

York

FIFTY YEARS



College Counseling Handbook

Class of 2010

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PHILOSOPHY

The College Counseling Office educates York students in the process of decision-making with a goal of helping students find colleges where they will be challenged, where they will be happy, and where they will succeed. We want to do this with as little stress and pressure on students as possible.

In helping students find colleges where the three things mentioned will occur, we focus on developing a **match** between the student and the colleges. We want students to find the best **colleges** for them individually. As a result, one thing we do not do is push students to apply to specific schools. In the words of Frank Sachs, the former President of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling, “College is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.”

While we educate and assist, we expect students to take control of the process. Our job is to guide, counsel, question, recommend, refer, suggest, and inform. We do not decide, require, command or package. Decisions about where to apply, what to write about in their essays, whom to ask for recommendations, must, in the end, be the students’. Students are responsible for submitting applications on time, signing up for tests on time, asking teachers for recommendations, acquiring applications and filling out forms. We do not do these things for our students—nor should the parents. We do not get students into college; they get themselves in.

In the end, students who are happiest about the college process are those who understand their abilities and needs best and who are, therefore, able to find schools that match those abilities and needs. These students have researched their lists well, asked tough questions, and, as a result, have found good matches, schools they truly embrace. York students traditionally have had the fortitude and self-awareness to make such matches. They listen to their hearts and their heads; they let insight, not college rankings, guide them.

I. THE FIRST STEPS

Welcome to the college planning and application process! Planning for college is one of the steps on your pathway to adulthood, and it is a very exciting and interesting time. For the first time, you are going to be asked to think carefully about your future and then decide where you would like to continue your educational journey. This planning period is a time for self-reflection and understanding your interests, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses. The more effort you place into this process, the more able you will be to decide where you want to be for four years. Some of you may feel that your experience will be improved by taking a year off to engage in a worthwhile experience prior to entering college.

But before plunging into a senior year of deadlines, word processing and anxiety, you should know why you're spending a Saturday night rewriting an essay or a Sunday afternoon being grilled by an alumna who wants only the best and the brightest for her college. To a very large degree, your admission to college depends not on what you will do as a senior but on everything you have done in the last sixteen or seventeen years. But your attitude, energy, and efficiency during the next year will make a big difference, and knowing what you want and why you want it will give you the enthusiasm and direction to make the business of applying to college an adventure rather than an ordeal. It is your mission to organize and present yourself to each institution so they can appreciate and value your achievements and potential contributions.

A. Choosing a College

Choosing where to apply cannot be reduced to a series of either/or questions, but the usual list of considerations is still a good place to begin. Big or small? Public or private? East or West? Liberal Arts or pre-professional? Traditional or non-traditional? Hot or cold? Ask as many questions as you can; any factor important to you is worth plugging into the equation. Before examining colleges, you must examine yourself and try to determine how you learn most effectively, what kind of curriculum will best suit your needs and goals, and what kind of environment will be most congenial, both academically and personally. The self-assessment and the personality profile on Naviance are tools to help you with this part of the process.

You should beware of letting only one or two factors govern your choices. What happens if you choose a college for a particular program and find yourself, a year or two later, interested in something completely different? What happens if you go somewhere to ski and break your leg playing Frisbee the first week of school? You should be especially careful about letting any one individual, whether it's an alumnus, an admissions officer, a friend, a teacher, or even a parent, influence your choice: liking someone who went to a college or who works at a college does not guarantee your liking the college. Another danger is to let a graduate school or program influence your choice. Getting into Yale College has absolutely nothing to do with getting into Yale Law School. You should also beware of statistics: A college may boast that 80% of its graduates get into medical school, but that doesn't mean you'll have an 80% chance of getting in if you go to that college. If you don't do the work, you'll end up in the 20%, and if you do produce, your chances may be just as good at a college where only 60% are admitted to medical school. It's your performance that counts in the end.

