



ONE STEP AT A TIME

Navigating the college admissions process

PRESENTED BY SMIC
COUNSELING OFFICE

01

Expectations

Overall goal setting

02

Setting the Stage

Action plan for grades 9-10

03

Standardized Testing

Which tests to take

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Application Process

An in-depth look at grade 12 activities and task list

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Admissions Timeline

What to do and when

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Placements & Resources

Where our students go worldwide



01

Expectations

Finding a “holistic” fit

- Selective schools increasingly more competitive
- With planning and realistic expectations, positive outcomes can be achieved
- Find the “right fit” - academically, socially, culturally and financially by looking beyond the Ivy leagues/UCs and the rankings
- Quantitative (GPA, test scores) and qualitative (activities, essays, interviews, recommendations) factors



COVID-19 Impact on College Admissions



Safety Schools

Safety considerations are paramount



Testing Implications

Many colleges have stated that they will be test-optional

Colleges will be flexible and sensitive about academic changes and disruptions



GPA

GPA more important than ever

Hybrid instruction

“Whole person/holistic review” will be emphasized



Commitment

Colleges expect students to make the most of the educational opportunities within own context



02

Setting the Stage

Academic RIGOR

What is your cumulative GPA thus far?

Weighted 5.0 for an A in an AP, 4.5 for an A in accelerated or honors classes.
Colleges will look at your weighted CGPA (taking into account academic rigor – AP/Honors classes)

Required

-23 credits to graduate

Transcripts

-Check your transcript (passport name, DOB)
-Official copies of previous high school transcripts if you transferred to SMIC



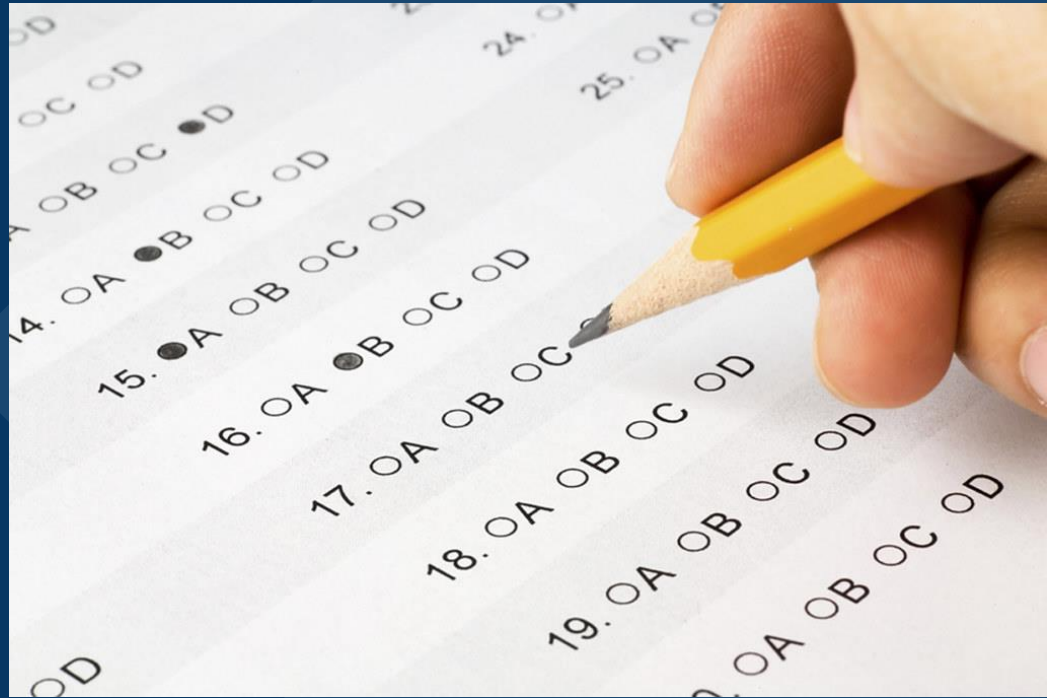
- All experiences since 9th grade
- Volunteering, internships, clubs, sports
- Accomplishments or awards received
- Showcase your contributions to your campus community beyond the classroom



Internships are valuable and can help develop interpersonal skills, networking, confidence as well as providing “real world” experience

03

Standardized Testing





SAT/ACT

Choose SAT or ACT to showcase your academic abilities



TOEFL/IELTS

Sign up for TOEFL/IELTS this summer, in case you need to retake again before fall



REGISTRATION

College Board

TOEFL – ets.org

IELTS ielts.org
(UK, Australian schools)



SAT

Impressive Scores Essential
(SAT -1600 top score)



ACT

Top score 36



Advanced Placement (APs)

Top score=5; Pass=3



HS Transcripts

Grades 9, 10, 11, 12.
As & Bs demonstrate
strength across all
academic subjects



TOEFL/IELTS

TOEFL Top score=120
IELTS for UK:
(max score 9)



Additional

Extracurricular activities,
internships, essays,
recommendation letters,
interviews



04

Application Process

We are **educators** –
not *agents*;
our goal is to
empower students to
take the lead in their
applications.

Services Provided During the Application Process

1. Packaging of each student's application file
2. Individualized assistance and follow-up
3. Mailing/uploading of the transcripts, recommendation letters and essential materials
4. Helping students upload required documents
5. Mid-year and final reports for the Common App/Coalition
6. Preparing an updated school profiles every year
7. Counselor recommendations (GAP and ET students)
8. Arranging for college admissions rep visits to SMIC
9. Weekly Life Skills classes (grades 9-12)



Research and discuss your choices with your counselors, teachers, admissions representatives, classmates, friends, and family

College Action Plan



List the pros and cons of each university based on size, location, climate, cost, culture, intended field of study, majors, internships, and career development opportunities.



