



2018 National Order of the Arrow Conference

## Cell Name: Is College in my Future College Preparation & Search

### Session Length: 45 Minutes

Through this session, you will:

**Explain** the process to a successful college search.

**Demonstrate** the key components to a successful college search.

**Guide** Arrowmen to realize they can conduct a successful college search.

**Enable** Arrowmen with the tools to understand and conduct a successful college search.

This session will help educate each Arrowman with understanding the steps involved with conducting a successful college search.

### Learning Outcomes:

- Outcome 1 – General understanding of the college admission process
- Outcome 2 – Understanding of the components involved in a successful search
- Outcome 3 – Action Game plan for grades 9-11

### Theme Connection:

The theme of NOAC 2018 is “Decide Your Destiny,” This session will incorporate this message by emphasizing that choices and decisions we make today, have a direct impact on the choices we will have tomorrow and for the future. This session will relay this theme in the following ways:

- By educating each Arrowman about the college search process and being prepared to successfully apply to the college of their choosing
- By empowering each Arrowman with the knowledge to conduct their own college search;

**Required Materials:** [tailor specifically for this session after the syllabus is done, e.g. handouts, flipcharts, projector, screen]

- \*\*Computer, Projector and Screen\*
- Flip Chart and pen

## TRAINER PREPARATION

1. The Arrowmen training this session should be extremely familiar with the Admission process by vocation or through personal experience. Experience will be extremely helpful in presenting the material and responding to questions in an honest and meaningful way.
2. Develop general knowledge and understanding of the admissions requirements utilized by the majority of colleges and universities in the United States.
3. Incorporate personal antidotes into script to make it more personal and story-telling rather than reading.
4. Review PowerPoint presentation and update with personalization's, if desired.

## Session Narrative

### Understanding the Process ... A General Overview

3 Minutes

The Journey of the College Search is exactly what it sounds like: a journey. In this session Arrowmen will take the journey to explore the nuances of how to conduct a successful college search. This session will cover the major topics of the college search including: Requirements for Admission, How to find a college that is the right fit for you, the College Campus visit, Admissions Deadlines, an overview of the 4 year college search calendar and how to best express your Order of the Arrow experience to enhance your college application.

This session, hosted by a university admissions professional, will cover the topics in depth yet be general enough to be helpful to every Arrowman in their college search. There will be time allocated for "general questions" from participants.

The purpose of the College Preparation and Search session is to help every Arrowman become comfortable with understanding the components of a successful college search. For some the decision as to where to attend college is quite simple; however, for many it is a process ... a journey ... to understanding each Arrowman's individual needs and then matching those needs with the opportunities offered at each college. The College Search is not a one step process; but rather it is a complex multi-faceted dynamic process of understanding, comparison and constantly evaluating schools to gain a full understanding of the merit of each possibility. In order to effectively and successfully navigate the College Admissions Process, Arrowmen must learn to objectively evaluate the admission criteria for each school to effectively measure their chances of success.

In this session we will present the knowledge and help develop the skills necessary to effectively conduct the college search process and make the final decision.

## The Admissions Criteria~ What are schools looking for?

15 Minutes

### **Trainer Instructions:**

The admission criteria discussed may vary from school to school. The order of importance of the identified criteria will also vary from school to school. It is important to remind participants that we are discussing admissions criteria in general terms and they should contact each school they are researching for the specifics for that particular institution.

Brief Introduction of Instructor and Housekeeping

2 Minutes

Hello and welcome to NOAC ~ This session: IS COLLEGE IN MY FUTURE – College preparation and The College Search

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am \_\_\_\_\_ (title) in the Office of Admissions.

Share a little bit about yourself (i.e. where you are from, if you graduated from College, what your major was, personal story of how you got here, etc.)

Share pertinent housekeeping items before beginning.

- Identify the fire alarm system in building and directions if there is a need to evacuate.
- Please turn off any cell phones, video equipment and other electronics. Your neighbors and I thank you.
- If you have a question, “I need you to raise your hand so I can see you to answer your question”.

