

College Planning

Senior Year
Class of 2017

PLP College Planning Team

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Senior Counseling

- Signing up for a senior interview - link sent to all seniors
 - Reviewing transcript for accuracy
 - Checking schedules and reviewing completion of graduation requirements
 - Discussing post-secondary plans and next steps to be completed by student

*** Parents are strongly encouraged to be checking CANVAS regularly for information regarding student grades and assignments.*

<https://youtu.be/iigCs2AaiVo>

Student Responsibilities

- Finalize college list
- Complete college applications, being mindful of deadlines
- Maintain Naviance Account
- Attend campus tours & representative visits at PLP
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers
- Write essay(s); complete college supplements
- Request/send official SAT/SAT Subject Tests/AP or official ACT scores

www.collegeboard.org www.actstudent.org

- Complete NCAA Clearinghouse registration for Divisions I/II athletes

PLP Responsibilities

- Provide support & guidance
- Provide assistance (essays, applications, understanding scores, etc.)
- Submit Transcripts – including final transcript to school of choice (June)
 - Official transcript
 - PLP Profile
 - Counselor / AP recommendation
- We can't get you into school, but we can help you with the process

**YOUR POST PLP
PLANS ARE A FAMILY DECISION!**

Key Fall Dates to Remember

- SAT/ SAT Subject Tests (10/1, 11/5, 12/3)
- ACT (10/22, 12/10)
- Financial Aid Night (10/5)
- Complete FAFSA (available 10/1)
- PLP College Fair (10/12)
- College Bus Trip (10/26-27)
- College Awareness Week (11/7 - 11/11)

***Numerous College Rep Visits are Scheduled for Sept. & Nov. and Noted in Naviance*

Senior Year Timeline (Fall)

- Finalize your application list
- Begin applying online- applications are open
- Sign-up for additional SAT or ACT test dates
- Prepare supporting documents (recs, resumes, personal statements, portfolios, etc.)
- Complete the applications and write essays
- Have everything in well before the deadlines!

In Search of the Ideal Fit



Factors in The College Search Process

- Programs (Major, Internships, Honors etc.)
- Location (Commute, Distance, Urban, Suburban, etc.)
- Cost
- Size (Small <3000, Medium 3-7000, Large 7-10,000)
- Campus Life (Dorms, Activities, Sports, Religion, Diversity, etc.)
- Special Programs (Study Abroad, Athletics, etc.)

Types of Schools

- Liberal Arts Colleges (Ex- Elon)
- Universities (Ex- UNC)
- Community Colleges (Ex- CPCC)
- Specialized Colleges (Ex- Cabarrus College of Health Sciences)
- Public vs. Private Colleges
- Academies/Prep Schools

Keep an open mind - look at schools you don't know

Your Application Resources

- Common Application: The application used by hundreds of colleges/universities
- Individual College Applications: The application available through the college's website
- CFNC Application Hub Web Site: NC schools
- Coalition Application

Naviance: The tool we use for college search and submitting application materials

Naviance

The screenshot shows the 'family connection' section of the Naviance website. It features a navigation bar with 'colleges', 'careers', 'about me', and 'my planner'. A left sidebar lists resources like 'act', 'college board', and 'fast web'. The main content area includes a 'what's new' section with email notifications, a 'PLP Welcome' message for Pine Lake Preparatory, and a list of 'Pine Lake College Planners' with their contact information. A mobile app download button for the App Store is also visible.

CFNC.ORG

The screenshot shows the CFNC.org website. The header includes the logo, the tagline 'Helping you plan, apply, and pay for college', and contact information for the College Foundation of North Carolina. A navigation bar offers options like 'My CFNC', 'Plan', 'Apply', and 'Pay'. The main content area features a login section with a 'LOG IN' button, a 'Check It Out' section with links to 'Financial Aid Primer' and 'eLearningNC.gov', and a 'Hot Topics' section with articles on 'Apply to College' and 'SAT? ACT? Test Prep Help'. A sidebar on the right lists user roles like 'Student', 'Parent', and 'Adult Learner'. A banner at the bottom right reads 'More financial security? College works.' with a photo of a woman.

Coalition Application



Common Application

The screenshot shows the Common Application website. The header includes the 'THE COMMON APPLICATION' logo and navigation links for 'About Us', 'Member Colleges', and 'Media Inquiries'. The main content area features a 'MISSION' section with a paragraph describing the organization. To the right is a login form with fields for 'Email Address' and 'Password', and buttons for 'HELP CENTER', 'Sign In', and 'CREATE AN ACCOUNT'. Below the login form is a 'SEARCH FOR COLLEGES' section with a search bar.

Where to Apply

Reach: Admission is “iffy” or have admit rates between 7-20% (dream school)

Possible: Closely meet school profile expectations; competition for space could be tight

Probably: Chances for admissions are strong

Financial Safety: School you can afford if your aid package is not strong at other schools

Application Tasks

Prioritize By Deadlines/App Type

- **Early Decision:** Students make a commitment to a first-choice institution. If admitted, they will enroll. The deadline and decision occur early. ***Binding!***
- **Early Action:** Students apply early and receive a decision before the institution's regular response date – ***Non-binding***
- **Rolling:** Institutions review applications as they are submitted and render decisions throughout the year– ***Non-binding***

Application Tasks

Prioritize By Deadlines/App Type

- **Restrictive Early Action:** Students apply to an institution of preference and receive a decision early. They are typically restricted from applying Ed or EA or REA to other institutions. If offered enrollment, they have until May 1 to confirm- ***Non-binding***
- **Regular Decision:** Submit an application and receive a decision by specified dates - ***Non-binding***

Factors in a Holistic Review

- Student transcript – GPA, grades, strength of schedule (transcript reflects end of junior year grades and senior year schedule)
- Test scores – ACT or SAT (old SAT)
- Student Essay & /or Personal Statement
- Recommendation letters (2)
- Extracurricular activities, employment, & / or community service
- Demonstrated interest in the school – including campus visits, emails to admissions office, phone calls, etc. Most document communications in your file!

