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Dear Counselor:

I recently counseled my daughter, who graduated from College in December, about some of the things she will need to know as she embarks on her new career. We had discussed these in the past, but this was a key time in her life to again address these important issues that aren't typically taught in school.

These included:
* Using credit cards to establish credit and the importance of paying her bills in full every month to avoid crushing interest
* The difference between good debt (home mortgage/appreciating assets/investments) and bad debt (credit card/auto loan/impulse purchases she can't afford)
* Opening up a 401K plan at her new job and where to invest her contributions while discussing the power of compound interest
* Types of insurance she needs and the ways to search for the best rates (auto, health, etc.)
* Safety tips as she navigates her new career in a large metropolitan city.

Surprisingly, these “life skills” are not taught in most schools and it is imperative that parents discuss these key things that young people should know about as they begin their post college careers. Unfortunately, many of your students have not been taught these general life skills by their parents so it is yet another thing that you as their Counselor can discuss with them as they begin their post high school careers.

This issue we have some great content for you that I hope you will find beneficial. Many of the articles were written by your peers, Counselors at High Schools, that contacted us and wanted to share their knowledge. We are always open to great content so if you have something you would like to share in a future issue or in our blog please send it our way.

As a reader of this publication you will most likely receive a survey from Paramount Research next month that asks you about topics you would like to see covered in future issues. Please let us know as this helps guide us as we plan for future content.

Thanks again for all you do for students and best of luck as you finish out the 2019/2020 school year.

Sincerely,

Jason Bullock, CBC
Publisher, LINK for Counselors
Jason@linkforcounselors.com
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So, What Are Your Students Planning on Studying in College?

By Brittany Maschal

For some students, this question (usually from a well-meaning adult) can result in feelings of academic-hopelessness...or a quick reply of stop talking to me you are stressing me out! Many 17-year-olds are genuinely undecided, and I am here to tell you that being undecided and applying to college as an “undecided” applicant, is not necessarily a bad thing.

There is a big difference between being undecided and applying—when asked by specific schools about your academic interests—as “undecided,” and not having any academic interests at all. Colleges ask questions about academic interests in the form of an intended major because they are curious about what excites students intellectually. What subjects or topics could you go down the YouTube or Ted-ED or Ted X rabbit hole researching? What books can you get lost in for days? What are the debates in class you feel compelled to speak up and participate in? What issues do you follow in the news? What they are not looking for is an exact college and career path or an applicant who seemingly has it figured out.

Take, for example, an old student of mine, Sammie. Sammie loved science but he also loved art. On their faces, not two subjects that seem to go hand in hand. Sammie had his sights set on a career in the medical field one day, perhaps as a researcher or professor. He had taken high-level science classes, read journals in his spare time, and completed an independent study in 10th and 11th grade with a faculty member at a local college. Art, however, was not something he wanted to lose in his college career. Art was not an activity he pursued formally outside of art classes in middle and high school but it was something he did for fun, and he even had an Instagram account where he posted his art—all of it being science and nature related.

At many of the colleges on his list, he could only enter one possible major. And, despite hearing from peers that putting undecided is “bad” or means you don’t know what you want to do in college (both not factual), he decided to put undecided for a number of reasons: he wanted to study science but he also wanted to study art, and his main extracurricular activities spoke to both of these interests. Undecided was the most honest and accurate answer and an answer that he could explain in many school’s applications via supplemental essays.

Now, if Sammie was interested in a career in the medical field one day, perhaps as a researcher or professor, but had not done any related extracurriculars and had no extra art activities either, we might look at this differently. Applying as undecided still remains the most accurate option, but here is where an issue presents itself (no matter what major he might have entered in the app): for
schools that require supplemental essays that are “why school” or “what do you want to study at our school” in nature, what will Sammie write about?

Of course, he can write the essays using his high school coursework as the core way he figured out his academic interests, or maybe he touches on wanting a “helping profession” and how that matches with his core values, and maybe he even goes as far as focusing on non-academic elements of why he wants to go to a certain school—but college, above all else, is about pursuing a course of academic study. The readers of applications, when they ask questions specifically about academic and intellectual interests, want to see how you have tried on the possible paths you note you might pursue. This gives the reader a sense of your commitment to these possible paths and helps them better understand the experiences you will possibly be bringing to their school. For students, it is also much easier to write this type of essay when they have “stuff” to write about and are not only relying on a hypothetical interest or future.

I want to make clear that not all students have the ability to pursue academic or intellectual pursuits outside of the classroom. They may have family responsibilities, a job, or little access to in-person opportunities that provide immersion in a subject area or topic. This can be noted on the application and will be taken into consideration. In this case, students can build out their academic narrative in other ways: research online if they have computer access (school and public libraries can also be helpful in this way), work with a teacher at their school to design a project or suggest activities that work with the time they have, or get back to basics and hit the books.

You don’t need a ton of time or money to explore your interests and show your desire to begin to understand what makes you tick intellectually. And, once you do find out, it becomes easy to convey to schools what path you might take and most importantly, why—even if that means you apply as undecided.

Dr. Brittany Maschal worked in admissions and student services at Princeton, Penn and JHU, and is the founder of Brittany Maschal Consulting, http://brittany.consulting. She can be reached at bmaschal@gmail.com.
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Helping Students
What Can You Do to Help Your Students?

By Elizabeth Drucker

As a school counselor, you have a lot on your plate. With writing college recommendations, helping students prepare for standardized tests, and planning their high school curriculums, there might not seem to be much time left over to help with anything else. But, in your role, there is still a lot you can do to help students who are struggling with academics and personal issues. Whatever the case, try to remain patient: most students are not purposely being difficult just to make your job harder.

★ Teach Coping Skills

High school is the perfect time for students to learn how to cope with anxiety and other forms of distress before they are thrown into the turbulent environment of college and the “real world.” Anxiety can be a very real problem many students face, but simple techniques like deep breathing and mindfulness can go a long way in reducing discomfort. Many of your students are probably very overwhelmed with the whole college admissions maze and you are in the ideal position to smooth over the process. Try to keep your students as organized as possible and aware of the timeline of the admissions process to ensure that they are not scrambling to meet college application requirements at the last minute. With mindfulness, it is important to focus on the present moment, so as not to get too overwhelmed with thoughts about the past and the future. Since many students arrive at college not knowing how to deal with the increased pressures, learning how to adjust to uncertainty and overwhelming academic situations will help them be more successful.

★ Consider Academic Accommodations

For your students who have a diagnosed mental or physical disability, one of the best things you can do is inform them about academic accommodations they can receive at your high school and beyond, in college. It might be helpful to partner with the social worker and school psychologist to develop an IEP or 504 Plan. It is also essential to keep the lines of communication open between your students’ parents and teachers. At the beginning of the semester or the emergence of a problem, it would help to have a team meeting with everyone involved in the students’ education. The academic accommodations you help arrange for your students, such as extended time on exams and flexibility with assignment deadlines and class attendance, can also form the basis of such support in college.

★ Make Referrals

If you notice that a student is experiencing symptoms of depression or anxiety that seem uncharacteristic for him or her, it might be necessary to suggest medical treatment. This could mean a variety of things: psychological testing, psychiatric diagnosis and medication, and psychotherapy to keep learning and reinforcing those very important coping skills. It is not your responsibility to act as a therapist and this might even feel uncomfortable for you. Support groups for families touched by mental illness or other medical conditions are also helpful to promote
inclusiveness and a feeling that they are not alone. It might help to have a directory of medical/mental health professionals that other students have liked, so you can refer out with confidence.

★ Stay Positive

You want your students to do well, so when they struggle, it is logical that you will feel discouraged. It is important to remember that a pessimistic attitude and a general sense of hopelessness often comes with depressive illnesses. So, you should do whatever you can to be uplifting and focus on the positive. Help your students to make a list of things that they like about themselves and encourage them to do at least one thing a day that makes them feel good. Positive affirmations are also helpful to boost your students’ morale as well as their self-esteem.

★ Break Things Down

When students need more help than you can give them, it could help to make a battle plan. For example, if your student is overwhelmed about an upcoming history test, a paper that is due next week, and preparing for the upcoming SAT, it helps to break things down into manageable chunks. For each major hurdle, your students could write all the various tasks that go along with it. This could include making vocabulary flashcards for the SAT, doing research for the paper one day, and brainstorming another day. Encourage your students to do a little work for each class, every day, if they can because this is a crucial skill to learn in college. Your students will find that working in advance of a deadline helps with anxiety and stress, but also quite often allows students to do better work. It is better to turn in a paper that has been thoroughly edited than one that has been rushed through and has grammar and spelling errors.

★ Therapeutic Schools

No matter what you do, there will be the occasional student that you will not be able to help. Students with certain medical or emotional issues may fare better in a more specialized environment where they have the resources and professionals who can teach them the skills they need to be successful. It may not be the first step in helping a student, but a therapeutic school can also offer group therapy where they will meet other teens their age who are going through similar issues. These schools are often linked up with a hospital or medical center, so they also provide good diagnostic support when you are not exactly sure what the problem is. Sometimes, students need a break and can come back to your school after a short while, once they have a plan for better functioning in a mainstream high school.
Colleges want to accept students that are likely to contribute to their campus community of students, faculty, and staff, and if those new enrollees can positively affect the broader community in which the schools are located, all the better.

So, how do admission officers determine likely contributors? What exactly, are they looking for?

We answered those questions in our September 2017 blog, “What Matters to Admission Officers?” We included these findings (some of which are bolded for emphasis here) about admission decisions for selective colleges:

- Colleges value these factors: family obligations, what students learn from engagement in their communities and helping others, how students might impact college campuses in meaningful ways, and authenticity and honesty in their college applications
- Amherst measures depth of commitment in activities, looks for bridge-building capability and the context of achievement
- Carnegie Mellon uses a 1-to-4 scale for leadership, service, grit, etc., among other measures
- MIT looks explicitly at attributes such as persistence, organizational skills, and resilience in order to predict academic success and a match for MIT’s culture.
- Rochester includes a supplemental essay that focuses on community impact and personal values (persistence, compassion, etc).
- Swarthmore has added flags for specific characteristics, such as empathy and finding solutions in collaborative ways.
- Wesleyan uses a 9-point scale to measure several personal qualities, such as leadership, persistence, and grit.

We followed that by saying...

The thread that runs through all of the above is clear: Character increasingly counts in admission decisions…and if you can use an application’s activities section, your résumé, and your essays to demonstrate that you “walk the walk” of valuing family obligations, learning from your engagement in your community and helping others, compassion, empathy, bridge-building/collaborative efforts to solve problems, persistence, grit, organizational and leadership skills, and resilience, you have a good chance of standing out from the crowd of competitors.

I’m going to be focusing on the application essay/personal statement in this article. The obvious goal: to help your students end up with an essay that demonstrates (shows, not tells), by what they do and have done, that they embody one or more of those or other comparable characteristics.

What follows is a step-by-step guide—aimed at students—for beginning that process.
Articulate
Aspiring
Athletic
Authentic
Balanced
Caring
Cheerful
Compassionate
Conciliatory
Confident
Conscientious
Considerate
Contemplative
Cooperative
Courageous
Courteous
Creative
Curious
Dedicated
Directed
Disciplined
Empathetic
Energetic
Enthusiastic
Farsighted
Flexible
Focused
Freethinking
Friendly
Hardworking
Honest
Honorable
Humble
Idealistic
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Kind
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Reflective
Reliable
Resourceful
Respectful
Responsible
Self-critical
Self-reflexive
Self-reliant
Sharing
Skillful
Sociable
Solid
Stable
Strong
Studious
Sympathetic
Systematic
Tolerant
Understanding
Undogmatic
Well-read
Well-rounded
Start by choosing one or more of the above characteristics, along with others from the following list of 76 positive personality traits, so that you end up with about ten. Think of at least one example of you demonstrating each of the ten traits, writing a word or two to remind you of each example.

Cut down to five your first list of ten. Base your five choices on the desirability of those traits and the strength of your examples that demonstrate each.

From your truncated list of five, discard the two that are the weakest in terms of desirability and the strength of your examples. If any two – or all three – of them overlap in some way, you probably have the focus of your essay. If there’s no overlap, you can pick what you think is the best of the three or engage in clustering and/or free-writing for each of the three to help you develop details and ultimately decide which of the three to work on first.

Remember that the last prompt for each of the Common and Coalition Apps is “topic of your choice,” and that gives you the freedom to tell a story that demonstrates (shows, not tells) that you embody one or more of the positive personality traits that admissions officers like to see in applicants.

While what I’ve described above is far from the only method for developing an application essay topic, it’s a structured one that has a specific aim, and because of those things, it has a good chance of being helpful to your students.

Good luck to you and to all of them.

Jason Robinovitz is the Chief Operating Officer of all of the Score At The Top Learning Centers and Score Academy schools and is the team leader for Score’s staff of more than 100 tutors, educational consultants, directors, and other staff. Jason is also directly involved in providing educational consulting services for college, boarding school, and law school clients, and he’s an active member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association, the National Association for College Admission Counseling, and the Secondary School Admission Test Board. Jason can be reached via email at Jason@scoreatthetop.com.
ROTC Scholarship Programs are a great source of funding for many students

By Lt. Colonel Robert Kirkland

The ROTC scholarship is one of the most valuable college scholarships in the United States. It pays up to full tuition, a monthly salary, and a yearly book allowance for those applicants who wish to become officers in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines.

Strictly speaking, an ROTC participant is not joining the Armed Forces. Participants will not be sent to "boot camp." However, the primary purpose of the ROTC program is to produce its officers, so they must agree to serve in the military after graduation. Initially enrolling (the first two years of college) does not obligate participants to serve unless they have also received a scholarship. Scholarship winners generally serve four years on active duty.

ROTC classes normally involve one elective class and one lab per semester. Although the classes involve hands-on work as well as classroom work, they are standard college classes that fit into a normal academic schedule. These courses can help students with personal and academic decision making while giving them the tools to exercise leadership in college life, even before graduating and becoming officers.

ROTC cadets and midshipman have the same lifestyles and academic schedules as any other college students. They join fraternities and sororities. They participate in varsity team and individual sports. They take part in community service projects. Most of the intensive training for ROTC takes place over the summer when officer candidates are not attending school.

In order to apply for a scholarship, one does so online. Each Service’s ROTC program has a scholarship page which can be found via a standard search engine. The application opens up each year starting between April and June of the candidate's high school junior year. Scholarship selection and notification are done on a rolling basis starting in September through March of the candidate’s senior year.

The application consists of chronicling the candidate's scholar, athlete, leader accomplishments: SAT/ACT scores, unweighted GPA, and high school courses; high school athletics as well as any other individual or team athletic participation; and leadership positions held. In addition, each Service requires its own physical fitness test as well as an interview normally held at an ROTC program college or university location.