Poll the audience to see who is in the audience.

[Helpful to make sure you address the needs of those in attendance.] I would like to find out a little bit about you. Raise your hand if you are a high school Senior, Junior, Sophomore, Freshman. Are there any Transfer students here today?

### **Brief Overview of the process**

3 Minutes

There are a great deal of choices for college ...public, private, 2-year 4-year for profit and non-profit schools

How does one choose, where do I apply and how do I find one that might be a good fit ... but what does that look like?

This is a Major decision ... give it thought

**How many of you would go up to a stranger and say would you marry me or buy a car before taking it out for a test ride and researching it ... same hold true here**

You need to test drive the college you are going to as you will be spending anywhere from 40-100K for your education

You will invest 20-25% of your life on the campus you choose ... do the research & choose wisely!

You shouldn't get accepted to a university and decide to go without getting to know the university extremely well.

### **Broad parameters for consideration**

Size, location, academic focus, what do you want to study?

Worst case scenario is you get to a school and find out that they don't have what you want to study ... not a great first move

Do your research first and then dip in the water trying to figure out what is going to work what qualities are going to work for you ... try on the university do they have a visitation program? Do they have a day with a student?

Officially visiting a campus will allow you to see it through the eyes of the current students.

Would you take someone out for a \$ 70.00 date before you get to know them?? Then don't spend the \$70 application fee without having some idea of what you are applying for

Some will seem more attractive than others at first ... but you not looking for the one and only ... find several options ... don't fall for the What's a matter U is the only school I am applying for.

There are many schools that fall under what is considered Selective Admissions

Sounds exclusive and clubby ... it really means that a selective university is a school that receives more applications from than they can accept.

The process is one of selecting the appropriate candidates

- For some schools they will look at your qualifications. if you have them you are in if you don't you are not.
- With highly selective schools the decision criteria changes ... at highly selective institutions they receive far more qualified applicants than they have room to accept. The decision is not just if you are or are not qualified or who meets the qualifications; but now for the admission office it becomes who among this set of highly qualified applicants are we going to accept?

A lot of students want to know where the bar is for admissions is ... what do I have to do to get in?

In most of your classes there is a clear rubric ... if you do this, this, this and this you get the top grade if you do this and this you get the next highest grade. Often the criteria is very clear cut .. you know where the bar exists.

The problem and frustration with selective admissions is that most students meet the top bar or more than we can accept and so it becomes a matter of choice and selection.

### **Trainer Instructions:**

Poll the audience for what they think colleges are looking for?

Focus points on flip chart should reflect:

Curriculum, Grades, Test Scores, Essay, Interview, Extra Curricular's & Letter of Recommendation

### **What are schools looking for?**

10 Minutes

**The order of importance of the criteria will vary from school to school**

### **A) ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF STUDY ~ THE RIGOR**

The definition of Rigor and what each school is specifically looking for varies from school to school. Basically, schools are looking for students who challenge themselves by taking the most challenging courses in each of the core areas available at their school during ALL four years of high school ... including the senior year.

Identify the subjects that are of interest to the schools you are looking at:

- English
- Math
- Lab Science
- Social Science
- Foreign Languages

How many years of each core area are required as the minimum?

What is the highest course needed in each core area to meet the minimum entry requirement?

Is there a specific sequence or course the school you are looking at is looking for?

### **B) ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT ~ THE GRADES**

What are the requirements and minimums of competitive applicants at the school you are looking at. How does the school evaluate academic success / achievement. Is it:

- Grade Point Average [GPA] from your school
- Weighted GPA
- A grade count ... or recalculated GPA by the college?

Look at your HS Transcript ... It tells the story of your whole academic career ... that is what the admissions office is looking at ... NOT your quarterly report card.

Every school is different; every school evaluates Academic Achievement in their own way. The ONLY way to know is to ASK at each school you are applying to.