In choosing where to apply, you must eventually face the toughest question of all: will the college choose you? Assessing your own record, strengths, and weaknesses, and examining the college's reputation and statistics will give you some idea. Knowing who a college has admitted or denied in the past can also give you some clue, but it's dangerous to generalize too much from past decisions: the student who got in with grades lower than yours may have had unusually strong recommendations or he may have been a splendid

violinist or an alumni son or daughter. The admissions landscape is changing so rapidly that even academic profiles of students admitted five years ago are often out of date.

One of my primary jobs in the College Counseling Office is to help you assess your chances of admission and to help you choose a range of colleges that will give you a choice next April. To that end, I expect all of you to include realistic options on your lists. Naturally, these should be institutions which you would happily attend. These schools should be researched as carefully and thoughtfully as the most selective colleges on your list. The key is to cover your bases, which you should be able to do with six or seven applications.

In assembling a list, students should balance the schools based on selectivity as determined by the academic statistics of accepted students. A preliminary list should consist of 15 colleges spread evenly between three ranges:

Reach/High risk: schools for which the student's academic profile is below that of the average accepted student or which have acceptance rates below 10%.

Likelies: schools for which the student's academic profile is roughly that of the average accepted student.

Anchor/Low risk: schools for which the student's academic profile is above that of the average accepted student.

Anchor schools are just that: They anchor your college plan. Knowing your comfort zone assists in establishing the other two ranges. Referring to the scatter grams on Naviance will help in establishing that comfort zone.

B. Getting Organized

You will discover that applying to colleges can be a draining and time-consuming business (and expensive as well – some are as high as \$75 or, if a music conservatory, \$200). It requires trips to the post office, hours of word processing, hours of talking (to admissions officers, alumni, coaches, friends, teachers, and parents), hours on line, and a great deal of thought. To be done properly and with the least anxiety, it also requires organization.

I suggest that each of you make this wildly colored handbook the first entry in a personal college application file. The file should also include the following:

1. Notes on the various colleges you are considering
2. A record of colleges to which you will apply, along with their appropriate deadlines
3. A record of tests you have taken, when you took them, and to which colleges you have sent score reports
4. A record of Secondary School Reports you have turned in to the College Counseling Office
5. A record of interview appointments
6. A record of which teachers you have asked to write recommendations and when you gave them their recommendation chart and, if necessary, forms and stamped envelopes
7. Copies of the applications and essays you have completed and returned
8. A record of all correspondence between you and the colleges
9. A record of application id's, web portals, and passwords.

No handbook can begin to answer all the questions you will have, but if you begin by reading this handbook carefully and following the recommended procedures, you'll waste less time on the details and have more time for the larger questions facing you in your Senior year.

II. COLLEGE COUNSELING PLANNING CALENDAR 09-10

During Spring 2009 you should

- begin to develop your preliminary list of colleges
- plan and take appropriate standardized tests
- meet with the college counselor to discuss colleges and test planning
- visit colleges
- save graded papers to submit to colleges if required
- perform well in your classes
- apply for summer programs and classes

During March 2009 you should

- take the March 14 SAT Reasoning Test
- register for the May 2 SAT if planned (deadline March 31) [This is a good time to take appropriate SAT Subject Tests]
- register for the April 4 ACT if planned (deadline February 27)
- attend the academic advising meeting on March 2
- meet with the college counselor to sign up for 12th grade courses and review preliminary college list
- plan to visit colleges and interview, if appropriate

During April 2009 you should

- take the ACT April 4, if planned
- register for the June 6 SAT (deadline May 5) [This is a good time to take appropriate SAT Subject Tests]
- register for the June 13 ACT (deadline May 8)
- meet with the college counselor to revise preliminary college list

During May 2009 you should

- take SAT Reasoning or Subject Tests as planned with counselor
- take AP Tests, if appropriate
- register for the June 6 SAT (deadline May 5) [This is a good time to take appropriate SAT Subject Tests]
- register for the June 13 ACT (deadline May 8)
- meet with the college counselor to revise preliminary college list
- make sure any additional transcripts have been given to the Registrar