Most ROTC scholarship recipients have a strong scholar, athlete, leader profile: over a 3.0 GPA (unweighted), top 20% of the class, SAT/ACT over 1200/24, winners of varsity letters, and team captains/leaders of school or outside organizations. In order to receive a scholarship, the candidate must also pass a physical and be free of any medical issues which would prevent the candidate from being deployable worldwide as a military member.
The part of the application that receives the greatest weight is the official interview at the ROTC program (about 40-50% of the total). Preparing and doing well in the interview is essential for selection. The importance of practicing interview techniques with a real person—whether it be a parent, relative, or neighbor—is essential. If the candidate has an acquaintance who is currently serving or retired officer in the service component that the candidate is applying for and can practice with that person—the better. The second most important area is the SAT/ACT score. All Services take the best score into their calculations and most “super score” the test. So it is to the candidate’s advantage to take the test multiple times to achieve the best outcome. Finally, the physical fitness test and scoring well on it can help separate the candidate from other applicants.

It should be noted that some ROTC scholarships are not full four-year scholarships. Some also do not pay full tuition. All Naval ROTC scholarships pay full tuition at both public and private schools. Half of the Army scholarships pay full tuition and half pay for three years. Only 10% of Air Force ROTC scholarships are full four years’ scholarships (known as Type 1), 20% pay up to $18,000 per year for four years (Type 2), and the remaining 70% are four year in-state tuition scholarships (Type 7).

The fact that many scholarships are not full scholarships is another reason for striving for the best performance on the interview, SAT/ACT, physical fitness test and other parts of the application in order to win a full four-year scholarship. The difference in benefits from a 3-year versus a 4-year Army ROTC scholarship or a Type 1 versus a Type 7 Air Force ROTC scholarship can be worth thousands of dollars per year.

It should be noted that some colleges or universities may be better to take ROTC at than others from a financial standpoint. Some schools help make up the difference for those scholarship recipients who receive something other than a full four-year scholarship by providing a first-year tuition scholarship or grant aid to close the gap between the scholarship and the tuition cost. There are a number of state schools that consider out of state ROTC scholarship cadets “in-state” students. Going to such a state school can be particularly valuable to Air Force Type 7 recipients who are attending from out of state. There are a number of schools that also give free room and board to ROTC scholarship winners. This can make the ROTC scholarship a “full ride” scholarship with tuition and fees, books, room and board, and a stipend all provided. At high-priced private schools, such an ROTC scholarship can be worth $300,000 or more over four years.

**Takeaways for winning a scholarship:**

- The ROTC interview is the most important thing to do well on. Prepare extensively for it.
A good SAT/ACT score is a way to separate yourself from other candidates.

Do well on the individual Service's fitness test.

Have a solid athlete and leader profile. Take a college prep high school curriculum and get the best unweighted GPA you can.

**Advice after you win a scholarship:**

Attend the college or university which is the best fit for you. ROTC is only part of your college experience. Most of your time in college will not be in ROTC so make sure you will be happy at that college.

Since many colleges will be a good fit for most students, it is worthwhile to explore colleges and universities that provide additional financial support to ROTC scholarship recipients—whether that is a scholarship to bridge the first year of a three year scholarship, grant aid to close the gap between the scholarship and tuition cost, in-state status to out of state students, or a room and board scholarship.

Indeed, the ROTC scholarship is a great opportunity for those students who wish to serve as officers in the United States Armed Forces. By understanding how applicants are selected for such awards, you can best prepare to win one of these valuable scholarships and attend a college or university which will provide the least out of pocket cost to you.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert Kirkland (U.S. Army, Retired) was one of the few officers ever to command two separate Army ROTC programs—Claremont McKenna College from 2006 to 2009 and the University of Southern California from 2010 to 2013. He is a graduate of the United States Military Academy, West Point and has also earned a MA and Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh. He served over 25 years on active duty.

The author and his team provide in-depth, personal consulting to ROTC applicants and their parents to help win these scholarships. Website: rotcconsulting.com.
While there are reasons to celebrate the many K-12 initiatives to improve student participation in STEM programs, some experts are concerned that students exposed to it early often shift away – either finding that it isn’t what they expected or is too challenging.

“STEM drift,” where students lose interest in the math, science or technology fields, may be nearly as big a challenge as initially getting students involved, according to Robin Rennie, director of a program at Michigan State University designed to keep students engaged in STEM in college. A primary reason, she says, is they aren’t prepared.

“Many students don’t receive the pre-college math and science training needed to pursue degrees and, ultimately, careers in science-related fields,” says Rennie. “Based on pre-MSU math testing scores, the statistical prediction for these students to successfully graduate in a STEM field was less than six percent.”

Other researchers have found that students drop out of STEM programs in college because they aren’t informed about the options for STEM careers or struggle with the pressure of the course work. Meanwhile, other experts say schools don’t adequately keep them engaged by making the work interesting.

Jamie Richardson, principal of LaCreole Middle School in Dallas, OR, and a Digital Principal of the Year for the National Association of Secondary School Principals, says the trend is even evident as students move into more challenging courses in high school.

“These students who excel in these subjects when they are younger often succeed, but they also often find that higher-level math or science courses are difficult, or not what they expect, and they move away from STEM,” he says. “If they persisted, some of these kids could be very successful and make a great contribution in these fields.”

A 2009 study from MIT indicated that young people are interested in STEM at an early age, but begin to lose interest as they become older due to a lack of interaction with mentors and role models in the STEM fields, and because the work was different from what they imagined.

Michigan State is trying to solve the problem at the college level with a program funded by a $5 million grant from the Herbert and Grace Dow Foundation that gives these students extra support academically and socially. Each Dow STEM scholar attends an academic orientation the summer before their freshman year to meet other students, faculty, and staff to ease the transition from high school. They also are assigned a peer mentor to help with the transition and to provide social and academic support throughout the school year. They are also invited to participate in a variety of activities.

A gateway summer course in math is also provided – a hybrid with on-campus and off-site classes, phone and video support, and online programming. When they complete that course, they are enrolled in specially designed MSU courses in math and chemistry, and a first-year seminar designed to build success skills for upper-level STEM courses. As a result, about 75 percent of the students who took the summer course were able to start with the rest of their peers in the entry-level math course, and more than 80 percent earned overall GPAs of 3.0 or higher, with one-third earning 3.5 or higher, Rennie says. Demographically, 77 percent of scholars were female, 55 percent were eligible for Pell Grants and 52 percent were first-generation students.

She and other experts say that in high schools, counselors could improve the chances that students will continue in these fields by checking in with them about concerns they have, and assessing how well prepared they might be based on their performance in class, standardized test scores and
grades in STEM courses, particularly in AP classes which might mirror the types of work they’ll do in college. Then they could help them find remedial work if they need it—tutors or online instruction that might help them fill the gaps. The MIT study showed that often these students have concerns about their ability to perform well in advanced STEM courses and will likely welcome the support.

Counselors could also ask teachers in those subject areas to let them know about students who might be struggling or losing interest. In addition, for students facing college, counselors may just want to prepare them for the atmosphere and the rigors of courses on campus—with college trips that take them specifically to meet with students or teachers in STEM programs. They can ask those representatives, or other people in the field, including alumni of the high school or parents, to come to the school too and specifically speak frankly about the challenges and opportunities in the fields.

Richardson notes, however, that students should not be discouraged from considering STEM fields because of their academic work or fears of succeeding in the future. “Sometimes we get bogged down in the numbers and the less interesting science without showing them how engaging studying and working in these fields can be,” he said.

Joseph Krajcik, an education professor at Michigan State University who has studied the issue, says he also strongly believes the students move away from STEM most often because they don’t grow to see value in the STEM subject fields. “The evidence doesn’t suggest it is because the science gets harder, but because learners no longer see why they should spend time on it,” he says. “The science ideas, for instance, seem disconnected from their lives and

Here are five ways counselors can support students who are interested in STEM or show promise in those areas of study and help them avoid losing interest or drifting away from those fields.

**Show the payoff.** Students should have a clear view of the wide range of STEM careers. Some experts say we spend a lot of time on subjects like robotics and coding, when STEM can apply to lucrative work in everything from careers in design or health to work with animals.

**Be honest.** Students should understand upfront that real study in a STEM field is going to involve work in less glamorous math, science or data classes. But help them understand that doing the early work in these areas will help them tackle challenging and more engaging classes, and those courses, in turn, will help them have options in and succeed in a range of careers.

**Look for signs.** Communicate to STEM teachers that they should pass along word about any students who are struggling or losing interest. Watch for students whose grades in core STEM classes are dropping or those who move away from taking these courses when they have previously shown an interest. A loss of attention to these classes based on a well-considered decision is fine, but a student dropping out of a STEM program might also just need a pep talk.

**Prep without fear.** Be honest with students about the challenges involved in some STEM coursework, but don’t overstate the difficulty. Get them support where needed.

**Collect resources**...for students who need anything from a pep talk or tutoring to good online coursework or inspirational videos. Be prepared to help students get good information about STEM fields and their value. Especially consider enlisting students or younger professionals who can talk to prospective students about both the challenges of STEM careers and the benefits.
they don’t want to put the effort into learning. They lose interest because they don’t see the value in sticking with it. And of course, once they fall behind, it becomes harder and harder to stay engaged and learn.

Aimee Froze, a computer science teacher with the Kimberly Area School District in Appleton, WI, agrees and says that while students need to understand the “nuts and bolts” of the math, science or technology, it can be presented in an engaging way. “It’s important to make the experiences diverse and engaging, going beyond coding to include robots, animation and the internet of things, to show students the wide range of applications,” she says. “Show them how computer science serves a meaningful purpose and solves real problems, so they understand that it is more than just coding or game design.”

According to Sonya Hayes, a professor of educational leadership at the University of Tennessee and former principal, who also has written about and studied the issue, it is particularly worrisome that more girls lose interest in STEM—especially since there is a deficit of them in the fields to begin with. She says that while it appears more girls are getting bachelor’s degrees in STEM fields, they aren’t getting into specific jobs in technology, science or math. Federal studies show that 58 percent of all bachelor’s degrees were awarded to women, but in STEM fields 36 percent of diplomas went to women and 64 percent to men. In addition, the majority of women STEM graduates pursued a degree in social and life sciences, she says. “So, it appears that the trend continues of women receiving more bachelor’s degrees overall, but fewer in engineering and technology,” she says. “Often, today, they seem to be introduced to those fields but move away from them.” She says girls may need extra encouragement from counselors and get more information about the careers they can choose.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC – area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, DE.

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Dr. Harvey has transformed Hampton University into a world-class leader in higher education. Hampton University remains committed to impacting the global community via scholarly service through various initiatives that include cancer research and treatment, STEM education and training for minorities, and inspiring the next generation of digital content creators.
Lowering the Stakes to Help Students Write Better College Essays

By Kim Lifton

We all know that the competition to get into the nation’s top colleges gets tougher every year, but that’s not because students are smarter or more qualified than they were five or ten years ago. It’s a simple matter of impossible math.

Year after year, more kids apply for the same number of available spaces at the most selective schools. It’s impossible for them all to get in.

Sharing some perspective with your next crop of college applicants before they take off for summer vacation can go a long way toward helping them see how their essays fit into the larger application mosaic. Many pieces of that mosaic are already in place: They took AP Chemistry, or they didn’t. They wrote for the school paper, or they didn’t. They played tennis since age 4, or they didn’t. No matter what the mosaic looks like, most students are thinking about topics to wow you, and the admissions teams, rather than focusing on what they want to say. They might freeze up because they believe they cannot live up to the expectations of the adults they trust.

The more we raise the stakes for our students, the more stuck they feel. You can lower the stakes by encouraging your students to think about their best characteristics first before they fixate on topics over the summer break.

Once they figure out how to demonstrate those characteristics, they will relax and just write. Even average students can write compelling, effective essays that stand out when they focus on their traits and characteristics. Why? Because those essays are genuine, and they answer the prompt.

Demystify Admissions

In an attempt to calm our students, we try to help them understand the admissions industry overall. While none of this will be news to you, I hope that sharing a little piece of our approach will give you some new talking points to calm your students and their parents before the angst creeps into their lives. I can almost guarantee that this will help your students write more effective essays.

Here’s how we explain the situation to our students:

► Because it is so hard to get into the top name-brand schools (think Stanford, Harvard, UC Berkeley, MIT, Vanderbilt, Columbia, University of Chicago, to name a few), the students who are qualified for the most selective colleges look elsewhere to improve their chances.

► The Common Application, Coalition App and other platforms make applying to college so easy that students frequently check boxes for schools they might normally ignore if more effort were required.

► This practice helps colleges increase their applicant pool. It works well for schools because it makes them look more selective. If a school can accept only 1,200 students and 6,000 apply, the admit rate—or the percentage of students the school accepts—will be 20%. If 12,000 apply, the college will enroll the same number of first-year students, but the admit rate will plummet to 10%. On paper, it will look like this college has become more selective (“We accept only 10% of applicants.”)
To see how ease of applying affects the admit numbers at popular colleges and universities, look at the University of Michigan, which began accepting the Common App in 2010. That year, applications jumped by 25%; U-M received 39,584 applications, and its admit rate dropped to 38.9% — the lowest percentage since 2005. Five years after joining the Common App (2015), applications to U-M surpassed 50,000, and the admit rate plunged to 26.3%.

Break Down the Buzzwords

Before your students choose a topic or write a draft, make sure they understand the role that essays play in the admissions package overall. Try moving beyond buzzwords like leadership, grit, and authenticity. We often start by breaking down one of the most common buzzwords: Passion.

Colleges say things like this:

Show us your passion!

► What is your passion?
► Share your passion.
► Is there something you are so passionate about that your application might be incomplete without it?

Rather than agonize about the word passion, you can help your students focus on what the prompt is really asking. Colleges care about core beliefs; they want to know what matters to the student. To start this important conversation, ask questions like these:

► What do you care about?
► What do you do in your free time?

Do

► Do help your students parse prompts; discuss what they mean and why colleges ask these questions.
► Do brainstorm ideas with your students.
► Do provide a brief overview of the essay’s significance within the admission process. Use the word “opportunity” whenever possible. Talk about “effective” essays, not “good” or “well-written” essays.
► Do share a positive trait you see in your student to start a conversation.
► Do stay positive and offer encouragement.

Don’t

► Don’t tell students which prompt to select.
► Don’t tell students which trait you think colleges prefer in prospective students.
► Don’t tell students what to write, which topic you think will work best or which words to use.
► Don’t say the essay does not matter, or that admission representatives don’t read them.
What would you do right now if you had nowhere to be and nothing you had to do?

Maybe one of your students walks the dog every day without being asked; another student might relax before final exams by drawing cartoon figures. Consider why they are drawn to these activities. In both instances, these activities show that a young person takes responsibility or knows how to manage stress. Colleges care about that. They care about how your students think and what's important to them.