### **C) STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES ~ THE SAT/ACT**

- Are Standardized tests required? Which ones?
- Are subject tests required? Which ones?
- Which test are accepted?
- How do you submit them ... [Electronic / attached to HS transcripts]
- How many tests can you submit ... how do they look at them?
  - Does the school SUPER SCORE ... SAT/ACT
- Is one score preferred over the other?
- What are the test scores ranges ... Typically schools will post the mid-50% - what does that mean?
- 25% are below the average and 25 % are above the average

#### **D) THE COLLEGE ESSAY ~ McESSAY OR PERSONAL STATEMENT**

- ANSWER THE QUESTION!
  - My life is like a Radish
- Is your submission a McEssay or a personal statement?
- Spell Check...
- Are the words actually what you want to say
  - Football couch and big yellow bust
- Have someone ELSE read it ... does it make sense?
- The work presented should be yours, **the voice that should come through should be yours**, have others review it to help make sure that your voice comes through
  
- Discuss the challenge of Eagle Scout vs. OA participation

#### **E) FACE TO FACE ENCOUNTERS OF THE THIRD KIND**

Visitation with college representatives can be monumental in the process ... If the **school permits and values** the face to face encounters as A PART OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS.

- College Fair ~ with college representative or alums
- Campus visit ~ with Official Visitation staff visit vs. THE FRIENDS VISIT
- The College Campus Visit {How and when / a how to guide to making the best of our time on ANY campus visit}
- The Drive by in grades 9--> 11 eliminating the OBVIOUS }
- THE INTERVIEW ~ a personal encounter with a college/university representative

#### **F) EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES ~ THE OTHER STUFF**

What are Extra-Curricular Activities?

- Awards {Academic, Athletic and Community based recognitions}
- National Honor Societies
- Work (Part-time, Full time & Summer work)
- School activities (Sports, Band, Theatre, SGA, 4-H, scouts ... other)
  - What have you done
  - When did you do it
  - Where did you do it [School, district, state or at the national level?]
  - For how long have you done it
  - Have you held positions of leadership
- Community service (Philanthropic or Required for school/church?)
  
- What type of activity is considered best?
- How do you make the best of what you do ...
- Do Extra-curricular activities matter ... what does a school learn from what you do?
- The challenge of Eagle Scout vs. OA participation [Eagle Scout-known entity / OA - What is it?]

#### **G) LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

Ask your counselor and/or teachers to write you letters of recommendation or to complete any required forms. Be courteous and keep in mind that they are VERY busy—give AT LEAST 2 weeks of notice! Meet deadlines for each school's application

## THE SEARCH

5 Minutes

### **Trainer Notes:**

The search is a dynamic process and involves the whole family. It can occur over a long period of time.

FLIP CHART ... Quickly poll the audience for:

How do you start?

Who do you know now that could help get you started?

What would be important to YOU in choosing a college that you might be at for 4-5 years?

## HOW to Start

- Meet with your school counselor or career coach. They will be very important to this process, and it's important to keep them up to date with your plans
- Discuss your interests and begin to identify schools that offer that course work or a major area of study that fits with your interests.

Areas of interest in the selection process include:

- Size, location and distance from home?
- Majors available / other academic considerations?
- Academic calendar of the school?
- What is the culture of the school?
- Do students go home on the weekend?
- What do students do on the weekends?
- Do Freshman live on campus?
- Is there a religious affiliation ... is this important to you

Visit with college representatives:

- High School visit ~ with college representative or alums at your school
- College Fair ~ with college representative or alums at a local College Fair Event

Campus visit ~

- The Drive by in grades 9--> 11 eliminating the OBVIOUS
- Official Visitation - Admissions visit vs. THE FRIENDS VISIT
- The College Campus Visit {How and when to making the best of your time on ANY campus visit}
- THE PRO's & CON's LIST

**The Long Shot—the Reach School:** Your grades and test scores put you in the bottom 25th percentile of students in that school. You should not apply to this school “just to see if you can get in”. Be sure to communicate to an admissions officer in writing that this school is the perfect fit for you.