During Summer 2009 you should

- narrow your list of college choices
- research, contact, and visit colleges
- request information from colleges
- develop drafts of college essays and “why I want to attend college Z”
- research scholarships (www.fastweb.com and www.scholarships.com are excellent sites)
- work, volunteer, take a summer class
- read the newspaper and summer books
- decide which standardized tests you need to take or retake and register as appropriate
- register for September 12 ACT
- register for October SAT
- **SENIOR RETREAT: September 3-4**

During September 2009 you should

- narrow your list of college choices
- talk to the college counselor if you are applying Early Decision or Early Action
- submit transcript and SSR requests for EA/ED applications **NO LATER THAN September 20**
- register for October SAT
- register for November SAT
- register for October 24 ACT
- meet with college representatives visiting York
- request teacher recommendations

During October 2009 you should

- make a firm list of colleges to which you intend to apply
- finalize your University of California and CSU choices and prepare the applications and essays
- file your CSU applications
- by Oct. 1, submit your application for November 1 Early Action or Early Decision deadlines
- submit transcript and SSR requests for applications due December 1-9 **NO LATER THAN October 22**
- submit transcript and SSR requests for applications due December 10-Jan 12 **NO LATER THAN October 29**
- register for October 24 ACT
- register for November SAT
- register for December SAT
- register for December 12 ACT
- meet with college representatives visiting York
- visit colleges during break
- take standardized tests if appropriate

During November 2009 you should

- file your UC and/or CSU application
- discuss final application plans with the College Counselor
- receive all applications
- send official test scores from testing agencies to colleges on your list (**York does not send test scores to colleges**)
- pick up FAFSA and CSS Profile forms from the College Counseling Office if you will be applying for financial aid
- file CSS Profile if applying ED
- meet with college representatives visiting York
- make college visits
- register for December SAT
- register for December 12 ACT
- submit transcript and SSR requests for applications due January 12-January 31 **NO LATER THAN November 16**
- take standardized tests if appropriate

During December 2009 you should

- finish all applications due in January; do not wait until 12/21 to submit
- take or register for any final standardized tests that you need
- if you have been admitted Early Decision, follow the instructions from the college including withdrawing applications from other colleges
- submit transcript and SSR requests for all remaining applications **NO LATER THAN December 3**
- send official test scores from testing agencies to colleges on your list (**York does not send test scores to colleges**)

During January 2010 you should

- finish all applications due in February
- submit FAFSA and CSS Profile if applying for financial aid
- check whether colleges need additional financial aid forms
- complete income tax forms
- submit Cal Grant GPA Verification form
- keep working in your classes
- submit art portfolios, if appropriate
- apply for privately sponsored scholarships

During February 2010 you should

- complete all final applications
- review your Student Aid Report (SAR) if you have submitted FAFSA; make any corrections and resend
- apply for privately sponsored scholarships

During March 2010 you should

- receive your Student Aid Report (SAR) if you have submitted FAFSA
- receive admissions decisions
- apply for privately sponsored scholarships
- stay focused!

During April 2010 you should

- receive any remaining admissions decisions
- compare financial aid packages
- make any final college visits
- decide which college you will attend

During May 2010 you should

- send in your deposit and intent to register
- contact schools about wait lists if necessary
- take AP Exams
- excel on final exams
- **GRADUATE**

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Application Forms

Most colleges have their applications on-line now, and they can be accessed either on the college's website or through commonapp.org. You can make the requests for supplemental applications, view books and catalogues by email, letter or phone. You can do this by going into Naviance, Prospective Colleges and clicking on the envelope. If you do contact a school for a paper copy, keep your request simple, e.g. I am interested in applying to Dunster College. Please send information and an application to:

Your Name
Your Address
(and don't forget the ZIP CODE)
Telephone Number
Email address

Include the fact that you are a junior at York, and indicate the term (in most cases that will be Fall, 2010) for which you are applying.

You can find the addresses for colleges in Naviance, on the college's website, in the college catalogues or guidebooks in the College Counseling Office, and through collegeboard.com. You may wish to buy one of the guidebooks (*Peterson's, College Board Handbook, Barron's*, etc) to have this information at your fingertips. University of California and California State University applications will be available online, usually on October 1. The Common Application, usually available on July 1, is accepted by 347 colleges. If you are applying to any of those colleges, you simply complete the Common Application AND any supplements, pay the application fee if appropriate and then submit. The Common Application website, www.commonapp.org, offers both online and downloadable versions. If you submit on-line, then your teacher recommendations can be submitted on-line.