A few years ago, I moderated a college essay session at the NACAC conference in San Diego. We had representatives from UC Berkeley, Cornell and two high school counselors. During the session, we discussed the mixed messages that permeate the industry and ways to make essays less confusing for students.

One of the counselors on the panel, Ed Schoenberg, who recently retired from Bellarmine College Prep in San Jose, shared a powerful story about working with a student confused by the buzzword leadership.

The son of a janitor at Ed’s school noticed that his classmates were leaving the cafeteria in a mess after lunch. The student organized a group of a half-dozen kids who picked up trash, so the school’s cleaning staff wouldn’t be overburdened. He wrote a beautiful essay that demonstrated that he cared about others and knew how to motivate his peers.

Ed knew how to guide the conversation to help draw out his student’s best traits, so he could find a story to illustrate it. You can do that, too.

If you can mute the outside noise that confuses your students, and put this industry into some perspective, they will be in a much better position to navigate the application process, so they can write effective college application essays that admissions teams will want to read.

Kim Lifton, a Top Voice in Education, LinkedIn, is President of Wow Writing Workshop. Lifton manages a team of professional writers and teachers who understand the writing process inside and out. The Wow Method has been used by students to write application essays and resumes; by professionals to develop college essay boot camps and improve their essay coaching practices; and by English teachers to improve student writing skills. She can be reached at kim@wowwritingworkshop.com

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You can hear it in a third-grade history class, where a teacher takes time to explain the different jobs that our society needs—or in a hi-tech college campus incubator, where students themselves are creating successful companies before they’ve even entered the workforce. New ideas about college and career readiness are increasingly popping up in education at all levels.

As it becomes a priority—even driven by requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act—in K-12 education it presents new opportunities for students, colleges, and affects the work of the people hoping to find the right fit for both.

College and career counselors and consultants may find they are working with students who are more clear about their interests and savvy about their options and with colleges that have sophisticated new tools to recruit students and assess them. It may make life easier, but also put new demands on them to keep pace. And certainly, there will be more focus on students choosing post-secondary options. The process for exploring, applying for, financing, and enrolling in college is likely to become more high tech and perhaps more complex.

Here are some tips that might get students excited about college and make your work with them on the college application process simpler and more effective in this atmosphere, without costing much in time and resources.

10 Tips to Make Your Job Easier

By Jim Paterson

START EARLY

If you don’t work with students in elementary or middle school, make those connections to feeder schools. Generally, do what you can to help them introduce the idea of college so that post-secondary education is an expectation throughout the system. It will all make your job easier.

First, talk to administrators and teachers at lower levels about how they can introduce lessons, have assembly events, make hall decorations, create bulletin boards or make morning announcements that have messages about college. Anything that will make students aware of colleges and careers is helpful.

One teacher has students imagine they live different lifestyles for a day at different income levels and with different jobs, spending fake money. It is a good lesson in the value of education. Others hold new fast-paced career days or brown bag chats about careers or ask teachers to speak about colleges or careers one time a week in every class, including their experiences at college. Others write morning announcements about one college for delivery each week.

Secondary counselors also can make presentations to middle and elementary students, even just to ask them to start thinking about jobs they would like to do, what the training will be like and what the income will be and where they might want to go to school. They can tell students to keep in touch with them with questions.
Develop a program with other counselors in middle school so that every 6th grader starts a college and career portfolio, expanding it with interest inventory results, parent interviews, and other projects.

**GET THE BASICS DOWN**

Develop a good online resource center for the college exploration process, update it each year, then keep it posted online, send it to all parents and make it available to students...over and over. Rather than answer the same question several times and look something up for a parent repeatedly, have a good resource and ask everyone involved to use it and provide updates. Ask graduating students or their parents to write blog posts about their experiences.

It should have important dates, links to good resources, definitions of key terms and information about the overall process. It requires work upfront but should be easy to update and maintain. “You can find that information on the Web site”, should be something you can say often.

Use social media wisely—and if you don’t know how, get help. It is efficient—and it is the way your students expect to communicate. Get the contact information for texting and emails early (for parents and students) but use it prudently for key messages about important deadlines or announcements.

**CREATE A BUZZ**

Get students excited about post-secondary education in creative ways. Have a college day when teachers wear gear from their alma maters or a special speaker invited from a nearby college, particularly alumni of your school. Include a streamlined and themed breakfast career fair where experts give brief five-minute talks then meet with smaller groups of students in separate spots to respond to questions. Ask a local college to come in with students from a team or performance group, and then make a presentation about attendance there and mingle in the cafeteria with your students. Make each student choose a post secondary option and then join with others with similar plans in an after-school event where they are charged with getting more information about those options.

**GET ON CAMPUS**

Nothing gets kids more excited about college than being on a college campus—no matter what their age is. (Help a feeder middle school develop a trip.) It will answer a lot of questions you might otherwise get and decrease the coaxing you’ll have to do for disinterested students.

**ENLIST OTHERS**

Parents can assist with college and career events—or, if they have the experience, provide support to newcomers trying to work their way through applications or financial aid forms. Collaborative work is also helpful.

Bring in alumni who are now in college, or invite a college representative to speak to students, with the understanding that the sessions should primarily be about the application process and life in college—and not a promotion for the school.

A surprising number of local churches, service groups, and other organizations offer some services to help students going off to school and it might pay off to coordinate their efforts with yours.
**GATHER DATA**

Consistently keep your data, update it and do some analysis. Think about what you need to know and find a source of information or develop one.

Perhaps look at the number of students who go to state colleges or a particular community college or who initiate the application process but stop. (How do you reach out to them?) Compare the number completing the FAFSA to a national average or the number who complete it and get a Pell grant. Survey students as they leave and even after their first year to find out the problems they find—and the strengths of your efforts. Then use the data to inform your work.

**USE THERAPY**

Don’t forget that you are a counselor—and use those skills in the college exploration process. It can be as simple as helping students with a stress reduction exercise or some solution-focused techniques that can get them through this difficult and confusing period. Don’t forget interpersonal counseling techniques that can be helpful when so much of the work is about paperwork and stress.

**ONE ON ONE**

Also, while efficiency is important when so many students need so much help, recognize that some students need time with you. Perhaps have a certain time right after school to be available two days a week by appointment. Have one day a week when for two hours you bring in those students who concern you.

While it is most efficient if you can get the same information out to a number of students at one time, sometimes it is important to pull a student early and get them on track—to find out the potential problems that are making them unenthusiastic and or miss deadlines. It might be something serious that is sapping their enthusiasm that needs attention—or something small where clarification can solve the problem speedily.

**KEEP IT REAL**

Give them as much information about and exposure to college and careers as possible with field trips, visits by college students and representatives, assemblies, lessons, and shadowing or internship opportunities. Colleges and careers are exciting to young people and they will sell themselves if students are allowed to see them first hand.

**STEP AWAY**

Your goal should be to make your students and their parents independent and self-sufficient every step of the way. It is good for students as a lesson in problem solving and you’ll be more effective if they work through issues themselves.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington DC area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, Delaware.
As college admissions season is well under way across the nation, students and their families frantically scramble to submit applications early, gather materials to be sent to colleges and universities, and finalize their college essays and resumes before they need to be sent to the dark, foreboding abyss of the admissions departments. As a counselor, you are all too familiar with the anxiety and intensity of this season and the bevy of issues that come your way from students and parents.

The midway point of the school year is upon us now. A brief respite is certainly deserved for all Seniors who have already completed the application process. For others not finished, they work intently to finalize everything before applying to colleges and universities. And throughout it all, you, the counselor, are there to support in every way possible.

But no matter what point a Senior is at in the process, time is ticking. With five months left in the school year, seniors should realize that one of the most significant academic and social transitions of their lives is right down pike. And as the counselor, the dread and fear that comes your way in the coming months ranges mild apprehension to all-out panic.

As students begin to finalize their high school careers, often, they usually begin to contemplate the academic preparation that will lead them to the next step of their educational journey. It is a natural instinct at some point in a student’s high school career to question their academic readiness. Did I take enough AP credits? Should I have pushed myself harder in math? Did I explore all possible electives offered at my school? All of these are valid questions to ask, but hopefully, with the guidance of the student’s parents, family, counselors, and teachers, the student will have finished their Senior year with a well-rounded list of courses under their belt that will prepare them for the academic challenges that lie ahead.

Perhaps a more pertinent question that should be asked as a student ends their high school career is “Have I done all I can to socially and emotionally prepare me for college”?

At the Woodlynde School in suburban Philadelphia, my colleagues and I take many proactive measures to ensure that our students are fully aware of the transitional issues and obstacles that await them on a college campus. From the specific college guidance course all students take beginning in 8th grade to their internship projects in their Senior year, all students are afforded an opportunity to understand, analyze, navigate, and solve a variety of issues in a supportive, nurturing environment that could cause college freshman headaches a plenty.

But for many students across the nation, the transition to college and living autonomously is often navigated more independently, even though it is the biggest adjustment the student has had to face so far in their lives. Classroom discussion and activities are a great advantage to many students, but just like in college, it is the student who must take proactive measures in high school to build upon their academic and social-emotional experiences. Below is a list of methods and suggestions that can help any apprehensive high
school Senior jump right into the waters of change and prepare for their freshman year of college.

- Step outside of your comfort zone in every single way that you can.

- Whether it is on the majestic tennis court, serving up aces or nestled away writing a creative fan fiction piece, every student has their comfort zone. Although we all deserve rest, relaxation and comfort, pushing yourself to explore new areas of the world is a great way to breed independence and confidence. Although this is a touch broad, stepping outside of your comfort zone to experience the world in all its glory and splendor will help any student create a greater global perspective.

- Participate in community service in your area.

- While community service has a bevy of benefits for anyone of any age, participating in community service activities once again puts students outside of their comfort zone and helps them work towards independence and understanding. Helping others in some way is a powerful proactive step to give a Senior a broader world view and help them to be amenable to people of all backgrounds, which they will undoubtedly experience when they go to college.

- Visit new places and foreign countries with your friends.

- Nothing quite jumpstarts a student’s self-advocacy and independence than being in a different city, state, or country where they must adapt to new surroundings, new people and perhaps even a new language. And quite frankly, if a Senior goes without his/her parents, that puts even more responsibility on the student to adapt to a new environment.

- Attend camps and summer preparatory programs.

- Although the summer is most definitely a time of well needed relaxation, it is also a very useful time for students to explore their interests and skills in a focused environment with like-minded individuals. Any sort of camp or summer college preparatory program is always a beneficial choice, especially if it is at the college you will one day be attending.

- Make it a point to experience college classes in any way.

- Whether your high school offers dual enrollment courses or you simply shadow a college class on a visit, the vast differences between high school and college classes are no more apparent than when you experience them yourself. Seek out these opportunities as early as you can in order to help prepare yourself for the notable academic differences you will experience in freshman year.

- Familiarize yourself with the college campus as much as possible.
If you are graduating with a hundred other students and your high school is no bigger than your average office building, a college campus, littered with different academic structures and old mansions, could be quite the change. Whether you are still deciding on which college to attend or have already committed, get on a college campus as often as you can. Whether it is to meet with a specific department or attend a basketball game, the more familiar you are with a setting, the less anxiety you will have.

Acknowledge the transition, embrace the change and talk about it as much as you can.

The world of college does not have to be a mythological beast of anxiety or a fear-ridden dread you try to put off. Change is growth and growth is success. Be honest, be open, and realize that by acknowledging this change, you have already helped yourself in so many ways.

There is no one list of predictors for college success in freshman year. Although academic preparedness is at the vanguard of preparation for college, the social and emotional experiences that lead up to college are just as vital in order to ensure that a student leaves high school with a wealth of experiences that will prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead in the collegiate environment. As the counselor, you have been the pillar of support in so many ways for such a long time. But as the Seniors reach the end of their high school journey and begin to feel more apprehension about the upcoming transition, guide them one more time towards the horizon of change.

Jason Hoffman has been the Director of College Guidance at the Woodlynde School, located in suburban Philadelphia, for the past 5 years. The Woodlynde School primarily caters to students with learning differences and throughout his tenure, Jason has created and implemented an individualized college guidance program for students and families that meets their specific learning needs and style while assisting them in all aspects of the college process. Jason has presented at the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools on creating dual enrollment programs for high schools and the Pennsylvania Association of College Admissions Counseling on guiding Generation Z students with learning differences through the college process. He can be reached at hoffman@woodlynde.org for further inquiries.
By Michael Gentile, J.D.

The roar of the crowd. The thrill of victory. The fulfillment that comes with being part of a team.

It’s all possible with an exciting career in one of the many growing sport management fields. Degree programs prepare graduates for leadership positions in areas such as athletics administration, management, scouting, marketing, public relations, or sports operations.

For students eyeing careers in organizations like the NFL, NHL, MLB, NBA, NCAA, or those interested in working for industry heavy-hitters like Nike, Reebok, New Balance, and New Era Cap (to name a few), the sport management program will help prepare them.

Finding the Right Fit

It’s important for institutions to blend courses in sport management with broader-based business courses, as well as to place a specialized emphasis on the unique technological, managerial, and leadership skills necessary for managers and leaders in the sport and recreation industry.

Students should be subjected to many aspects of the industry, including policy and governance, sport law, sport finance, and event and facility management. An ideal curriculum will also place an emphasis on experiential learning, with some colleges requiring that students graduate with as many as 800 hours of industry field experience to give them a significant advantage over their competition.

At Niagara University in Lewiston, N.Y., for example, sport and recreation management majors can oversee all operations of the Niagara Power, a baseball team that plays in the New York Collegiate Baseball League and is owned and operated by NU’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Fulfilling roles in field and gameday operations, marketing, broadcast, ticket sales, and concessions for the team gives students a glimpse into real-world industry situations, and prepares them for future careers.
Knowing the Business within the Business

Career opportunities are bountiful, given the depth and breadth of the sport management field. Positions typically attract professionals from a variety of disciplines who are enthusiastic about the chance to work in professional, collegiate, or recreational athletics.

Most sport organizations require employees with similar financial, operational, and marketing skills as a typical business. That being said, anyone interested in the field should develop a skillset and knowledge base unique to the industry as well.

To illustrate, aspiring sport marketers should understand how to use social media to connect a team with its fans. Having a grasp on negotiations and vendor contracts is important for those interested in working on the finance side, while gameday ops employees need to know how engaging audiences during breaks at a baseball game differs from that in other entertainment industries, such as theater.