**The Target School –Acceptance is Likely?:** Your grades and scores place you in the middle 50th percentile of the school's students. You are a good match for the majority of students there, and this is one of your



favorite colleges you have considered. It is a good idea to let the admissions staff know this is one of your top choices. BE CAREFUL.

**The Safety School:** Your credentials clearly place you in the top 10th percentile of the college's applicant pool. However, you should never have an arrogant attitude with an admissions officer from this school by letting them know this is your "safety". Remember that a safety school may offer you a competitive financial aid package or scholarship, or offer you admission to an honors program.

Once you finalize the list of schools you plan to apply to, go to their website and find out their deadlines. Note any special scholarship deadlines and follow them! Don't apply too late and miss out on free money!

## THE APPLICATION

5 Minutes

DEADLINES ~ HIT SUBMIT BEFORE THE DEADLINE

Consider and **Meet deadlines** for each school's application

Will you apply:

**Early Decision** (where you must attend that college if you are accepted) or d

**Early Action** (where you simply apply earlier and find out your admission decision earlier)

**Regular Decision** (typical deadlines range from Dec 1 to Jan 15th. CHECK with each school]

**Rolling Admission** deadlines vary from school to school but typically close when the class is full.

Review each college's website to see what application materials are required.

Do you need to write a personal statement, include letters of recommendation from a teacher and/or counselor, or attach a resume?

**Each school has different requirements, so it's very important to check with each college.**

### **Hit submit before the deadline**

Submit ALL required documents BY the deadlines POSTED

A large number of applicants hit submit on the LAST DAY possible ... then stress and worry if the school has their application materials .... Save the added anxiety ... apply well before the deadline

First and foremost, locate the application. Most applications are submitted online.

To find a college/university's application, visit their website and head to their "Admissions" or "Prospective Student" section. This will typically lead to a page where an "Apply Now!" button can be found.

For each application you complete online, you will have a username and password that will allow you to save your progress and return to it at a later time.

Students are expected to submit each of their applications before the college's posted deadlines. It is very important to review any application before submitting it.



Along with the application, colleges will often ask for other documents such as test scores, transcripts, mid-year grades, essays, resumes, and recommendations. Each school has different expectations. Some will require all of these while some may require just a transcript and test scores.

Many colleges will have an application checklist on their website where students will be able to find the required items for that school. An incomplete application will generally not be evaluated.

Pay close attention to which schools require what documents!

### **The Common Application:**

Over 400 schools participate with, and use, the Common Application.

### **The Coalition Application**

Over 140 schools participate with, and use, The Coalition Application

If applying to more than one of the school who use either the Common or Coalition application, the student completes one main directory of information and then there is usually a smaller supplemental application for each additional school.

The Common Application can be found at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

The Common Application can be found at <http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>

In addition to the elements completed by the student, all counselor elements and teacher recommendations will be completed electronically as well. After speaking with counselors and teachers to request a transcript or letter of recommendation, you will have to input counselor/teacher email addresses in order for those individuals to be prompted to complete their portion of the application.

Unless you are eligible for a fee waiver, an application fee must be paid for each application that is submitted.

## **THE CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT 4 YEARS**

**15 Minutes**

### **Trainer Instructions:**

Provide an OVERVIEW of the process and what to do during the 4 years leading up to enrollment. The list below is exhaustive and it is not necessary to include everything ... A lot is include here for reference. PowerPoint slide for each year has some of the highlights for each year.