Application Process

- Allow at least 2 weeks for recommendations – you must provide self-addressed stamped envelope (if not electronic)
- Allow at least 2 weeks for processing prior to deadlines
- You must check the transcript request for each request / school
- Find the code numbers for each school you are sending SAT / ACT scores to – this is a requirement for most schools – you can not simply report your scores

Pieces Of The Application - Essay

- The McEssay: While accurate, they are organized and use correct grammar and proper spelling—they are basically the same, like Big Macs (generic and the same across the country). A McEssay isn't wrong, but it's not going to be a positive factor in an admission decision.
- If an essay starts, "I have been a member of the soccer team, and it has taught me leadership, perseverance, and hard work," I can almost recite the rest of the essay without reading it. Each of the three middle paragraphs will give a bit of support to an abstraction, and the final paragraph will restate what has already been said.
- A student who uses vague abstractions poured into a preset form will end up being interpreted as a vague series of abstractions. A student who uses a cliché becomes a cliché to admissions officers. We are what we eat; we are also what we write.

By Admissions Officer, University of Virginia

Purpose of The Essay

- Essays allow a virtual stranger to learn more about your life and most positive qualities.
- Questions may ask you to choose something about yourself to discuss, or it may require you write about something such as an event, book, or quotation.
- *On Identify Your Personal Qualities form, check off those qualities you possess that you would like colleges to know about.*
- Select the 5 most descriptive qualities or the qualities you most value in yourself.
- Now, **PROVE IT:** How could you show someone else you have one of the qualities you selected? Is there something you have done, an activity, an experience that would exemplify this quality in you?
- **What distinguishes you from other equally acceptable applicants.**

Pieces of The Application - Personal Statements

- Your chance to introduce yourself in writing – Proof It!
- Use easy to read fonts and proper spacing

Possible Topics –

- What major(s) are you interested in and what prompted this interest – mention any internships, shadowing, etc.
- Any local, state, or national recognition you have received talents, leadership, or academic achievements.
- Discuss ethnic/cultural background that would diversify the campus.
- Address any extenuating circumstances that have significantly affected an otherwise academically strong record.
- If this is your 1st college choice then say that! If you have visited, include that in your statement too.

Pieces of The Application- Recommendations

- File requests (2) via Naviance – Available now!
- If submitted through Naviance, you can see submission dates by recommenders
- If a separate teacher recommendation is required – give form to teacher so they can attach their letter and send it to the college directly. Provide self-addressed, stamped envelope
- Provide self-addressed, stamped envelopes for any non-PLP recommendations
- Provide resume and ask someone who can speak highly of you!

Testing

- SAT & ACT testing dates are posted online
- Report **ALL** scores
- Check to see if college of choice Super-score: COMPOSITE score report / "Best of"
- New SAT scores are about 60 points higher than the old SAT
- Fee to send reports after the fact

Common Misconceptions/Myths

- Full rides (\$\$) are common
- Knowing someone helps
- Marketing material received = recruitment & \$\$ (acceptance rates)
- Not knowing a school means it is no good
- There is an "Admissions Formula"
- Schools limit # admitted per county
- Out of state don't know PLP = no admit

Financial Aid

- Financial Aid Night at PLP:
 - Wednesday, October 5 - 6:30 pm STEM Auditorium
- Davidson College Financial Aid Night:
 - Tuesday, October 18 - 7:00 pm Location TBD
- FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid
 - Required by all colleges
 - Calculates EFC (Estimated Family Contribution) for Federal Aid
 - www.fafsa.ed.gov
 - Application will be available October 1, 2016

CSS Profile

- CSS PROFILE: Some colleges require this form in addition to the FAFSA (UNC-CH, Davidson, Duke, Elon, High Point, Wake Forest)
 - Used to distribute institutional aid
 - Costs money to file (\$25 for 1st school; \$16 for each additional school)
 - www.collegeboard.com
 - Early Decision/Early Action should file by November 15; Regular Decision should file by February 1

End Notes

- All colleges accept students on **a conditional basis** & senior grades will be a final aspect of evaluation.
- Senior grades are evaluated and admissions can be rescinded -even after students have moved into dorms. One NC school rescinded more than 358 admission decisions summer 2011.
- 1st & 2nd semester senior grades important for admissions - midyear only by school request
- College students change majors on average 4.5 times
- Average student loan debt upon graduation = \$30,000+

End Notes

- Average time to earn Bachelor's Degree - 6 years
- Approximately 35% graduate in 4 years
- The cost of college textbooks has risen 812% in the past 30 years – More than healthcare, housing prices, & college tuition.
- 70 - 75% of PLP graduates attend a 4-year college; 20-25% attend a 2-year school (National average = 57%, NC average = 64%)

Closing Thoughts

- Manage stress: take it one step at a time.
- Schedule specific times to work on applications. Remember that students should love their list!
- Don't panic if you get a mass email/letter from a college – let us help!
- Colleges appreciate when students take the initiative to reach out with questions.
- And finally...you can do this! It won't be long before those acceptance letters start rolling in...

Resources

- Twitter –
 - FAFSA
 - New York Times – “The Choice”
 - US Dept. of Education
 - College Board

- Facebook - Federal Student Aid
- YouTube – Federal Student Aid
- Naviance Links & Resources
- CFNC