Manage your expectations of getting admitted into dream, target or safety schools. Consider acceptance rates, middle 50 percentile SAT/ACT score range.

Make Smart Choices

Limit your list to ~10 colleges to have better focus, efficiency, and ultimately greater effectiveness and success.



Undecided is ok!

Students do not need to declare a major until sophomore or junior year for most US colleges (aside from engineering, business).

Changing majors is not unusual; fulfill prerequisites then declare

Applying undecided won't hurt your chances of acceptance (express areas of interest)

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Submit names of 2 teachers, complete the Student Information Form.

Counselors will give recommenders folders with relevant documents (report cards, Student Information forms, transcripts)

We recommend 1 humanities and 1 science or math teacher

WHO TO ASK

Recent teachers are better (10th or 11th grade)

Someone who knows you well (is familiar with your child's personality, character, student habits, integrity)

Can comment on your demonstrated achievement in the classroom and expressed potential for success at the college level

The College Essay

- Get a **head start** on college essays and your personal statement this summer! Don't wait until the last minute!
- **Become familiar with the prompts:** Common Application and Coalition essay prompts usually do not change year over year.
- **Retain your voice.** Have friends/parents/teachers read your essays; get feedback but remain original
- Write in a **natural manner** – avoid using (or misusing) overly complicated vocabulary words
- Write about **specific experiences** which reveal character, intellectual, and personal development

05

Admissions Timeline



MID MAY

- Develop your College Lists
- Draft your personal statement
- Register for standardized tests (when available)



JUNE

- Will you apply ED, EA, Rolling or Regular?
- Follow-up with recommenders



MAY/EARLY JUNE

- SAT/ACT Review classes (optional)
- Research specific application requirements and deadlines

JULY/AUGUST

- Internships, work or volunteer
- Find meaningful & productive experiences
- Common App, Coalition, OUAC (Canada), UCAS (UK), HKG applications

**Summer
2021:
Timeline**

**Senior
Year:
Timeline**

SEPTEMBER

Finalize essays, testing,
follow up w/recommenders
and begin applications

JANUARY

Regular Application Deadlines
(majority in January)

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER

EA/ED Applications
Withdraw other applications
if admitted to ED
UC schools
Rolling Admissions

MARCH-MAY

Notifications
May 1st Decision Day
Pay deposit
Final transcripts and test results sent
Wait-lists follow up
Student Visa (US)
Receive I-20
Pay DS-160
SEVIS Fees and Arrange US
Consulate Interview for F1 visa

Research Financial Aid Information



COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE (CSS)

<https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/prf/index.jsp>



Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

(for US citizens and greencard holders)

<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>



Bank Statements/Certificate of Deposit

SAVINGS PROOF

For students who are not holding Canadian or American passports, you will need to provide proof of savings from your local bank

MINIMUM DEPOSITS

The deposit minimum needs to be at least the cost of one year's tuition plus room and board (cover the cost of attendance for one academic year)

MULTIPLE COPIES

Students are recommended to have proof of savings certificate for each school by early fall; if you apply to 10 schools – you may need 10 copies



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Placements & Resources

SMIC-I Class of 2021 – Highlights of Acceptances to Top Universities

USA

Washington University St.
Louis (MO) - #16 US

Emory University (GA) - #21
US

University of Southern
California (CA) - #24 US

New York University (NY) -
#30 US

UC Santa Barbara - #30 US

UC San Diego - #35 US

UC Irvine -#35 US

Georgia Institute of
Technology (GA) - #35 US

UC Davis - #39 US

Boston University (MA) -
#42 US

Brandeis University (MA) -
US #42

Case Western Reserve
University (OH) - #42 US

University of Illinois Urbana
Champaign (IL) - #47 US

University of Washington –
Seattle (WA) - #58 US

US Liberal Arts and
Art/Music

Swarthmore College (PA) -
#3 Liberal Arts

Vassar College (NY) - #13
Liberal arts

University of Rochester –
The Eastman School of
Music (#5 Top Music
School)

School of Visual Arts (NY)

School of the Art Institute
Chicago (IL)

SMIC-I Class of 2021 – Highlights of Acceptances to Top Universities

UK, Canada and Australia

Imperial College London (UK) - #9 QS World

University College London (UK) - #10 QS
World

University of Edinburgh (Scotland) – #20 QS
World

University of Toronto (Canada) - #25 QS
World

University of Melbourne (Australia) - #31 QS
World

University of Sydney (Australia) - #40 QS
World

University of British Columbia (Canada) -
#45 QS World

Middle East

New York University – Abu Dhabi (UAE)

Carnegie Mellon University – Qatar

Asia

Duke University – Kunshan (China)

Hong Kong University of Science and
Technology

Korean Advanced Institute of Science and
Technology (Korea)

Waseda University (Japan)



COLLEGE BOARD

collegereadiness.collegeboard.org

BigFutures.com

COLLEGES THAT CHANGE LIVES: ctcl.org

Fiske Guide To Colleges

The Princeton Review (online and print catalog)

COMMON APP: commonapp.org

COALITION: coalitionforcollegeaccess.org

UCAS (U.K.), www.ucas.org

OUAC (Canada – Ontario colleges) –

www.ouac.on.ca



QS World rankings

Unigo.com

colleges.niche.com

collegeprowler.com

FAFSA

collegedata.com

US News and World Report – online

Univ. of California <http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu>

National Center for Education Statistics

<https://nces.ed.gov/COLLEGENAVIGATOR/>



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Ask us your questions!



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