College planning is not just a senior year activity. Plan early. Prepare yourself for admission to the best colleges and universities and for making your transition to college as smooth as possible. The sooner you begin the better. Here are some general guidelines

### **Ninth Grade**



- **Discuss your class schedule with your counselor. Begin making a four-year plan for graduation.** Take classes that correspond to the most demanding requirements of the kinds of colleges to which you are thinking about seeking admission.
- **Enroll in honors classes if you can succeed in them.** Admissions counselors consider a strenuous course load through high school to be quite important when they are considering how to evaluate an application. They prefer students who have taken a demanding set of courses, but who have average grade point averages, over students with high grade point averages, but who have taken easy courses.

This does not mean that grades don't count. They do.

**Even ninth grade grades count in calculating your grade point average.**

- **Most universities and colleges seek to enroll students with a wide range of skills, interests and backgrounds.** They value a student body with diverse backgrounds, experiences and talents. Plan to participate actively in in-school and out-of-school clubs, activities, and sports. Select extracurricular activities and community service opportunities that interest you and that position you to become a professional in a field that interests you.
- **Start thinking about the kinds of colleges you would like to attend.** Consider keeping a college planning file where you keep information for future reference.
- **Find out who your counselor is and meet with** him or her to explore your interests and college interests. See what printed and media materials the counseling office has for college and career planning.
- **Throughout high school, attend presentations with visit college representatives on campus** to hear what they say about their institutions.
- **Start to meet and become friends with your teachers.** When you are applying to college you may need letters of recommendation, so good relations with your teachers is important. Universities may require counselors to write letters of recommendation as well.
- **Each university and college has its own look and feel.** Each institution's academic demands, culture, and student bodies is different. As you have the opportunity go to college campuses, stop by to get a feel for what they are like.
- **Use the Internet to visit college Web sites,** take their virtual tours, see what majors are offered and what makes them different from one another.
- **Take practice standardized tests** to see how you are doing.
- **Sign up for challenging courses** in your sophomore year.
- If you **acquire excellent computer skills** in keyboarding, research, and project work, you will find success in college easier to come by.
- Keep a portfolio of:
  - **Your report cards**
  - Lists of student government and club offices you have held and of awards and special **recognitions you have received.**
  - **Lists of volunteer work,** group projects, and work experiences you have engaged in.
- **START YOUR RESUME**

### Tenth Grade

- **Maintain a rigorous class schedule** and keep your grades up.
- **Continue to engage in extra-curricular activities.**
- **Attend a college fair.**
- **Keep thinking about majors and careers.** Ask people in the community about their education and about their profession. They might let you "shadow" them on the job for a day.
- **Continue visiting campuses when you can** and collecting information about schools you may want to attend.



- **Attend the presentations by college representatives** when they visit your school.
- **Take the practice SAT and/or ACT exams.** Take these tests seriously and prepare for them. Find out what your scores indicate about your college planning. These tests can give you valuable clues about your strengths and weaknesses, as well as possible areas of career interests.
- **Meet with your counselor to evaluate your post-high school plans** and your academic and co-curricular progress toward graduation. Review and change your plans, if necessary.
- **Begin to think more seriously about your career goals and interests.** Use paper-based and computer-based attitudinal and values instruments to suggest careers that are appropriate for you to consider.
- **Plan to take the Preliminary SAT,** as well as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.
- **UPDATE YOUR RESUME**
- **Take on leadership roles in your extra-curricular activities** whenever possible. Keep a record of awards you receive as well as of important events you participated in. Target activities and positions that will make you stand out.
- **Plan your junior year carefully.**
- **Take advanced placement and SAT II tests in the same year as you take those classes.**

