learn about test optional colleges

ESSAY/PERSOAL STATEMENT
  • Your chance to communicate directly with the admission committee
  • Don’t be too safe but don’t attempt to be too provocative or take too many risks
  • It should tell a story
  • It should tell something that makes you different than other applicants

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS
  • These should be as well crafted as your essay
  • Sloppiness and last minute writing is clearly evident
  • Use the opportunity to answer optional questions, if needed

RESUME/ACTIVITY SHEET
  • Be as detailed as possible within formatting guidelines
  • About quality not quantity
  • Stay away from acronyms, even if commonly used in your community
• Some students will be well-rounded; other will be very angular
• This should answer the question, “What do you do with your spare time?”
• Think broadly about the term activities (i.e. caring for a sibling is a valid activity)

LETTER(S) OF RECOMMENDATION
• Pay attention to who you are asking to write letter
• Multiple letters should present different aspects of you and your involvement
• The thicker the file, the thicker the student; don’t overdo it.
• How important someone is doesn’t matter if that individual doesn’t know you well enough to tell the admission committee about you

INTERVIEW
• Often optional
• Your time should be spent on preparing your application, not just focusing on the interview
• If you do interview, you should be prepared to talk about yourself and not just the things presented in your application.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS
Supplemental materials may be required for your intended major. This includes:
• A statement of purpose
• A portfolio
• An audition
• An interview

OVERALL
• Follow directions
• Don’t wait until the last minute
• Demonstrate that you have done your research about the school
• Neatness and presentation count!
• Explain anything that is unusual or different (gaps, trends, involvement)
• Show the admission committee what makes you unique
• There is generally no preference for doing the application on paper or online
• Common Application
  o No preference for CA over school applications
  o Pay attention to supplements
• Always put your best foot forward in everything you do.

QUESTIONS??