Individual college application forms include several parts:

1. the student application which requests general information and one to three essays, (some will have a Part 1 and a Part 2 submitted separately)
2. teacher recommendation forms
3. the Secondary School Report or Counselor's Recommendation that should be turned into the College Counselor, after you fill out the top portion (waive your right to review the form and recommendation)

We will talk in more detail at the Senior Retreat about the mechanics of applying.

BASIC SCHOOL AND COUNSELOR INFORMATION

Counselor Name: Michele M. Radcliffe
Phone Number: 831-372-7338 x119
FAX Number: 831-372-8055
Email address: mradcliffe@york.org
CEEB Code: 052053 ACT Code: 052-053

B. Testing

According to the National Association for College Admissions Counseling Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling Manual, "High schools use a variety of grading scales and curricula, which can make comparison of students' grades difficult for admissions officers. Standardized tests provide colleges with a common measure to help them sort through credentials from thousands of high school students across the country and around the world. Additionally, standardized tests are one indicator of a student's readiness to do college-level work. Admission officers can compare test scores among applicants to help in the process. Test scores may be used as a criterion for awarding merit-based financial aid."

1. SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject Tests:

It is your responsibility to know which colleges require which tests and to request that the scores be sent from the College Board to the colleges. Most schools require that scores be sent directly from the testing agency. You can send scores when you register for the test, when you take the test, or when you receive the scores (using an Additional Report Request Form, available in the College Counseling Office or online). Juniors should not have scores sent anywhere unless specifically requested by a college or agency. You should keep careful records of which tests you have taken and where the scores have been sent. **Please note the test dates and deadlines in the accompanying calendar.**

Almost all colleges require the SAT Reasoning Test (or ACT), and some private colleges also require (or recommend) two or three SAT Subject Tests. You should note carefully any specific requirements of the colleges to which you are applying. For example, some technical colleges ask for a Math II and a science subject tests. UC require two subject tests.

While Score Choice has been implemented by the College Board, many selective colleges have decided to have you send in ALL of your scores.

The SAT web site is **www.collegeboard.com**.

2. The ACT:

The ACT is an alternative to the SAT Reasoning Test. The ACT is designed and administered by a company other than the College Board (Educational Testing Service), which puts out the SAT tests. Therefore, the test dates and locations are different. You can register on-line at www.act.org .

The ACT tests your academic skills in the following areas: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science Reasoning, and Writing. As you can see, the emphasis is on verbal skills and your ability to draw conclusions, see implications, and apply facts. Students who are strong verbally and find they have difficulty with math should consider the ACT. If you take the ACT, remember to take the optional writing test.

Most universities accept either the SAT or the ACT. In some cases, colleges (ex. Wellesley, Tufts) will accept the ACT in place of the SAT and two SAT Subject tests.

IMPORTANT: The York school code number for all standardized tests is **052053**. MEMORIZE IT. You must include this to ensure that your scores are sent to York.

Be sure to use the same form of your name consistently when registering for tests and requesting score reports, AND this name should be the same one you use on your

applications. If you used “Bobby” the first time, don’t switch to “Robert” later. It is especially important to be consistent with middle initials.

3. A Note about Special Test Preparation

There is free on-line test prep available through www.number2.com , www.proprofs.com , and several other sites. Some of these sites will also try to market programs, which cost money.

Online preparation may not be the best alternative for each student, so students might consider other options. They should use the free preparation materials available at collegeboard.com and in the outer room of the College Counseling office. Students want to familiarize themselves with the test format, content, scoring and pacing, and become familiar with the directions. These activities can help students be as prepared as possible for the test when they take it. You can also study with a partner!