## Eleventh Grade

### Fall

- Plan to take the Preliminary SAT, as well as the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.
- **Go to a college fair** to find out more about colleges, their requirements and their offerings.
- **Recheck your high school courses.** Will you meet college requirements?
- **Stay involved in activities. Genuine involvement in one activity is better than token participation in several.**
- **Register for the December SAT IIs** if appropriate.
- Talk with graduates of your high school who are home from college to see what they have learned about their experience.
- **Make a list of possible colleges to attend.** Consider criteria that are important to you (for example, academic program, the major you are seeking location, size, cost, athletics). Request information from these colleges and/or visit their website.
- **If you are planning on participating in college athletics,** meet with your counselor to learn more about the NCAA Clearinghouse process.
- Attend, with your parents, financial aid planning programs to learn more about the process of applying for and obtaining financial assistance for college.
- **Meet with college representatives** when they come to your high school.
- **Sign up to take career planning and attitudinal tests** that help to refine your potential college major and career interests.
- **Consider taking the ACT in early April** the school(s) to which you are applying require it so that you will have more than one score from which to choose. If you are planning on participating in college athletics, you must take the ACT on a national test date.
- **Take the SAT in the spring** if the school(s) to which you are applying require it.
- **Take the Advanced Placement (AP) exams in May** if you are eligible to earn credit and/or advanced standing at many colleges and universities.
- **Meet with your counselor to discuss questions you have about college.**
- **During registration in the early spring, make sure you sign up for challenging courses for your senior year. Don't take an easy senior year—colleges want to know that you've challenged yourself during your entire high school career.**



- **Continue your participation in extracurricular activities and community service. Take on leadership roles whenever possible to enhance your resume.**
- **Throughout the year and during the summer, visit colleges in which you may be interested.** Also consider visiting nearby colleges in order to get a better understanding of different types of schools (small private universities, large public universities, two-year colleges, etc.).
- **Consider colleges that you think you can't afford.** Many private colleges and universities offer attractive financial aid packages to students with financial needs or with outstanding academic achievements that can make attendance at these campuses possible.
- **Investigate college costs, options for financial aid, scholarships.** Use resources at your counseling center, as well as online resources.
- **Start narrowing your college list based on your personal preferences for a major, a career, and university size, location, cost and other factors.**
- Obtain, or view online, college catalogs, view books, financial aid information, campus and departmental Web sites.
- **Continue making visits to campuses.**
- Take appropriate tests: SAT's- I and II's, ACT, AP, IB, in the spring.
- **Make plans for getting teacher recommendations.**
- Plan meaningful summer activities.
- **Consider taking especially difficult advanced placement, honors, college-level, or International Baccalaureate classes.**
- **If you don't have access to adequate counseling and advisement services at your school, consider engaging the services of a professional independent counselor** who can help you write personal essays, locate good universities for you attend, assist you in taking standardized exams, and in exploring all your options.

### Winter/Spring

- **Register in December for the January SAT - I test.**
- **Review your PSAT scores.**
- **Take the January SAT-I Test.**
- **Meet with your college counselor.** Make sure that he/she has a good understanding of you and your goals for the college application process.
- **Explore your values, needs and strengths with your counselor as they relate to selecting a major and a college to attend.**
- **Register in March and April to take the May SAT-I and June SAT-II** (discuss which SAT-IIs you should take with your college counselor and your teachers).
- **Register for and take the April ACT test.**
- If English is not your first language, make plans to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language.
- **Drawing on your visits to colleges, identify the kind of college you would to enroll in.**
- **Develop a preliminary list of colleges that interest you** and write to them for information.
- **Discuss your twelfth grade schedule with your college counselor.** Select the most rigorous course load that you can carry successfully.
- **Research your list of schools in a variety of ways** (objective and subjective guidebooks, discussion with alums and present students).
- Learn how to access and use online resources. Links to many of these resources are found on the MyMajors' College Planning Resources page.
- **Plan summer visits and interviews.**
- **Initiate service academy and ROTC scholarship applications, if applicable.**