Michael Gentile is an associate professor in the College of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Niagara University. He teaches courses in sport management, recreation and sport law, negotiations, sport policy and governance, event and facility management. Niagara University’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, which houses the sport and recreation management program, was the first in the world to offer a bachelor’s degree in tourism. The university offers bachelor’s and master’s degree programs in sport management.
Will the robots take their jobs, or will those jobs be outsourced to India or the Philippines? In a job market characterized by uncertainty and instability, how can you guide your students on the path to economic security? One effective strategy is to give them an understanding of the bigger picture.

**Twin threats (or opportunities—depending on your perspective): Technology and Globalization**

In the bigger economic picture, two forces have tended to disrupt the job market. The greater of the two is technological advances.

According to McKinsey’s Jobs Lost, Jobs Gained, 38.6 million full-time equivalent jobs could be displaced due to automation by 2030. We can expect to see three specific types of disruption.

▶ **Job losses (or gains).** High-wage and some specific low-wage jobs, such as nursing assistants and teaching assistants, will be the big winners. A wide range of middle-income occupations will lose jobs.

▶ **Salary changes.** Salary levels are driven, in part, by supply and demand. As demand for a particular job rises, so does the salary. On the other hand, in occupations with declining demand, salaries tend to remain unchanged or even fall. This trend could cause a widening in the salary gap between the haves and the have-nots.

▶ **Skill shifts.** Social and emotional skills and more advanced cognitive capabilities, such as logical reasoning and creativity, will become more important across all occupations.

The other, less disruptive force is globalization. Many have bemoaned globalization as a job-killer, and to a certain extent, it is. According to the US Department of Labor, on average over 90,000 US jobs per year were threatened by foreign trade between 2012 and 2017. Again, much of the disruption from globalization will manifest itself in the form of wage changes and skill shifts, rather than job losses. Indeed, these disruptions have already occurred and are not likely to accelerate at the same pace as technological changes.

How, then, are technology and globalization changing the job prospects of your students?

**Changing Jobs**

McKinsey provides some insightful predictions of the types of jobs that will be most impacted by technology over the next 15 years. Here are four job types likely to show significant increases.

▶ **Builders** (including engineers, architects, surveyors, construction, installation and repair workers), 35%
Here are the two types of occupations most likely to show the largest decreases.

- **Jobs with Predictable Physical Work** (including fine-equipment installation and repair workers, protective services, cleaning-equipment operators, and general mechanics, but not specialized mechanics and repair, which should see a slight increase), 31%

- **Office Support jobs** (including information and record clerks, office-support workers, financial workers, and administrative assistants), 20%

Despite the ups and downs in job openings, it is the shift in required skills that should really concern us.

### Changing Skills

- **Technological Skills** - 55%
- **Basic Cognitive Skills** - 5%
- **Social and Emotional Skills** - 24%
- **Physical and Manual Skills** - 14%

This example from the healthcare sector illustrates how these skill shifts will play out within healthcare jobs.

Patient interactions will be facilitated by automation and artificial intelligence, decreasing the demand for office-support skills.

- The need for both advanced IT and basic digital skills will see sharp increases.

- Demand for monitoring patient vitals and medical equipment will decrease or remain flat as machines take over these more routine tasks.

What about changes in skills due to globalization? These three skill sets are valuable in a global economy.

- Understanding of and ability to communicate with a culturally diverse set of colleagues, customers, and suppliers.

- Ability to navigate increasingly complex government regulations.

- Knowledge of new business practices to address and adapt to global climate change.

Given all this information, how can you translate the big picture into practical advice for your students?

### Balanced Advice for Your Students

Make use of these three principles to guide your students toward a future-proof major.

- **Choice of major is a driver of earnings—but not always.** According to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, your choice of major can have a significant impact on future earnings. For example, a bachelor's degree in architecture and engineering leads to median annual earnings of $85,000, compared to just $46,000 for a four-year degree in education. However, while the field of study is important, it does not control your financial destiny because there is great variation in earnings within majors. To illustrate, the bottom quartile of architecture and engineering majors earns less than the top quartile of majors in either the arts or humanities and the liberal arts. Still, on average, earnings for humanities and liberal arts majors never catch up with the highest-earning majors.

- **Technical skills and liberal arts are both important.** Your students will need a skill set that gives them both breadth and depth. According to Burning Glass Technologies, “high-paying jobs of the future are more complex, multi-disciplinary, and what Burning Glass calls ‘hybrid.’” Consider these two contrasting examples:

  - “In marketing and public relations, a new set of jobs requiring data analytics skills (marketing manager, digital marketing manager) require a
combination of right-brain thinking (creative design) with left-brain thinking (analytics and data analysis) to succeed. Today’s advertising managers are creative designers and analysts rolled into one.”

▶ “In the area of computer science and data analytics, the opposite has occurred. Once considered highly technical jobs, now these jobs require writing skills, problem-solving skills, creative and research skills, and skills in teamwork and collaboration. So just like the marketing manager who is now an analyst, the software engineer or data scientist is now a business person, designer, and team worker.”

The skills that you need to adapt to the new, hybrid job economy fall into four broad categories: Digital tools and technology; analytics and data; business and management fundamentals; and design or creative skills.

▶ A future-proof college curriculum must address soft skills. A 2018 survey of anticipated skill gaps forecasted by talent development professionals generated a list dominated by soft skill gaps. All of these anticipated gaps increased since the 2015 survey, some of them quite dramatically. Soft skills are not explicitly taught in most college courses. However, one proven way to develop these skills is to choose a program that incorporates significant, real work experiences into the college curriculum.

Can you give your students solid guidance on their choice of major? Admittedly, the only sure thing about the future is how uncertain it is. Nevertheless, you can ensure that their selection is an informed choice. Help them to understand the consequences of their choice of major, the importance of both technical and soft skills, and the need to continue learning and growing throughout their working lives. If you share with them these important points, then you can rest assured that you have given them the tools to make the best decision possible.
School counselors have likely heard about flipped learning – the approach to teaching that might sound like something coming from a PE class or from that teacher who dresses up in costumes and holds classes outside a lot. But they may not know that this important new trend in education is dramatically changing classrooms and might be perfectly suited to their lessons, particularly about career and college exploration and the college application process.

Jon Bergmann, is one of two high school science teachers in Colorado who are considered the fathers of flipped learning, having discovered it about 10 years ago when they prepared videotaped lessons for substitute teachers and students who were absent. The 2012 book the two co-authored titled *Flip Your Classroom* became a popular guide to the approach, and the two have become its chief disciples.

They first noticed in their classrooms that not only did the absent students use the recorded lessons – others found them helpful and wanted more of the work online. “It worked for a lot of our students – and we eventually saw it helped us teach.” Bergmann’s students found they could view the lecture or explanation of the lesson online when and where it was convenient and conducive for them – even with their parents, a tutor or a friend. They could stop it, play it back and they could follow links to other information or more thorough explanations if they wished.

The instructor could also request that the students complete a simple assessment that might provide the teacher with an idea about how the group was grasping the lesson – and about which individual students might need help. Then, in class, the instructor can devote time to those issues. “Few people are asking about flipped learning’s effectiveness, any more”, says Bergmann. “The current discussion is around the myriad ways that flipped learning has evolved based on research, classroom innovation and new technology. It is about using flipped learning as a model that provides the time to make all other instructional strategies possible.”

**Meeting various needs**

Bergmann cites research that shows it benefits all sorts of learners. “It totally changed the way I work with students,” says Stacey Roshan, who teaches advanced high school math at the Bullis School, a private school near Washington, DC. “It allows
me much more time in the classroom to work with students on concepts they need help with." She has used flipped learning for several years so she has been able to fine-tune the lessons and the assessments and has learned how best to use class time.

On the other end of the spectrum, Greg Green, a principal at Clintondale High School in Clinton Township, MI., who has been at the forefront of spreading the word about flipped learning, discovered the process when he was teaching special education at the start of his career. “When we provided kids who had accommodations with technology and lessons like this, increasingly they could be successful,” Green says.

Other teachers who work with students learning English in their school also have found it is useful because students can translate the lesson and work at a slower pace. Cara Johnson heads the science department at Allen, TX, High School, where she is known as a vocal proponent of flipped classes. One of her favorite success stories is about a “brilliant” student from Korea who was struggling in a science class because she knew little English. “Flipped classroom helped her tremendously. She was able to watch and re-watch my videos, to pause and rewind the lecture to make sure she understood. Also, I had time to work with her one-on-one and clarify concepts with which she struggled. Not only did she learn anatomy in my class, she learned much more English because she replayed the lectures – and class time was a continual conversation between the students and me.”

A student with attention issues may find learning at home with fewer distractions is beneficial. (Sometimes, too, a video screen is more engaging to them.) Even for students who have behavior issues, the flipped lesson may be an alternative during in-school suspension sessions or if a

## College lessons flipped

Two tasks related to college and careers can be adapted to a flipped learning model.

Online interest inventories such as WhoDoUWant2B, O-net, Virginia Wizard or the Minnesota State CareerWise test can be completed by the student at home. A counselor just needs to record a lesson showing students how to get started with one of the programs and most students can take it from there.

Counselors can then ask them to talk to their parents about what they found and narrow their choices to five options.

Then they should come to a counselor-led session prepared to discuss or write about what they found and explore their options further with the counselor assisting. They might, for instance, look at what training certain jobs require, which colleges offer majors in those fields, or what the likely income will be, then narrow their options and potentially create a plan for themselves.

Another job of high school counselors is providing basic information about the college application process. Flipped learning might be helpful to record a message about it and ask students to accomplish some of the tasks, such as logging into Naviance, writing a resume, completing the common application or the FAFSA form or searching for scholarships. Then counselors can meet with students to discuss their concerns and answer individual questions.
student is suspended and confined to their home, getting even further behind without support. An alternative setting at Edenton-Chowan Schools in N.C. for students with behavior issues offers small classes where students can access online lessons and keep pace with their classmates.

Research has shown that for students with behavior problems “technology allows the role of the teacher to change from the dispenser of information to a facilitator of learning who motivates, assists, and guides students”. Also, some experts’ note, a topic that many students need to understand such as registration for classes, changing their schedule or steps in assembling college application materials can be put online. <see sidebar> Students can be directed to it then meet with counselors if they have individual concerns.

Counselors can flip

Apart from understanding flipped learning as a tool that teachers increasingly utilize for all sorts of learners, counselors also can put it to use. Some experts say it is well suited to school counselors who have growing responsibilities and caseloads. They might find their students benefit from having more time for discussions and conversations since it provides lectures and lesson explanations online for viewing at home and homework and individual attention later at school.

Bergmann says that as he travels internationally to help schools adopt the strategy he is often approached by counselors who are using it or would like to know more. “It is well suited to the counselor’s job—especially considering all they have to do with so many students,” he says. Bergmann and other experts say a counselor could use the approach with an individual student to cover an issue the student can learn about online then talk to the counselor about (sometimes learning about an issue resolves it) or with a group or class, where the students can be asked to review a lesson the counselor creates or other good information on counseling topics and be prepared to discuss it.

“That may be a much better use of their time,” Bergmann says. “It also may be more valuable to the students to have more time to discuss an issue where they really consider the topic.” For instance, he says, if a counselor wants to run a group on anger management, they could ask the members to view an explanation about it on their own – an online lesson the counselor developed or something they feel would explain key points. Then the counselor would have more time for the student to think about their specific issues and be prepared to discuss them.

He also says for college exploration, students might complete interest inventories or career searches online and be prepared to gather information about their findings or take another step to plan out other training. He says counselors also have figured out how to do lessons on more personal topics such as substance abuse or eating disorders. “There is a big learning component in all of counseling. But the key is to then better utilize their group space and individual time with students,” he says.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education-related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, DE.
Despite nationwide concerns about the rising cost of college education, the path to success for many high school students involves the attainment of a college degree. This goal has long been espoused, if for no other reason than the financial benefit that continues to be supported. According to a recent report from Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, an individual who has earned a college degree can be expected to earn up to 84% more than an individual with just a high school diploma. Without dispute, a college education can be a personally enriching and life-altering experience, and the prospect of financial reward is evident.

Sadly, however, in many high schools around the country, administrators, teachers, and parents promote the intrinsic and monetary rewards of college education, and yet they lack an effective plan to inform and encourage students to think of themselves as college-bound. For these students, the goal of attaining a college degree is never realized due to low aspirations, limited knowledge, and the mistaken belief that a college education is beyond their reach. What is needed is the development of a college-bound culture that encourages and supports the goal of achieving a college degree. In high schools across the country, creating a college-bound culture is a critical step in college prep.

To understand the meaning of a college-bound culture, it is necessary to define the construct. A College-Bound Culture is defined as

“the overarching school environment, resources, and support structures, designed to encourage students and their families to attend college. These include the administrative and counseling personnel, facilities, attitudes, policies, practices, time, information, and technical resources necessary to promote and support college attendance for all who aspire to achieve this goal.”

Whether your school has an established college-bound culture or is attempting to create one for the first time, an assessment will help you understand the key elements that determine a college-bound culture. An honest reflection encourages a school to focus on their particular needs and determine where their time, talent, resources, and energy may be most effectively allocated.

Assessing your College-Bound Culture

Conducting an assessment is the initial step in learning about your school, the potential sources of support, and the parameters that will guide and direct your efforts. An assessment involves asking important questions about the school and the current environment. Does the administration support your efforts to develop a college-bound culture? Does the curriculum include rigorous college preparatory courses? Does the larger community, including teachers, parents, and students believe in the value of a college education and do they desire opportunities for higher learning? If the answer is yes, you have fertile ground to support the creation of a strong college-bound culture.

A more detailed investigation identifies the number of students, the character and attitudes of the student body, the curriculum, and other resources that exist. An appraisal discerns the amount of time, counseling personnel and their qualifications, time, space, finances, and other resources that could be made available. To create a strong college-bound culture, you will need to thoroughly understand the current environment and develop a plan of action, including the establishment of goals and the amount of effort needed to achieve them. By assessing your school’s situation, identifying needs and establishing priorities, an effective college-bound culture can be developed. This requires a plan of action; a
sequence of steps designed to change the status quo. Success in developing a strong college-bound culture will hinge on an accurate assessment, a list of priorities, and a plan to secure the necessary resources and administrative support to accomplish your goals. *The Assessment of College-Bound Culture*® was created for this purpose.

**Administrative Support**

Following an accurate assessment of the current environment of your school, your efforts to build a college-bound culture will depend on the attainment of *administrative support*. Early in the planning phase of your college counseling efforts, it is essential to obtain a commitment from the school leadership to devote the time, money, space and resources necessary to build a strong college-bound culture. By presenting the leadership with an outline of your plan, including the goals, philosophy of your program, needed resources, and a method for measuring success, you will increase the prospect of their approval and eventual success. A periodic review of your progress will reaffirm their support and the mutual understanding that developing a strong college-bound culture is an essential element for student, community and school success.