While standardized test results are an important factor in college admissions, the most important factor remains the rigor of the high school program and the student’s performance in it. For this reason, we still believe that formal test preparation such as a course is best done, if it is appropriate for an individual student, during the summer when participation will not take time away from school and extracurricular time commitments. However, as a service, we have offered our facilities to Revolution Prep, and we will inform families of other local options when we are made aware of them. The notice is not an endorsement, and families must do their own research to determine if a program suits their needs.

C. Transcripts

Transcripts are sent to colleges along with a Secondary School Report form (SSR) and a mid-year report form. Transcripts are requested through Naviance, by going into your portal and clicking on My Colleges or My Transcripts. If you are using the Common application, please submit just the SSR with the basic information completed. You do not have to submit a mid-year report form to the college counselor. At the Senior Retreat, we will review in detail the procedure for submitting requests. Pay attention to the calendar for the deadlines.

D. Visits to Colleges

Seeing a college, particularly when classes are in session, is invaluable in helping you make your choices. Visit first-year classes, check out the bookstore, read the college newspaper, and eat the food. Try to arrange an overnight stay in the dorms to see what that’s like. The Admissions Office can help you organize your visit and arrange accommodations, often with students. While you are there, ASK QUESTIONS! Get a feel for the particular personality of the institution. Begin looking at the colleges critically instead of worrying about how critically the colleges will be looking at you.

You are allowed to take some time from school for these visits, but please be sure to follow these guidelines:

1. College visits during the school year should be limited only to those colleges which you are seriously considering and to colleges for which you have a reasonable chance of attending.
2. Students should condense their visits to colleges as much as possible to minimize the loss of school days. If possible, students should plan to travel on school holidays and weekends.

3. Students will not be permitted to miss school to visit colleges during any mid-term or final exam week or during the AP exam week if the student is taking an AP exam. As always, you are responsible for any work missed.

In the back of this handbook you will find more suggestions for college visits. It is up to you to make arrangements for your visits, but if you have questions about how to go about it, see the College Counselor.

E. College Representatives at York

Watch the “College Visits” section of Naviance and announcements on the bulletin board in the breezeway and in the library for news of college visitors. There will be many admissions officers visiting York in the fall, providing you with one of the very best ways to learn more about the colleges they represent. Attend as many of these as you can, keeping in mind these rules:

1. You must sign up 24 hours ahead on Naviance (procedure in back of handbook) and request permission from your teacher beforehand if you will be missing a class. Beforehand means the day before, not immediately before class.
2. You are responsible for all work covered in class and must make it up immediately.
3. You may not miss a test.
4. You shouldn't overdo it. Many of the colleges which visit will not be of interest to you, so attend only those sessions for schools you are genuinely interested in learning about.
5. Attending these sessions demonstrates to the person, who will be reading your application, that you are interested in their college.

If I think a college may be of particular interest to you, I may send you a note urging you to attend the session. Generally, I will do my best to send you the note 24 hours in advance so that you can make necessary arrangements with your teachers.

Notes:

IV. APPLYING TO PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

While applying to state universities is generally a much simpler and more straightforward process than applying to private colleges, rigid requirements and strict deadlines complicate the matter. A student who fails to meet deadlines, take the required courses, or neglects to take the correct pattern of tests is quickly turned away from oversubscribed state universities, no matter how talented or qualified she is. **For any student interested in a public university in California, the most important deadline is November 1.** The filing period for both the University of California and the California State University is November 1-30.

A. California State University System

The twenty-three campuses of the Cal State System admit students solely on the basis of grades and test scores (SAT or ACT). Neither an essay nor a teacher recommendation is required. CSU-MB is our designated regional CSU. You may apply to as many campuses within the system as you wish, submitting a separate application and application fee to each campus to which you apply. Due to budget constraints, CSU's outside of our region may not accept you even if you are qualified. The best approach is to apply early in October, when there may be more spots available. Cal Poly San Luis Obispo has become the most oversubscribed or "impacted" campus of the CSU System. Therefore, admissions requirements at Cal Poly are more rigorous than at others. Particular programs at different campuses are often oversubscribed. You are encouraged to read the catalogue carefully to determine if there are other requirements (audition, portfolio, etc.) for your program of interest. You can find a wealth of information and the application for the CSU system at www.csumentor.edu.