- **Take SAT-I and/or SAT-II.** If you apply for early acceptance (EA) or for early decision (ED) to a university that requires these tests, take both of them.
- **Ask teachers for recommendations.** Give them an outline of your class standing, your outside activities and other information they can use to create a good letter.
- **Narrow down your initial list of colleges to those you are seriously interested in.**
- **Athletes: Register for NCAA Division I and II athletics,** if you think participating in college sports is a possibility. Begin contacting coaches at schools you are interested in.
- **Students in the music fields should prepare audition videotapes and/or audiotapes** of their skills for evaluation by music departments. Similarly, **art students should assemble portfolios** of their art work and theater students should have videos of their performances.
- Select a topic for a college essay and/or an approach to your personal statement.
- Athletes should write to college coaches to indicate interest in participating on teams at their college.
- If your PSAT scores suggest that you need to work on improving your results, consider taking a preparatory course or studying computer and paper test preparations materials.
- February – May
- **Review your SAT and ACT scores to determine your relative standing with respect to the standards at the schools you are considering.** Continue improving on your ACT and/or SAT testing techniques.
  - **If necessary, prepare yourself and retake the SAT and/or the ACT.**
- **Start requesting college applications, if they are not available online.**
- Check to see that counselor and teacher recommendations have been sent.
- **Select senior year courses.**
- **Take advanced placement exams,** if appropriate.

### June-August

- **Travel to a variety of colleges and participate in group tours, information sessions,** and personal interviews. Make campus visitations a priority, if possible. Don't forget to call ahead to schedule an appointment.
- **Work on your college application essays and personal statements.**

### Summer

- If you don't have a summer job, try volunteering in an area of interest to you.
- If you are interested in athletics, meet with coaches whenever possible.
- Talk to your teaching faculty about good schools to consider with respect to majors that you are thinking about. Their background often includes knowledge of which campuses have particularly good reputations in the fields in which they teach.

### Twelfth Grade

- **If you are a male student, you must register for the Selective Service in order to be eligible for Federal Financial Aid.**
- **Take or retake standardized tests, if necessary.**
- **Attend a college fair.**
- **You and your parents should gather income tax information so you can complete and mail the FAFSA as soon as possible in January or February.** See if the schools you are applying to require the PROFILE.
- **Complete applications and essays; ask for letters of recommendation and transcripts.**

### Fall

- **Start looking for scholarships and financial aid information.**



- **Make college decisions; notify all schools that accepted you. Send deposits.**
- **Meet with your college counselor.**
- **Register for the fall/winter SAT-I, SAT-II, and/or ACT tests, as appropriate. Release any SAT-II scores from tests taken previously.**
- Make plans for taking the Test of English as a Foreign Language, if necessary.
- **Review your senior courses. Have you met all of the requirements for the schools you are interested in? Is your schedule challenging? Should you add courses?**
- **Attend presentations by university representatives coming to your school and college fairs in your area.**
- Write or call for any applications that you do not yet have.
- **Begin applying, the sooner the better. Decide if you want to apply EA or ED to any college.** Many highly competitive schools do not accept applications after given dates. Applications may be due in mid-November. Scholarships are often allocated to students who have applied for scholarship assistance early.
- **Work on narrowing your final list of colleges, especially if you plan to apply for early admission (EA) or early decision (ED).** Many counselors suggest applying to two or three of the most competitive schools you think you qualify for, as well as three or four that are somewhat less competitive.
- Photocopy your applications so that you will have a practice form to work on.
- **Revise and polish required essays. Get assistance in proofreading your essay.**
- **Create a final list of five to seven colleges to which you will apply.**
- **Ask teachers for recommendations. Ask early and give your teachers a written list of the schools to which you are applying. Provide the teachers with a stamped, addressed envelope for them to use to mail the letter of recommendation. Give them at least three weeks time to prepare this letter.**
- **Research scholarship opportunities.** This information is available from online sources, as well as from the financial aid offices at all campuses.
- **Make sure that your counselor has a list of the colleges to which you are applying.**
- **Make sure that you have had your transcript sent to the schools of your choice.**
- **Revise and finalize your essay.** Get reactions to it from your counselor and from other people. See if they find it to be a good response to the request of those colleges that request essays.
- **As you submit your applications to universities, confirm that they have been received.**
- **When you receive your SAT scores, see if your scores have improved. Make sure you've released all subject test scores to be sent to colleges you have applied to.**
- Keep copies of your applications and supporting materials arranged by university.
- **After you have been accepted at a college of your choice:**
  - Send in your acceptance letter.
  - Notify other colleges that you do not plan to attend their campus so they can free up space for other students.
  - Mail in your application for campus housing, if you plan to live on campus. Most campus living accommodations are in high demand.
  - Send in all required deposits.
  - Notify your counselor of your decision to attend a university.