**College Counseling**

Next, you will need to ensure that your college counselors are knowledgeable, well-prepared and fully committed. A strong college-bound culture requires effective communicators who can provide accurate and up-to-date information, guidance and support to students and their parents. This may require training and educational support to instill the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively perform college counseling responsibilities. Most often, this relates to the school counselor or college counselor, however, institutional differences will require an appraisal of your school’s organizational chart, assigned duties and job responsibilities. A sound and well-developed *college advising agenda* should be inclusive, sequential, consistent, and continuously improving. To guide this agenda, a calendar of planned events will promote a strong college-bound culture.

**Planned Events**

Through a series of informational meetings, counselors have an opportunity to disseminate information, share expertise, and allay the concerns of parents and students alike. Interest and enthusiasm can be encouraged with panel discussions, visits from college representatives, college-sponsored events, and gatherings for targeted populations such as first-generation students or students from low-income households. Together, a schedule of planned events helps to create an ethos that encourages college attendance. A routine of scheduled events can reinforce college aspirations and subsequently increase academic performance. When students envision college as a part of their future, it is easy to draw a connection between responsible behavior, earning good grades and the college-bound culture instilled by a calendar of planned college related events. A college counseling schedule may include work
with 9th grade students, to establish the value of a college education, the 10th grade to envision their future college path, the 11th grade to gather more specific information about the types of colleges, careers and areas of study, and the 12th grade to finalize plans for applying and deciding which college to attend. A calendar of individual counseling sessions, grade-level meetings, visits from college representatives, daytime and evening parent meetings, and a host of other encouraging and celebratory events combine to create a college focused counseling agenda. The school web page and other promotional avenues can be used to stimulate interest, increase attendance and excite an energized college-bound culture.

**Time and Space**

When implementing a plan of action, the elements of *time and space* are critical. As often as possible, designated time for college counseling activities should be committed. This includes time for individual counseling activities and works with groups such as grade level meetings and assemblies. When the necessary time and space are provided, counseling activities are elevated to a level of higher meaning and importance. The school community understands when and where college counseling will take place, how often it will occur, for whom, and how long it will last. A particular school’s agenda may address 12th grade activities in September and October for example. This could be followed by 9th, 10th, and 11th grade activities in each of the succeeding quarters of the school year. The timing of a sequence of meetings would be dictated by the most pressing grade-level issues. For example, 12th grade students are primarily concerned with college applications.

Of equal importance is the assignment of an adequate space in which to hold group counseling sessions, individual meetings, college representative visits, and events. Securing a commitment of space, unencumbered by other school activities, promotes efficiency, focus, and consistency. This too elevates the status of your college counseling program to the level of other school activities. Correspondingly, the dedication of assigned space can bolster the enthusiasm and sustainability of a college-bound culture. Students, parents and the community begin to realize the importance of learning about college, the factors to consider when choosing a college, the types of institutions, majors and possible methods to attend. This, in turn, develops more interest, builds excitement, and the goal-oriented anticipation required of any high school that is truly committed to the creation of a strong college-bound culture.

**Communication**

Another important element that impacts the college-bound culture, is the element of *communication*. In an ever-changing communication landscape, where students use multiple e-mail accounts, text messaging, social media, and a host of other communication methods, it is important to clearly define the method of communication that will be used for all college-related communications at your school. Questions to be resolved include the type of communication that will be used, how it will be used, and for what purpose. A uniform standard and set of expectations must be identified to ensure clear, consistent communication between the counselor, parents, students and the community. Without a clear understanding of the communication method that will be used, there is a greater chance that information will be neglected, ignored, lost, or unevenly disseminated.

**Technology**

To guarantee efficiency and improve the utility of your college counseling efforts, consideration should be given to the type of *technology* that will be used to collect data, when it will be collected, how it will be used and safeguarded, and the logistics involved. Questions involve the type of database to be used, whether it will be created in-house and customized to your specific needs, or whether you will use a proprietary system offered through a vendor. The initial cost, user fees, ease of use, customization, and the control and retrieval of the data are important considerations.
If your school has more than one counselor, consistency, and accuracy in the collection and entry of data will be important. Your college-bound culture can be enhanced through the use of a database (custom made or proprietary) to collect and organize information. From this, informed decisions can determine the focus of your program, the appropriateness of your college counseling and information providing efforts, and what shortcomings should be addressed. When using an effective data collection process, college counselors are empowered to accurately process applications, track their progress, record the types and names of colleges to which students apply, and identify patterns of college acceptances and matriculation. Complementary to this technology, printed and electronic resources provide support, valuable information and help to establish a strong college-bound culture.

Printed and Electronic Resources

In most communities, there is an expectation that essential college counseling information will be made available in both printed and electronic formats. At a minimum, schools should develop a series of documents to serve as a reference throughout the college exploration, search, and application process. A basic list of printed resources includes:

- ☑ A handbook of college information for parents and students
- ☑ An academic profile of your school
- ☑ Forms for requesting transcripts, letters of recommendation, and processing applications
- ☑ Informational handouts on a variety of topics related to college admissions
- ☑ Schedule of events for juniors and seniors
- ☑ SAT and ACT testing Dates and information etc.
- ☑ A list of scholarship resources and web sites.
- ☑ A list of Testing, College Application, and Essay Writing resources.

Participation in the College Admissions Community

An important element of a school's college-bound culture is the full participation of counselors in the college admissions community. Mistakenly, there may be a perception that attending professional meetings, conferences, hosted events, and seminars, will yield limited results. Too often, little attention is paid to college outreach efforts, high school visits from college representatives, events hosted by college admissions offices and a plethora of efforts to connect with prospective students. A strong college-bound culture requires the full participation of counselors through membership in college admissions organizations, the enthusiastic planning and hosting college rep. visits to the high school, and the counselor's contribution to seminars, workshops, college fairs, conferences, and publications. By participating in the college admissions community, college counselors and the schools they represent, demonstrate the importance of college planning and the value placed in membership in the college admissions and counseling community. Efforts to provide a college-bound environment, demonstrate that college aspirations and attendance is a priority at your school. In turn, the reputation of your school, the perception of your students held by others, and the caliber of your program are greatly enhanced.

School counselors should actively encourage admissions representatives to visit their school and welcome them to an accommodating and accessible place where they can meet with students, provide information, answer questions and support their
A public calendar announcing college representative visits should be created. Meetings, seminars, and panel discussions help to inform the community and produce knowledgeable, better prepared and motivated students. Furthermore, parents, administrators, teachers, and community leaders should be encouraged to participate, get involved, make contributions, sponsor events and become a part of a culture that supports college attendance. Creating a strong college-bound culture requires leadership commitment, physical and financial resources, scheduled time, and dedicated space to support the effort. It requires planned, reliable and regular communication, updated technology, and the printed and electronic resources required to promote college attendance. Moreover, with the full participation and support your school and community, and the creative planning and persistent efforts of school counselors, a strong college-bound culture can be realized. Listed here are some planning ideas to support the establishment and growth of a college-bound culture at your school.

### Ideas to Support a College-Bound Culture

Consider establishing traditional meeting dates for parents and students.

- **Holding a fall and a spring meeting for parents** can enlist and develop parents as allies for your program, send a consistent message, and bolster a college-bound culture that stimulates student interest in college attendance. These bi-annual informational meetings for parents provide an opportunity to shape expectations and set the tone for an effective college counseling program. Daytime and/or evening meetings should be scheduled to make the information available to working parents.

- For students in the 11th grade, a separate, targeted presentation can address their specific concerns. Once again, a fall and a spring assembly for each group would help establish this tradition in the community and raise college attendance expectations. Through these efforts, college aspirations become realistic, perceived to be within reach, and established as the normative behavior for students at your school.

- **Make daily and/or weekly announcements** in homeroom, over the public address system, or on a television display monitor. These announcements can highlight an upcoming event, SAT and ACT test dates, college representative visits to your school, or other interesting information. Offer trivia about colleges, announcements of college acceptances, and statements about the advantages of college attendance. This creates awareness and engenders support for college attendance.

- Monthly announcements can activate a passive student. Announcements of upcoming admission deadlines, college information seminars, open house events, sponsored college tours, and on-campus college visitation days. Additionally, periodic announcements might encourage students to attend an upcoming college fair or an event planned on a college campus. Other announcements can remind students of tasks they need to complete. Do you have a passport picture? You will need this to register for the next SAT. Are you planning to play sports in college? You should register for the NCAA Clearinghouse this month. See your college counselor for information.

- **Distribute promotional materials** such as pens, pennants, posters or other freebee materials that college representatives provide.

- **Regularly, hold a college-focused trivia contest.** “What public college did Thomas Jefferson attend”? The reward could be a college pennant of your choice. College pennants are regularly provided free by college admissions offices to promote their school.

- **Ask recent graduates of your school to give a 5-minute promotion for their college alma mater,** explaining what college has done for them. These could be in-person appearances at a school assembly or videotaped and run through a continuous loop on display monitors through your school.
Use public service announcements from famous people speaking about the value of their college experiences. Many of these or in the public domain and can be obtained free on the internet. Peyton Manning, for example, talking about the University of Tennessee, or a government officeholder extolling the value they place on their college education.

Declare a week in the fall, College Information Week. Display posters that encourage the wearing of College Sweatshirts and spotlight the colleges that faculty members attended.

Create a pin map showing where this year’s seniors have been accepted. (exclude student names.)

Create a college admissions deadline calendar. Post on web site or in a prominent place.

Hold a panel discussion of recent graduates sharing their challenges and successes. (Tell it Like it Is.)

Create an Instagram page to show pictures of the colleges who visit your school.

Display published articles, informational handouts, and other resources. Make these available in the front office and counseling area. A topical index could be created to display these items.

Construct and distribute tailored lists: (Colleges by selectivity, region, programs offered, etc.)

Periodically make public address announcements, celebrating where students are accepted.

College Tour. Take a bus of students to a university for a group college visit.

Hold mini-classes to teach students the life skills needed in college.

Highlight summer enrichment opportunities. (Post these prominently in school or online)

Publish data identifying alumni college attendance, where they attend and school trends.

Maintaining and Sustaining the College-Bound Culture

Once you have created your program and built a college-bound culture in your school, it would be wise to appraise your efforts, determine how well you have done and learn how you can improve. This enlightenment requires introspection and an evaluation of your college counseling efforts. From this exercise, a school can better understand their strengths and weaknesses, learn from their experiences, and make adjustments where they are needed. The maintenance of a strong culture requires a sustained effort and the ongoing enlistment of help and support.

Through their actions, administrators, teachers, and parents can provide immeasurable support in maintaining the culture of the school. Countless opportunities exist for volunteering, supervising students, distributing information to students and supporting events. It will be important to demonstrate your appreciation for their efforts, include these groups in the college-bound culture, tap into their enthusiasm and reinforce the benefits that a strong college-bound culture can provide to the individual, the school and the community.

The most important goal, however, is to continuously improve. Through an organized and systematic process, taking into consideration the varied and interconnected elements that make up a school’s college-bound culture, a school counselor’s efforts and enthusiasm, along with good planning, support, and resources, will help to ensure that all who wish to pursue a college degree will be afforded the opportunity to achieve their goal.

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As a conscientious counselor, you have looked at the pros and cons of all the colleges, researched teacher-student ratios, checked out the housing options, enrolled your students in ACT prep classes, and helped them apply for every scholarship imaginable. You think they are ready to go! But here is the deal—I have worked with hundreds of struggling college students, and they never mention any of these things! That is because you have prepared them for what you know they need…but what about the things you didn’t know?

Your students are most likely going to struggle in college. College is supposed to be hard, but there are hard things that your students are going to face that have nothing to do with their intelligence or with typical college prep topics. Make sure you have equipped them and their parents in a way that is going to serve them in the journey to come.

As a counselor, you are the go-to for college advice and help. You are the one who is supposed to teach them all the many things they need to know. So I have broken down the five most important things you want to talk to them about before they leave for college.

When teaching my college classes, there are five things I notice most that are causing students to struggle. I am going to go through solutions for each of these issues so that you are better equipped to prepare your students for college.

1. **They cannot control their emotions.**

You work at a high school. You are fully aware of the out-of-control emotions that your students are facing. There is still time to teach your students how to manage their emotions.

When I see students who are struggling the most, it is because they have lost control of their emotions, and that has separated them from the reality of the situation. I am not saying that they should not have emotions. They should, and they should learn to sit with these emotions. What I am saying is that they should be aware of their emotions and learn what to do when they are feeling emotional and out of control.

### Teach them this:

- **Circumstances**
- **Thoughts**
- **Feelings**
- **Action**
- **Results**

- We have a circumstance that, in the moment, we cannot change.
- In every circumstance, we can choose our thoughts about it.
- If we can choose how to think about the circumstances, we can choose how to feel about them.
- Then we can choose the action we want to take.
- That action has a result.
So what does this look like in action? Here is an unintentional thought model:

**Circumstance:** Your student’s boyfriend breaks up with her.
**Thoughts:** I am worthless. I am not pretty enough, etc.
**Feelings:** Sad, unworthy, unloved.
**Actions:** Stops eating, doesn’t focus on school, doesn’t study, distracts herself with social media.
**Results:** Is unhealthy, grades drop, become depressed.

We take this, and turn it into the intentional thought model:

**Circumstance:** Your student’s boyfriend breaks up with her.
**Thoughts:** This is really hard, this hurts, I am going to miss him, he might be seeing someone else.
**Feelings:** Sad, hurt, disappointed.
**Actions:** Talks to friends and family; spends more time working on things for college, practicing a sport, working on art, etc.
**Results:** She is practicing coping skills and being productive while still dealing with the sadness.

If you can teach your students how to do this, they will continue to practice this when they are in college. They are going to experience things that are hard. They may experience a break-up, a fight, a betrayal, a death of a loved one, or an illness; and it is partially your responsibility, as a counselor, to help them know how to handle these emotions. They are not going to be taught how to do this in college, so now is the time for them to learn.

2: Teach them how to be safe in a dangerous world.

There is no question that the day a student leaves for college, they are entering a dangerous world that is full of violence and sexual crimes. We can encourage students to be the change they want to see, but we can’t ignore the danger that lies within college life. Women are at a higher risk for sexual assault than men, but you must talk to students about the dangers for both men and women.

Here are some things that they want to avoid and that I teach my clients to be aware of:

- Going for a run alone
- Being drunk without a sober friend to be there for you
- Partying with people you do not know
- Walking somewhere alone at night
- Exploiting yourself on your social media accounts
- Stopping for gas at night
- Traveling to dangerous countries

I do not want your students to live in fear. The point is to teach them what they need to know to keep themselves safe. There is nothing that they can do to ensure that they are safe; however, there are so many things that they can do to prevent becoming victims.

Other things that your student can do to be safe are to:

- Carry pepper spray
- Get their keys out of their purse or pocket before walking to their car
- Be aware of their surroundings
- Look like they are paying attention (not be on their phone)
- Always keep their doors locked and check the backseat before getting in their car
- Never let their drink out of their sight at a social event
- Travel in groups
- Trust their gut—if something seems weird, pay attention
3: Teach them how to manage their time.

There is a good chance that your students are already learning time management, because they are involved in everything imaginable. They are doing extracurricular activities, keeping their grades up, applying for colleges and scholarships, and having a social life. They will have more downtime in college than they do in high school, but they will most likely be less productive because they have never had downtime to make choices with. It is very possible they can take a full class load, work a job, and have a fulfilling social life. This is something that I love teaching my clients—how to make time for your social life. They love this too.

What your students need is to learn how to plan their work, and work their plan. When they make plans to study, they need to study. When they make plans to go out with their friends, they need to go out. There is enough time in their schedule to do everything. They just make a plan and then follow it. This is a very simple concept, but it is challenging to do because there are so many distractions in college. That is why they will struggle with time management. The way I do this is to make a schedule for myself and plan each hour of my day, including sleep time and playtime. Once they can see their schedule this way, they will see clearly that they have time for everything that they need and want to do that week.

There are basic time management skills that they can start practicing today, in addition to creating a schedule. Teach your students to:

- Minimize distractions like cell phone notifications, loud people, pets, random noises, etc.
- Make commitments and stick to them. If they say they are going to do something, they need to do it.
- Say no to things that are not moving them toward their goals.
- Prioritize—if they have more than three priorities, then they do not have priorities.
- Decide how much time they need to complete a task, and then complete it within that time.

The big picture is that they have plenty of time. When that time is put into a schedule, it is really easy for them to see how much time they have. When it comes to helping them with their time, telling them that they do not have time to go out with their friends or play that extra sport is not going to be effective. Show them how they can do all the things they want to do. If they want to do all the things (that are safe and good), encourage them. It will show them that you are on their team and there to support them as they follow their dreams and enjoy this very exciting time in their lives.

4: Teach them the basics of being healthy.

Most college students want that hot summer bod to show off and be proud of, but this is not what I am talking about. There are all kinds of programs out there to help students get fit. I am talking about the basics of being a healthy person. You probably already know what makes us fat and unhealthy—but are you talking to your students about it?

Here is a reminder of the things they need to hear about:

- Don’t drink calories—stick to water and unsweetened tea.
- Avoid flour and sugar (or at least limit to a day or two a week).
- Do a hot and sweaty workout at least 4-5 days a week for 20 minutes.
- Sleep around 8 hours a day and take naps if needed.
- Learn how to manage stress without eating (see number 5).
Eating healthfully in college is hard because students are typically limited in how much money they can spend per month on food, so they buy what is cheap and easy. Or they are on the cafeteria plan, and they have a buffet of food always there for the taking. The buffets, while they have a lot of healthy options, also provide easy access to a ton of unhealthy foods like pizza, pasta, burgers, and Chinese.

As their counselor, you can start teaching them how to make delicious, cheap foods at home. There are a ton of crockpot meals they can make that are healthy and cheap. If they can learn how to cook their meals at their apartment or in their dorm, they are going to save money and be a lot healthier.

Part of the reason college students gain weight is because of the lack of physical activity. They may have gone from being a student-athlete to being just a student, losing most of their physical activity. They may think they are too busy to go do a workout. They may be mentally exhausted and not feel like working out. But here is the thing: they need to work out. If they work out for 20 minutes every day, they are going to be healthier, look better, feel better, and get the most out of their study time every day. When the body is active the brain works better. That 20-minute workout might just save them time because they will be able to study more effectively.

Sleep is super important and possibly the most challenging. When we are not getting the sleep we need, we turn to sugar and caffeine to get us through the day. This, in turn, makes us fat. College kids stay up late and then often have to be in class at 8 a.m. If they are doing this, they are not getting the sleep they need. That is why I mentioned naps. They have to get their rest if they want to do all the things. A rested body is a more productive body.

5: Teach them ways to reduce their stress and anxiety.

Most of my college students identify stress or anxiety as a huge problem in their lives. It is keeping them from focusing on the important things in their lives, and it is draining their energy. There is not one certain thing that is causing them stress. It is the effect of many things that they feel are out of their control. But you can help them!

Most students feel that they do not have enough time. The reality is that most students have plenty of time to do everything that they need to do. So open up a calendar and have them schedule everything that they need to do. Once they have done this, they are going to see that they have plenty of time.

Another reason why students get stressed out is that they are trying to keep up with everyone on social media. This is a thing in itself, as you know. But students need to be reminded that they are enough and the most important thing is fulfilling their dreams and goals. Try to bring them back to the core of who they are. If they are worried about trying to be all the things, they will get stressed out and eventually have anxiety. Teaching them to prioritize things in their lives is going to help them see where they need to spend their time and energy.

Another thing that is causing students to feel stressed out is a combination of sleep deprivation followed up with sugary caffeinated drinks. Students at this age are tired a lot. Their bodies are still growing and developing, they most likely have a busy schedule, and they are staying up late socializing. When they wake up in the morning, they are tired. They reach for the sugary coffee or soda, and this triggers their anxiety. This is the hardest one, but if students want to live their best lives, they cannot be running on sugar and caffeine. Encourage them to have a coffee, but not the sugar. If they are drinking energy drinks, bring to their attention the effects of those drinks on their bodies.

As a counselor, you have a ton of things to check off your list every day. We must always think about the student and what is going to benefit them the most in the long run. Prepare them for college in every way, not just academically.

JoBeth Evans has five years of experience teaching high school, and has been teaching public speaking at the University of Arkansas for five years. She holds a bachelor’s degree from the University of Arkansas and a master’s degree from Arkansas Tech University. She is a nationally certified life coach with a total of three different coaching-related certificates. In her work as a life coach, she helps teen girls make the transition from high school to college. In addition, JoBeth is a speaker and writer who works to equip young women for the major life transition of entering college. She can be reached at jobethevans@outlook.com.
How to Help Students Maximize Their High School Experience

By Laura George

In my role as an independent college consultant, I routinely field questions from parents on how to help their sons and daughters plan for and enjoy the most fulfilling (and manageable) high school careers. A member of my Parents of College Bound Kids Facebook group recently asked about how to prepare her rising freshman daughter to make the most of her high school experience and set herself up for success in college. This is an excellent question that this parent had the foresight to ask. I often find, however, that parents of middle schoolers, especially those who will be taking their first foray into becoming “The Parent of a High Schooler,” do not realize that they can do a great deal to empower their children to thrive during these formative years. Counselors can contribute to this success during the school day as well. Here are some things that parents and counselors can do to help students establish a foundation for success and fulfillment in high school:

1. Ensure students have solid executive functioning skills going into high school (organization, note-taking, study skills, time management). I see too many students in my college consulting business who have great grades sophomore through early senior year, but their freshman grades were mediocre or even low because they didn’t possess the skills to make the transition from middle school to a much more rigorous workload in high school. When poor freshman year grades drag down students’ overall GPAs, this can hamper their chances of admission to more selective colleges for those targeting these institutions.

2. Encourage students to be true to themselves and their abilities and pursue an APPROPRIATE level of academic challenge. I also see too many students who are knocking themselves out to take as many AP classes as possible each year and who report to me that they are sleeping an average of four hours a night. Encourage students to discover their favorite subjects and those in which they naturally excel and then pursue the most challenging courses in those areas. College prep or honors level classes are fine for subjects in which the extra challenge would be too difficult/overwhelming, especially during freshman and sophomore years. Students should aim to maintain or slightly increase the level of rigor and the number of advanced classes as they move through the trajectory of freshman to senior year. College admissions committees are looking for some measure of balance – students who not only appropriately challenge themselves academically but also carve out time to pursue other interests and develop new passions.

3. Motivate students to try new things early in high school and find some things that they truly love. Support them in pursuing leadership opportunities, whether they are formal roles or informal mentoring opportunities. Not everyone has to be the club president or team captain to make an impact, and not every student has the personality to seek those formal roles. After students identify some areas of interest, encourage them to expand upon these in other areas of their lives as well. In doing so, they can think outside the box. For example, if a student loves a sport,
perhaps as she progresses through high school, she can not only participate but also volunteer to teach younger kids to play that sport at a Boys and Girls Club. Or perhaps she can befriend a peer through Best Buddies and help that student play in a club league or learn to enjoy cheering on the school team. Similarly, if a student loves music, cooking, working with animals, computer programming, etc., encourage him to extend those passions beyond the expected and find ways to enrich others’ lives along the way.

4. **Permit students to just be kids.** Pursuing academic rigor and building their resumes can seem to be of the utmost importance, but encourage students to go “old school” like those of us from past generations did while in high school: build friendships, try new things, and take some downtime to refresh sometimes. And while it’s important to stay on task and work toward goals, it’s also important to get adequate sleep and enjoy this time in their lives.

5. **Impress upon students that there is no “one” school** that will far and away be the best or only college for each of them. Many colleges will prove to be an excellent fit for each student’s academic and personal interests. Try to encourage students to enjoy high school, commit to giving their best effort in their classes and the extracurricular activities they choose, and then build a diversified list of target colleges. Perhaps most importantly, encourage them to follow their hearts, not the opinions of their peers.

Best of luck to your children or students wherever they are on this journey!

Laura George is the founder of Laura George Consulting LLC, a Chicago-area firm that provides high school entrance exam tutoring, ACT/SAT tutoring, college application and essay coaching, and college consulting services, both in person locally and across the country via Zoom.

She is also the creator and moderator of Parents of College Bound Kids, a Facebook group dedicated to educating parents about the road to college admissions. Laura can be reached via email at laura@laurageorgeconsulting.com, phone at 847.363.6780, or through the company website at https://www.laurageorgeconsulting.com.
Carteret, New Jersey is a short 35 minute train ride from “The Big Apple.” Its population is diverse and comprised mostly of Hispanic, African American, and Asian with a small Caucasian group rounding out the community. Its high school students are largely “first generation” when it comes to higher education. Still, about thirty percent attend universities and twenty percent attend two year colleges. The rest are intent upon gaining employment or learning a trade in this historically blue collar area.

Carteret High School has about 1,000 students in attendance annually. The high school is served by four counselors and an assistant. According to statistics, that’s 100 more teens than the recommended student-to-counselor ratio. Sweety Patel heads the team. Her workmates are Toni-Marie Planko, Dara Benjamin and Kimberly Vaticano.

### One for all and all for one.

The all-female “band of counselors” is tightly bonded. They set aside any political or personal differences and support one another by reminding themselves that their primary purpose is to help students set goals and to focus on those goals. They are “futurists” in a way. Although they don’t study trends and make predictions, they are intent on helping each student discover his/her pathway from the organization and structure provided by the high school onto a continuing education or workforce environment.

The women also agree that their core role is to ensure that each student is prepared to make informed decisions and that they are equipped to manage their emotional and social well-being as they plan their academic career with confidence and happiness.

Time management is something we stress and that is where we find that most students (and some adults) have the biggest problem,” said Sweety. “Additionally, one of us follows our students through each grade level. That way it is easy to see where that student is in his/her development during the high school years. And, because each counselor is with them from the first day through graduation, anything that would be appropriate or inappropriate by age and grade level can be easily assessed and managed.”

Counseling is provided through group meetings and assemblies, classroom guidance, and appointments for individual counseling sessions. They assess student needs, both academically and emotionally, through self-referrals and referrals from the faculty and staff. They have a school-based youth services program called Pathways as well as an Effective School Solutions program. According to Sweety, they receive many referrals from the two programs. Additional referrals come from the Child Study team (for special needs students), school administrators, and parents. Sweety adds, “Once referred, students are assessed in terms of their academic standing, goals, and their emotional well-being through individual counseling and the all-important follow-up.”

### Multiple ways to define and assist.

Of course, required tests are administered and monitored and they have some great “career
“Self-care” and the vow to remain optimistic.

Sweety constantly reminds herself and her team that they can best help their students if they leave their work at the door each night and remain optimistic about the services they provide. Toni added, “It is easy for kids to tell when those in a position of power are stressed. It shows on their faces, in their tone-of-voice, and even in their posture.”

Sweety shared her personal secret for remaining optimistic. “I take breaks before coming back to challenges. It’s important to allow myself time to reflect and to celebrate. It is helpful to remove myself from any internal politics and drama—especially as an administrator. My goal is to revive and remember the passion that brought our team to this place so we can continue to grow together and remain true to our role in assisting our students.”

Sweety’s advice for other counselors is, “Don’t get stuck in the nonsense that others use to impede us from our mission and duties. Use the ‘define you before they do’ motto and give your schedule to someone before they give you their schedule for you. Hold no fear and stand by your profession. Be proud that you are a school counselor and remember the only opinions that really matter are those of the children you serve. We know our work and sometimes we have to define our identity for others, but that’s okay. It’s just one more reason not to give up on what we do.”

Dara agrees with Sweety’s “define you before they do” mantra. She said, “I think most counselors instinctively want to help and it’s difficult for us to use that simple two-letter word ‘NO’ when asked. For me, having supportive co-workers and a supportive family is a great help. We lean on one another and keep each other encouraged.”

The only regret the Carteret High School counseling team has is they do not have enough “play” time with their students. It’s during those less formal times that the team can gain important insights. For instance, playing chess with students is one activity that can reveal more about the child’s attitudes and needs and an outing such as a day trip to do research can work wonders. But the reverse also works because students themselves can offer a great deal of insight to their counselors. Sweety recalls one time when she had to talk to a student in their zero tolerance program. He told her how, when the school doors are opened for lunch and no one was monitoring, he would leave school for the rest of the day. He said he just wanted to yell, “somebody stop me!” It was this statement that reminded Sweety that students want limits and rules. She said, “We often think they want freedom, but they want boundaries and they want a system. Thanks to that boy, I really started to understand more about the need for discipline.”

And, discipline is what it takes, as this trio of dedicated high school counselors will attest; the discipline to remain true to goals for yourselves and your students; the discipline it takes to say “no” when your schedule is already overbooked; and the discipline to manage time effectively. Plus, the discipline to take time for yourself so you perform with optimism.

Connie Voss has been writing professionally for over 40 years. Her body of work includes a wide range of technical articles and human interest stories. She researched and wrote St. Thomas High School in the 20th Century an account of the first 100 years of a well-known Houston, Texas boys’ school. She writes a monthly column on advertising and marketing and assists a variety of industrial firms with their advertising communications.
Today getting into college involves so much more than filling out applications. When it comes to high school academics and standardized testing things are mapped out for students. The same cannot be said for extracurricular activities, it is difficult to know the role they play on college applications. Are some more important than others? Which will be most heavily weighted on applications? We must help our students choose extracurricular activities that are not only personally fulfilling but augment their profile as a college applicant.