### December

- **Talk with friends (first-year and advanced students) who are home from college to get their impressions of their campus. Try to understand whether you share their likes and dislikes.**
- **If you need financial aid, request and complete campus financial aid forms.**
- If necessary, register for the winter SAT-I and/or tests.



- If you did not qualify for early admission or early decision at the campus of your choice, submit regular decision (RD) or rolling admissions (RA) applications.

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### Winter

- Have your parents complete the FAFSA.
- **This is your last chance to take the SAT-I, SAT-II, or TOEFL.**
- **Check your recommendations. Has everything been sent?**
- **Keep your grades up. Winter grades will be sent to colleges you apply to.**
- **Register for spring AP tests** if you are taking any.
- **If you applied for financial aid, make sure that you received the Profile acknowledgement and the Student Aid Report from the FAFSA application.**
- **Confirm your intent to enroll at the college of your choice.**
- **Watch for announcements to attend spring and summer orientation and registration programs.** These programs provide you with orientation activities, placement exams, meetings with academic advisers, and course selection advisement.
- **When you have accepted admission to a university or college, let your counselor know of your decision.**
- **Send thank you notes to teachers, counselors and others who helped you by giving advice or by writing letters of recommendations.**

### Spring

- Review all responses you received from colleges with your college counselor, and keep counselor fully informed.
- **If at all possible, try to visit the college of your choice before committing yourself.**
- **Notify schools you have rejected and where you were accepted that you will not be attending so they can offer an acceptance to another student.**
- **Make sure you have received forms for requesting housing, campus-based, scholarship and financial aid, health insurance, food services, and summer orientation.**
- **If necessary, apply for a student loan.**
- **Maintain your academic focus. Colleges see and evaluate your final transcript.**
- **Make sure you check each individual school's deadlines and requirements, and adhere strictly to them.**
- Ask teachers, counselors, and others for letters of recommendation if the school to which you are applying requires them.
- **Keep copies of everything you send to colleges.**
- **Make your final choice and notify school(s) no later than May 1.** Send acceptance letters and any necessary documents and deposits to your school of choice. Write a polite letter of refusal to others.
- **Continue to give your best effort academically**—colleges want students that have taken their senior year seriously.
- **Send final transcripts to the school you are attending.**
- **Set up a bank account and, perhaps, a credit card account.**
- **Has your financial situation changed in such a way as to allow you qualify for additional financial aid?** For example, if one of your parents is now unemployed, if a parent has died or if there has been a serious illness, you may qualify for reassessment.

## Takeaway Challenge

3 minutes

As we have discussed, the College Search is a daunting task at first look. This is a process that takes time and patience to work through, it cannot be accomplished overnight; but with careful planning and thoughtful investigation Arrowman can conduct a successful search and find the college that meets their needs

The task now falls to each of you to use the information we have covered in this training session, to conduct your own personal college search and find the college experience of your dreams that will lead to a successful and meaningful career.

For the final three minutes, Please take out your notebook and pen, write down the 2 websites on the screen as they will be valuable resources in your search, and think of about 5 ACTION ITEMS that you can do when you return home that will be helpful as you design and decide your destiny.

## Appendix: Resources and Source Material

- BigFuture {CollegeBoard's step-by-step road map to all things college}
  - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- ACT – Informed and Organized College Planning
  - [www.actstudent.org/college](http://www.actstudent.org/college)
- The Common Application can be found at:
  - [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)
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- The Coalition Application can be found at:
  - <http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>
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