Studies have shown that students who participate in extracurricular activities tend to have higher self-esteem and get better grades than those who do not. Sticking with these activities shows colleges that students can keep a commitment and those students who stick with the same activity for a year or more are more likely to graduate from college.

Highly selective universities tend to place a heavier weight on extracurricular activities and participation in extracurricular activities may set them apart from their peers that have similar grades and SAT/ACT scores. Extracurriculars can make the difference between a successful or unsuccessful application, so it is worth advising our students on the important role they take on. According to Peter Van Buskirk, an author, speaker, and consultant, the primary focus of credential review is academic; can the student do the work in the classroom, once academic competence is established, then the question becomes “if we admit the student, what do we get?” How will the student contribute to the enrichment of our community? What is the potential for him/her to bring distinction to our institution? He adds, the key is authenticity. Is it clear that the student is pursuing these activities due to defined interests or the desire for self-enrichment—or does it appear that they are strategically involved in resume building?

Conversely, Maria Furtado, executive director of Colleges that Change Lives says, “the most important thing about extracurriculars is that the student finds them fulfilling and meets good friends.” She believes too many students try to impress admission reps by participating in an activity they perceive to look better on their resume than something they might better enjoy. Admission committees aren’t just interested in who you are as a student because college is a community, they are interested in learning what students can contribute. In general, these activities show dedication and commitment, highlight leadership skills and create a picture of a well-rounded student who has chosen to focus on a few passions. The trick is that in order to be successful and convincing in doing this, students need to participate in extracurricular activities because of genuine interest and excitement about them. Peter Buskirk adds, students need to follow their hearts when choosing to become engaged. When they embrace things that give them joy in life, they can’t go wrong.

Admission committees will see right through an applicant filled with activities of no personal
Encourage students to select something they enjoy, care about, is challenging and useful to others. Simply signing up and participating isn’t enough, college admissions committee’s look to see sustained participation, ideally with increased responsibility. Ultimately students need to be able to speak about how the activity has impacted them both personally and as a student. Advise and help students think critically about the role these activities will play in their lives and try to imagine what they will have to say about the experience. Maria Furtado adds, it is not which activity, but what experiences did the student have. How excited are they when they talk or write about it? Do they use better verbs and adverbs, more exciting adjectives when they describe the experience? Furthermore, it is difficult to know which activities will resonate most with specific Colleges.

A good general rule of thumb is quality over quantity. Advise students that they must choose personally meaningful activities as well as those that they are passionate about. Students will show maturity by selecting a few activities to pursue during their high school years. Maria Furtado adds, when pursuing activities ask students if they enjoy the activity? Peter Van Buskirk remarks admission officers are eager to see consistency and growth demonstrated through involvement. Intensive involvement in one or two activities that result in leadership, substantial responsibility and recognition for achievement will be more impactful. Performance areas such as theater, sports, debate, and science fairs offer the most easily identifiable areas for such involvement. Evidence of compassion and activism can also be meaningful.

Help students to be judicious about choosing activities as a history of joining and dropping out will be a red flag. Indeed, those activities chosen should be enjoyable pursuits which students look forward to as a way to refresh and relax outside of academic work. Try to counsel students to find activities they enjoy, care about, challenge them and that are useful in order to maximize what they get from the experience and capitalize on a finely tuned extracurricular portfolio for their applications. Help students choose the right groups that offer the most opportunities. Because extracurriculars are not required for graduation they are a great way to explore an interest, discover unknown talents and show dedication. Share this checklist with your students:

- Do what interests you like, not what you think will look good
- Don't overcommit
- Do your research
- Become a leader
- Choose activities that you can commit to

It is also important to help students understand how to balance academics and other activities while prioritizing schoolwork. Here is a handy checklist on tips to help students evaluate their extracurriculars:

- Communicate that schoolwork is a priority, plan activities around classes
- Discuss proposed activities, write down the time commitment, the amount of practice involved and how it will impact the student's life. Help students weigh the pros and cons by making a list and talk about it. Does the student understand the effort required?
- Ask your students if this is something that they are enthusiastic about or if they just feel pressured to do it.
- Let students know nothing is written in stone. Situations change. It is good to be flexible.

Peter van Buskirk adds whereas a strong academic record gets students into the conversational elite institutions, it is often their non-academic credentials that put them “over the top” in the competition for admission. Students should invest their time and energy in activities that truly excite them—that define their character and values, and in many cases ignite a curiosity to know more about themselves and the world in which they live. He remarks, the worst thing students or their parents can do is try to follow a prescriptive approach to choosing extracurricular activities. Doing what they think admission officers want to see is not only inauthentic, it isn’t very satisfying.

Extracurricular activities are an important part of college applications. Those activities students choose to become involved in outside of the classroom helps admission committees understand their personality in a way test scores and grades cannot so help them choose those activities carefully.

Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch the lives of young people through her writing.
The ACT, One Section At a Time

For reasons beyond its fast pace and the breadth of content it tests, the ACT is a trial. Students, knowing full well that their results will be used in some measure to award or deny them college admission, must conquer stress in the face of the stakes and fight through fatigue in the face of a four-hour ordeal to put forth their best academic performances. And all this under conditions that may leave something to be desired. Test rooms are too hot or cold; other students, with their sniffles and pencil tapping, too distracting. And time, it seems, moves faster when it is least convenient for it to do so. Students have long been taught to accept these factors as part and parcel of a grueling but necessary rite of passage. That is, until this past October, when the ACT announced changes to its test administration policies that will fundamentally change the way students can take the exam.

Starting in September 2020, students who have taken the full ACT and desire to improve their scores will no longer have to sit through another full exam—instead, they will be able to retest in individual subject sections (English, Math, Reading, Science, or the optional Writing).

This is a monumental shift in college admissions testing. It will allow students who are retaking individual sections to focus their preparation on just a fraction of the exam rather than on the full test. This will save them time, and, for those enrolled in prep courses or tutoring programs, likely money. Students will be less likely to burn out from practice with content and full-length mock tests, and will be better able to focus their already limited time precisely where they need to do so. Paired with a logical prep plan, these factors will increase students’ likelihood of significantly improving their section scores. Furthermore, section retesting will drastically reduce stress and fatigue during the exam. Imagine a student whose Reading and Science scores need to go up, but whose scores on English and Math (the first two sections on the test) are already solid. This student will no longer have to expend cognitive energy and negotiate the attendant anxieties for a full 105 minutes before taking on the sections that were the impetus for the retest in the first place. Again, this is likely to help students achieve better scores.

While the ACT’s move seems a win for students on the surface, the devil is in the details. Single-section
retesting will be available in computer-based (online) format and on national test dates only. The former condition is the most limiting. The ACT claims it will start holding computer-based tests at “select” test centers, and that it plans on expanding to all of them “eventually.” For now, however, the technology and operational measures necessary for smoothly administering online tests will present logistical challenges that relatively few testing locations will be able to deal with. Though a list of online testing centers is forthcoming, we can speculate that districts with greater financial and personnel resources—that is, better funded schools in higher-income areas—will be first on the roster. Equity and access, then, are primary concerns. Will students in lower-income, poorly funded districts have the same opportunities to improve their scores? It’s hard to be optimistic that they will. Even if these students qualify for fee waivers (which will continue to be available for single-section testing), the travel to an online national testing center might be prohibitively time consuming and expensive. Such a scenario puts students who are close to online testing centers at a significant advantage.

Obsessive retesting is also a concern. In my ten years with Method Test Prep, I’ve seen some worrying behaviors, one of which is what I would call the “testing with abandon” approach. Students who subscribe to this philosophy of test taking simply keep retaking the exam as many times as they can. For students (or parents) who refuse to accept scores where they are, single-section testing can be a dangerous enticement to take the maximum number of tests possible (12, as it currently stands). It will be up to students, parents, and counselors to moderate testing when it’s clear that additional exams mean grasping at straws.

Apart from the pros and cons for students, single-section retesting brings to the fore additional considerations of test validity and reception. The ACT’s newest offering comes on the heels of another announcement that attracted a bit less fanfare but is of equal, if not greater, interest. A July 2019 ACT technical brief took prevailing ACT wisdom—that superscoring, or averaging of individual test scores across multiple test administrations, would improperly inflate students’ scores—and turned it on its head. The study linked to the brief suggested that superscored composite ACT scores actually were better predictors of first-year college success. Now, the ACT is endorsing the practice of superscoring, and will even begin reporting superscored composites on students’ ACT score reports. The introduction of single-section retesting, then, is a logical next step. It will be up to admissions committees to determine how to consider superscores and individual section retest scores in due time.

As we enter the next decade, the ACT’s move toward computer-based testing—which will also be made more widely available for full-length tests in the U.S.—presages an overarching shift toward technology in standardized college admissions testing. Indeed, the ACT has already successfully executed administering digital testing for all international test takers; it is leveraging this experience to expand computer-based testing initiatives at home. In addition, single-section and computer-based exam administration highlight the intense competition between testing organizations.

By introducing single-section retesting, the ACT has fired a shot across the College Board’s bow in the battle for the most student-friendly test. It would be no surprise if the SAT creators responded in kind, further accelerating the tug-of-war for college testing predominance. Paper tests will be here for a while, but the future in testing is coming, sooner or later, to a screen near you.

Evan Wessler is the VP of Education at Method Test Prep. He can answer any questions you have about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing him at evan@methodtestprep.com or visiting the Method Test Prep website at www.methodtestprep.com
Scholarship Watch
Curated by Scholarship Owl

- **Technique Online Learning Scholarship**
  https://teachinguide.com/scholarship
  Applicant must be a bonafide college student of any accredited college or university in the United States of America.
  **Awards:** $1,000
  **Deadline:** August 1, 2020
  **Contact:** E-mail inquiries and submissions to scholarship@teachinguide.com

- **Docs.Zone Scholarship**
  https://docs.zone/scholarship-program
  Students who are currently enrolled in a university, college, high school or trade school are eligible.
  **Awards:** 5 winners, $300 (software worth) each, MONTHLY
  **Deadline:** Last day of each month
  **Contact:** Submit requirements via scholarships@docs.zone

- **Digiteum Internet of Things Scholarship**
  https://www.digiteum.com/iot-scholarship
  The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, either an undergraduate or a graduate student of one of the U.S.-based college or university, studies engineering and computer science or currently undertakes a relevant internship.
  **Awards:** $2,000
  **Deadline:** April 1, 2020
  **Contact:** Submit requirements to hello@digiteum.com

- **Avalon Tech Joint Scholarship**
  http://avalontechjoint.com/avalon-tech-joint-scholarship/
  All applicants must be enrolled, or due to be enrolled, as a full-time student at an accredited college or university in the USA for the semester that they are applying to receive the scholarship and have a minimum of 3.0 GPA.
  **Awards:** $1,000
  **Deadline:** March 31, 2020
  **Contact:** Submit all work to scholarship@avalontechjoint.com

- **Fountainhead Essay Contest**
  https://www.aynrand.org/students/essay-contests#thefountainhead-1
  Applicants all over the world that are currently in 11th and 12th grade are eligible.
  **Awards:** Total $22,500 (1st place-$10,000; 2nd place-$2,500x3; 3rd place-$500x5 and 50 finalists $50 each.
  **Deadline:** May 28, 2020
  **Contact:** Visit https://aynrand.org/students/essay-contests/#tab-3-the-fountainhead for different essay submission options

- **Vowelor Scholarship**
  https://www.vowelor.com/scholarship/
  Graduating high school seniors or students enrolled in a college are eligible.
  **Awards:** $1,000
  **Deadline:** March 31, 2020
  **Contact:** Send your entry to scholarship@vowelor.com

- **Pretty Photoshop Actions Scholarship**
  https://www.photoshopactions.com/pages/pretty-photoshop-actions-scholarship-program
  Applicants must be currently high school seniors or students currently enrolled in a college/
university in the United States or Canada.
**Awards:** $500  
**Deadline:** April 15, 2020  
**Contact:** Email the submission to scholarship@photoshopactions.com

- **SolidEssay Contest**  
  https://www.solidessay.com/essay-contest/  
  Applicants in the United States are eligible.  
  **Awards:** $2,200 (1st place-$1,000; 2nd place-$700; 3rd place-$500)  
  **Deadline:** June 18, 2020  
  **Contact:** Submissions must be emailed to solidessay@gmail.com

- **MoneySolver Summer Scholarship**  
  https://www.moneysolver.org/scholarships/summer-scholarship/Applicants must be 18 years of age and older, legal US residents and currently enrolled in a post-secondary institution  
  **Awards:** $1,000  
  **Deadline:** July 31, 2020  
  **Contact:** Visit https://www.moneysolver.org/scholarships/summer-scholarship/ to apply

- **Celebrity Scholarship**  
  https://celebrityscholarship.com  
  Applicants must be 16 years of age or older and be legal residents of the United States.  
  **Awards:** $500  
  **Deadline:** December 31, 2019 (quarterly) and continuing on to 2020  
  **Contact:** To apply visit https://celebrityscholarship.com

- **You Deserve It Scholarship**  
  https://scholarshipowl.com  
  Applicant must be 16 years of age or older and be a legal resident of the United States.  
  **Award:** $1,000  
  **Deadline:** Monthly; 29th of each month  
  **Contact:** Register and apply on https://scholarshipowl.com

‘Curated by ScholarshipOwl, the #1 destination for financial aid.’

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Have some knowledge you want to share with other Counselors?  

LINK for Counselors is always looking for great content. Our Fall issue will be published in October 2020.

Contact us at Jason@linkforcounselors.com to find out how you can participate.
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please check with show organizer to confirm dates, location and times or for further information.
Sure, you can tour a campus online these days. But there’s nothing better than a campus tour when you’re trying to get a feel for the college or university. In order to make the most of your college tour you have to be prepared. Follow these steps and you’ll be a college tour pro!

**Be prepared**
Research its outstanding programs, faculty-student ratio, educational mission — even its mascot. Know the competitive sports teams and major rivals. Prepare yourself with all of the pertinent, public info about the college.

**Read while you wait**
Once you arrive on campus, check out the bulletins, pick up a copy of the college newspaper or magazine and don’t forget to grab a few brochures from the admissions office. This will help familiarize you with the campus basics, so you can focus on more in depth questions while touring.

**Questions to ask the tour guide:**
- Why did you choose this college?
- What was your best experience here?
- Why did you stay after freshman year?
- What’s your plan for after graduation?

**Ask questions**
Sometimes the excitement of the tour can lead to lots of distractions, which means you may forget to ask questions. Be sure to create a list of questions before the tour and keep them handy the day of. Reference it regularly to make sure you’ve got all the answers. If a question hasn’t been addressed, ask it!

**Talk to students**
Some of your best feedback will come from students who are actually at the college! They are living the life you may live everyday, so who better to give you insight on the day-to-day activities on campus? Visit the campus coffee shop or commons and ask students what the campus is really like (It’s OK to leave the tour guide and/or parents behind on this one!)

**While on the tour**
Your tour guide will be an actual student at the college you are visiting, so be prepared to ask questions.

**After the tour**
Write down five impressions of the school. Consider the campus personality, diversity of the student body, the size of the lecture halls and student interaction. These little mental reminders will help you compare colleges later.

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**SCHOOL NOTES:**
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

**FIRST IMPRESSIONS:**
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

**YOUR QUESTIONS:**
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

**Find your match**
Get matched up with your perfect college at LINKForCounselors.com
Why—and Where—to Get a College Job

Have you thought about getting a part-time job in College? Most college students do. In fact, a 2015 study by Georgetown University found that, over the past 25 years, 70% of U.S. college students have been earning a paycheck while pursuing their studies.

Why do so many college students work?

**Money.** The most obvious reason to get a job in College is to make money to help with school and living expenses. Whether you need to pay tuition or room and board, buy books or groceries, or go out to eat now and then, you’ll be glad to have a regular source of income.

**References.** Your work supervisor and other decision-makers in the company or organization can become great references later, whether to help you land an internship, get into grad school or secure your next job. If you’re lucky enough to work in your field of study, these individuals might also become mentors to you.

**Resume-building.** No matter what type of job you hold, you’re likely to learn new skills and pick up knowledge that could bolster your resume. Future employers will also appreciate that you had the drive to work and study simultaneously; a strong work ethic is important to those who hire.

Where should you look for work?

**On campus**

Colleges offer a variety of student employment opportunities, typically posted on the school website or intranet. The advantages of working on campus include:

► **Location.** Why not take a job that’s within walking distance of your classes?

► **Flexible scheduling.** Understanding the demands of juggling a job and coursework, campus employers will often work around your breaks, finals and other school-related activities.

► **Special perks.** Some colleges offer incentives in addition to a paycheck—a meal plan credit, for example, when you work in food service.

**Off campus**

Though you may have to arrange for transportation to an off-campus job, taking a look at local job postings could be a good idea. Off-campus jobs offer these advantages.

► **Pay.** You can often earn a higher hourly wage working off-campus.

► **Variety.** Depending on the number of businesses in your college town, you may be able to find a job that interests you more than on-campus options.

► **No limits on earning.** Off-campus jobs tend to offer more flexibility.

To learn more, visit: pnc.com/myfinanceacademy
BAYLOR INSTITUTE FOR AIR SCIENCE

Location: Waco, TX
Website: www.baylor.edu/aviation
Year Founded: 1845

Type of Institution: Four-year Private, Christian University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1
Tuition Costs: $21,421
Room & Board: $6,362

Baylor University offers the unique combination of a professional aviation degree and a stellar education from a world-class faith-based university.

At Baylor University’s Institute for Air Science, we offer you an aviation Bachelor’s degree along with opportunities to enjoy a fulfilling college experience and student life on a tradition-rich campus. Soar to new heights and discover Baylor’s one-of-a-kind spirit of community and faith!

Telephone: 254-710-3563
Email: aviation@baylor.edu

GANNON UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA
Website: www.gannon.edu
Year Founded: 1925
Type of Institution: University
Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1
Institutional Designation: Private - Religious
Tuition Costs: $31,180-$33,060
Room & Board: $11,450-$15,060
Avg. Student Aid Package: $21,128
Avg Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $19,494
Avg. Work-Study Aid Awarded: $2,300

At Gannon University, we’re focused on students’ academic success by ensuring a high-quality education is within reach for all who are seeking to find their path and advance their career.

Gannon offers over 100 innovative online and traditional Bachelor’s, Master’s and Doctoral academic programs where students practice hands-on, real-world application in exceptional learning environments on campus and in the community. More than 4,000 academically talented and diverse students enjoy a personalized experience through Gannon’s low student-to-faculty ratio of 13:1. Our faculty experts inspire students and prepare them for the careers of tomorrow.

Telephone: 814-871-7407
Email: admissions@gannon.edu
HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Location: Hampton, VA  
Website: www.hamptonu.edu  
Year Founded: 1868  
Type of Institution: Private  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1  
Institutional Designation: Coeducational  
Tuition Costs: $24,950  
Room & Board: $12,366  
Average Student Aid Package: $32,128  
(Aincludes Loans, Plus Loans, and all Aid)  
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 48.1%  
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $11,500  

At Hampton University "Inspiration to Impact" are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 50 bachelor's; 25 master's programs; 1 post-master degree, and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, counselor education and supervision, architecture, and pharmacy. 

Telephone: 757-727-5000  
Email: admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Location: Hempstead, NY  
Website: www.hofstra.edu  
Year Founded: 1935  
Type of Institution: University  
Institutional Designation: Private/Non-profit  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1  
Tuition Costs: $45,700  
Room & Board: $15,708  
Average Student Aid Package: $32,455  
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 100%  

Hofstra University can help you get where you want to go, with small classes, dedicated faculty and a beautiful, energized campus, plus all the opportunities of New York City within easy reach.

Find your future by choosing from about 160 undergraduate programs and about 165 graduate programs, in Liberal Arts and Sciences, Business, Communication, Education, Health Sciences and Human Services, Engineering and Applied Science and Honors studies, as well as a School of Law and School of Medicine. The student-faculty ratio of 13 to 1 and a priority on teaching excellence ensures you’re part of creating your own success. 

Telephone: 516-463-6700 or 1-800-463-7872  
Email: admission@hofstra.edu
KEAN UNIVERSITY

Location: Union, New Jersey  
Website: www.kean.edu  
Year Founded: 1855

Type of Institution: Public University  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Tuition Costs: $6,297.50 (full time, in-state per semester); $9,885.50 (full-time, out-of-state per semester)

Application Deadlines: First-year Early Action, January 1; Preferred Regular Action, April 30; Preferred Transfer Action, August 6

Application Fee: $75

Students come to Kean University with a singular purpose: to get the world-class education they need to climb higher in life. They acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in the classroom, in the workplace and in the world. Help your students find their passion and a path to success that lasts a lifetime.

Telephone: (908) 737-7100  
Email: admitme@kean.edu

LANDMARK COLLEGE

Location: Putney, VT  
Website: www.landmark.edu  
Year Founded: 1985

Type of Institution: Four-year, two-year liberal arts for students with learning disabilities and attention challenges  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 6:1

Tuition Costs: $59,100  
Room & Board: $12,900 per year (based on standard room and meal plan)

Landmark College is for students who learn differently, including students with a learning disability (such as dyslexia), ADHD, or autism. LC champions a strengths-based model and gives students the skills and strategies they need to achieve their goals. Landmark College offers bachelor’s and associate degrees, as well as a Bridge Experience, online dual enrollment courses for high school students, and summer programs for middle school, high school, and college students.

The Landmark College Institute for Research and Training conducts groundbreaking research on learning differences and shares that knowledge with educators around the world.

Telephone: 802-387-6718  
Email: admissions@landmark.edu
LYNN UNIVERSITY

Location: Boca Raton, FL
Website: www.lynn.edu
Year Founded: 1962

Type of Institution: Independent, nonprofit, coeducational, residential institution.
Institutional Designation: Private, Nonprofit

Student-Faculty Ratio: 21:1
Tuition Costs: $35,260
Room & Board: $11,970
Average Student Aid Package: $24,185
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 58.70%
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $11,150
Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: $2,039

Lynn University is an independent college based in Boca Raton, Florida, with approximately 3,000 students from 100 countries. U.S. News & World Report ranks Lynn among the most innovative and international schools in the region. Lynn’s Dialogues curriculum and award-winning iPad program help graduates gain the intellectual flexibility and global experience to fulfill their potential in an ever-changing world.

Telephone: 561-237-7900
Email: admission@lynn.edu

MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA
Website: www.mercyhurst.edu
Year Founded: 1926

Type of Institution: 4-year, Catholic, liberal arts
Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1
Tuition Costs: $37,500
Room & Board: $11,000 - $13,000 (depending on residence hall)
Student Aid Package: $21,500
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: More than 90% of students receive financial aid.

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution, in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 100 majors, minors and concentrations as well as unique post-baccalaureate, advanced certificate and master’s degree programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Inspired by our motto, “Carpe Diem” (seize the day), our faculty and students are busy making a difference on and off campus — from “the Hill” to the far corners of the world.

Telephone: 800-825-1926 x2202
Email: admissions@mercyhurst.edu
MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Location: Wichita Falls, TX
Website: www.msutexas.edu
Year Founded: 1922
Type of Institution: Comprehensive higher education system
Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1
Tuition Costs: $4,510 (in-state); $5,665 (non-resident)
Room & Board: $4,135 per semester based on a semi-private traditional residence hall with highest meal plan
Student Aid Package: $11,142
Avg. Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 68%
Avg. Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $5,653
Avg. Work-Study Aid Awarded: $1,877

Midwestern State is recognized as a public liberal arts university with strong programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences as well as accredited professional programs in mechanical engineering, social work, nursing, radiologic science, respiratory care, athletic training, and business, among others. MSU offers the individual attention of a private education but the affordability of a public university. Classes average fewer than 30 students, and most are taught by full-time faculty, not graduate assistants. Students are active in more than 100 organizations and bring a spirit of competition to 13 NCAA Division II athletic programs.

Telephone: 800-842-1922
Email: admissions@msutexas.edu

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

Location: Lewiston, NY
Website www.niagara.edu
Year Founded: 1856
Type of Institution: Private, four-year, comprehensive, Catholic, co-educational university
Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1
Institutional Designation: Private, religious(Vincentian), Masters Large
Tuition Costs: $33,000 (before financial aid)
Room & Board: $11,700
Student Aid Package: $27,232
Avg. Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 99%

Since 1856, Niagara University has empowered graduates with the skills and confidence to excel as professionals and people. It’s a practical experience that delivers exactly what employers are looking for by blending the best of a liberal arts and professional education – making a degree from Niagara a coveted 21st-century credential.

All four of the university’s academic colleges – Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, and Hospitality and Tourism Management – have received the highest rankings from the top accreditation boards in their fields. Students can choose from more than 80 majors and 55 minors. Ninety-seven percent of recent Niagara graduates were employed or enrolled in grad school within just six months of graduating.

Telephone: 800-462-2111 or 716-286-8715
Email: admissions@niagara.edu
SAWATBURY UNIVERSITY
Location: Salisbury, MD
Website: www.salisbury.edu
Year Founded: 1925
Type of Institution: 4-year public comprehensive
Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1
Tuition Costs: $9,824 in-state; $19,526 out of state
Room & Board: $11,950 (based on “all day, every day” meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)
Average Student Aid Package: $7,395 (need based)
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $2,773 (non-need based)

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 43 undergraduate majors, 15 graduate programs and 2 doctorates in nursing practice and education. SU is ranked among the nation’s “Best Value” colleges by Kiplinger’s Personal Finance, Money, Forbes, The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Washington Monthly also named SU among America’s “Best Bang For The Buck” Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 20 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Telephone: 410-543-6161
Email: admissions@salisbury.edu

TEXAS A&M-CORPUS CHRISTI
Location: Corpus Christi, TX
Website: www.tamucc.edu
Year Founded: 1947
Type of Institution: Four Year Public Doctorate
Institutional Designation: Hispanic Serving - HSI
Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1
Tuition Costs: $10,202 annual
Room & Board: $11,024
Average Student Aid Package: $10,376
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 56%
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $3,858
Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: $4,640

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is a premier doctoral granting institution in South Texas. More than 45 undergraduate, 31 masters, and 9 doctoral/terminal degrees make the Island University the intellectual hub of the Coastal Bend. Nationally and internationally known institutes, research centers and labs, and award-winning degree programs draw approximately 12,000 students annually to the Island University.

Telephone: 1.800.4.TAMUCC
Email: recruitment@tamucc.edu
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

Location: Kingsville, TX  
Website: www.tamuk.edu  
Year Founded: 1925  
Type of Institution: Public University  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1  
Institutional Designation: Four-year  
Tuition Costs: $9,694 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)  
Room & Board: $8,787 per year  
Average Student Aid Package: $14,537  
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 76%  
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $7,296  
Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: $3,107

Texas A&M University-Kingsville has been ranked among the nation’s best in higher education by U.S. News and World Report, Forbes and Washington Monthly. Degree offerings include well-known programs in engineering, agriculture and music, and new programs in veterinary technology and criminal justice. Classroom learning is enhanced through hands-on research opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Recognized for excellence in affordability, financial aid, athletics and more, Texas A&M-Kingsville offers a complete college experience.

Telephone: 361-593-2315  
Email: admissions@tamuk.edu

TOURO COLLEGE, NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES (NYSCAS)

Location: Brooklyn, NY  
Website: www.nyscas.touro.edu  
Year Founded: 1971  
Type of Institution: Comprehensive higher education system  
Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1  
Tuition Costs: $15,150  
Average Student Aid Package: $9,000  
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world’s most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

Telephone: 212-463-0400 ext. 55500  
Email: admissions.nyscas@touro.edu
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - VICTORIA

Location: Victoria, TX
Website: www.uhv.edu
Year Founded: 1973
Type of Institution: Four-year, public university
Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1
Institutional Designation: Bachelor’s & Master’s
Tuition Costs: $8,328 Annual Tuition and Fees (2019-2020 in-state rate, 15 hours/semester)
Room & Board: $8,502
Average Student Aid Package: $10,152
Average Percentage of Financial Aid Met: 63%
Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: $4,711
Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: $2,167

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses leading to more than 80 academic programs in the schools of Arts & Sciences; Business Administration; and Education, Health Professions & Human Development. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas, campus as well as an instructional site in Katy, Texas, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

Telephone: 361-570-4848
Email: recruitment@uhv.edu

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA WILMINGTON

Location: Wilmington, NC
Website: www.uncw.edu
Year Founded: 1947
Type of Institution: Four-year public
Institutional Designation: Doctoral Universities: High Research Activity
Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1
Tuition Costs: In-State $4,400/Out-of-State $18,508
Room & Board: $6,790

The University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) is divided into 5 academic units: the College of Arts and Sciences; the College of Health and Human Services; the Watson College of Education; the Cameron School of Business; and the UNCW Graduate School. Through these institutions, 56 undergraduate degrees and 40 graduate degrees are offered.

The US News and World Report ranked UNCW among the Top 100 Public National Universities in its Best Colleges 2020 guidebook. Additionally, UNCW has been named a Best Southeastern School by The Princeton Review.

Telephone: 910-962-3243
Email: admissions@uncw.edu
UTICA COLLEGE

Location: Utica, NY
Website: utica.edu
Year Founded: 1946

Type of Institution: 4-year, private, residential college
Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1

Tuition Costs: $21,560
Room & Board: $11,670
Average Student Aid Package: $28,209

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