B. University of California System

The undergraduate campuses of the UC System admit students on the basis of course of study, grades, test scores (SAT or ACT, plus 2 SAT Subject Tests) and other criteria found in the back of this book. Applicants are asked to submit two essays, one of about 600 words, and one of about 300 words. In addition, there is an optional essay you can write to explain a particular situation.

Your applications will be considered simultaneously at more than one UC campus. When applying online, you will indicate which campuses should receive your application. **It is your responsibility to see that test results are sent to each individual campus.**

Keep in mind that requirements for the Berkeley, Los Angeles and San Diego campuses are more rigorous than for the others. For Fall 2009, UCLA received more than 55,600 applications. For all UC campuses, a formula is used combining grades and test scores to determine eligibility. In addition, extra weight is given to applicants who have pursued a strong high school curriculum taking honors and advanced placement classes. The essay is read carefully. Admission to particular programs at different campuses may be more selective than the campus at large. Once again, you are encouraged to read the catalogues carefully and, when in doubt, call the Relations with Schools office at the desired campus. For more information on the UC system, go to www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions.

UC Eligibility: First, students must meet the a-g course requirements listed in the back of the Handbook. To determine eligibility for admission, the University then uses an index that includes test results and GPA. The index was recently revised. Here is the latest information directly from UC: The Eligibility Index defines the combinations of test scores and grade point average students must earn to be eligible for admission to the University. The minimum GPA is 3.0. Whether they took the ACT or SAT, students scores will be converted to a UC Score, based on a 0-100 scale. Students will then use their UC Score and GPA earned in required A-G courses in the 10th and 11th grades to find where they fall in the index.

Students can quickly convert their scores and determine their standing in the index by using UC's online calculator at <http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/scholarshipreq>.

Eligibility to UC does not guarantee admission to a specific campus.

University of California Testing Policy

Each applicant must submit scores on an approved test of mathematics, language arts and writing, which is either the SAT Reasoning or ACT tests. In addition, students must take two SAT Subject Tests in two different subject areas. Science majors should take Math II and a science.

C. Out-of-State Public Institutions

Standards for admission to state universities outside California vary. Although the requirements are generally more stringent for out-of-state students, for many students, gaining admission to another state university can be easier than getting into the University of California's most selective campuses. Like the California public universities, most other public universities require only a simple application form and a transcript, unless the transcript is self-reported. Occasionally they also will request an essay.

Some state universities request that the transcript accompany your application. In such cases you should request the transcript six weeks before you intend to submit your application, making a note that it is to accompany your application.

Notes:

V. APPLYING TO PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Although some private colleges and universities ask for little more than an application and transcript, most require considerably more. Admission to private colleges, particularly the more selective ones, is a complex, subjective, and unpredictable process. Decisions are generally based on the committee's evaluation, through readings and discussion, of a candidate's folder. What follows is a list of what usually goes into that folder with some suggestions and guidelines on how to handle each of these components.

A. The Application

The application that you complete is one of the means through which your character and personality may emerge for the reader on the other end, and the one part of the application over which you have real control. Doing a careful, thoughtful job on your application can make a significant difference. College admissions officers have commented on how a shabby application killed someone's chances or how a thoughtful, well-presented application pushed a borderline candidate into the admitted group. Consider your audience: does the admissions officer really want to wade through a dozen extra sheets detailing every activity or honor, however, minor, since 7th grade? Does he want to strain to read impossible handwriting? Of course not. Some rules of thumb:

1. Be tidy, be honest, be thorough. Make a copy of the application and complete it first before doing the actual application.
2. Don't overdo it: let your accomplishments speak for themselves. Don't pad the application with trivial activities or long neglected interests. Playing the violin in the 8th grade means little if you have not picked it up since then. If you list a lot of extraneous activities, and neither your teachers nor the school recommendation mentions them as significant, the college will know that you're padding. It is much better to concentrate on a few significant pursuits that are truly meaningful to you.
3. Type the application yourself or write it neatly. No college admissions officer will object to a neatly handwritten application. Most schools prefer on line applications, and some waive the application fee for online applicants. Read the school's preferred method and comply with it.
4. Answer the questions they ask. In your eagerness to write about what you want to write about, don't ignore the question.
5. Don't attach extra papers to the application unless it's absolutely necessary. Try to fit all the information requested on the application form itself. If, however, you find it necessary to supplement your application with additional material, make sure that the college is willing (and prepared) to consider it.
6. Be yourself! You can drive yourself crazy trying to figure out what you think a college wants to hear. There's seldom a right or wrong answer to a question on an application. All the committee wants is a clear, honest answer that will tell them something about you as a person.
7. Give yourself plenty of time. Last-minute jobs usually look and sound like last-minute jobs.
8. Proofread.
9. If you apply on line, print a copy for your records. If you prepared a paper application, copy the completed application before submitting it, and get a Certificate of Mailing at the Post Office.

B. The Essay

Like the application form, the essay (or essays, in some cases) provides you with an opportunity to convey something about yourself that goes beyond the objective data. Above all, the essay should be well written and carefully edited, and you should strive to keep it within the prescribed length (if no length is prescribed, aim for 500-600 words). Again, you should consider your audience. An admission officer reading a dozen applications on a dreary February night does not want to read five pages of high school economic theory or a rehashed debate topic. He wants to read something short, lively, and graceful that will tell him something about you as a person. You should write about something that is important to you: your family, your neighborhood, a particularly moving or amusing or enriching experience, or your intellectual growth. Unless the college specifically asks for it, avoid the general autobiographical essay. Most application essay topics are fairly broad and open-ended, but if the question is quite specific, be sure to answer it. You may have only to adapt an essay you've written for another application or you may have to write an altogether new one. In the long run, it's worth the effort to make sure the essays you write suit the application and the college for which you are writing. A few more thoughts:

1. Don't use the essay to apologize for some failing you perceive on your part (e.g., "My test scores are low, but I know I'm really better than that."). On the other hand, if there have been unusual circumstances in your life, the essay might be a good chance to explain them.
2. Try to avoid much-used topics (among the most common: Outward Bound experiences, trips overseas, how sports build character), but don't go overboard in your attempts to be original or memorable or profound. Nothing is worse than attempted humor that isn't funny or stream-of-consciousness writing that ends up sounding like gibberish. Avoid anything that smacks of weirdness, cuteness, and elitism.
3. Think of the essay as an opportunity to add a new dimension to your file. Avoid repeating facts, figures, or activities that have been mentioned previously in the application unless they have particular bearing on your development.
4. Get some feedback on your finished product. Have a teacher, parent, friend, or neighbor read and critique your essay for its form and content. What does your essay communicate about your character and personality? **DO NOT** let others write your essay.

C. Teacher Recommendations/Reports

Most private, selective colleges require one or two recommendations from teachers. You should ask your teachers from 11th, or 12th grade who have taught you in an academic subject. The teacher who gave you the highest grade may not be the one who is likely to write you the best recommendation; it is just as important that the teacher knows you well and likes you. You should ask the teachers you would like to write for you by the end of September. Even if you haven't finalized your college list, you should let the teacher know that you would like him to write and that you'll get the form to him as soon as you receive it. Faculty members are free to assign their own deadlines for receiving requests or forms, and some do. Follow these guidelines:

1. You should ask in person. The faculty will not write recommendations that are simply left in their mailboxes. Keep in mind that a teacher is under no obligation to write for you and may feel that she cannot honor your request.
2. Except in special circumstances, you should ask the same teachers to do all your recommendations, and you should let them know how many there will be altogether. If it is a Common Application college, you should ask the teacher if they want to submit on-line. If they do, then you need to specify their name on Naviance and "sign" the FERPA waiver. In addition, you will want to give them the list of colleges and their deadlines.
3. If your recommender will be writing a letter of recommendation, then you should give them paper copies of the form as well as pre-addressed and stamped envelopes. (Most

teachers will write a letter which they can duplicate and attach to the form you give them.) Special circumstances? You might want your math and history teachers to write most of your recommendations but find that one college requires a report from an English teacher. Or you may wish a teacher who is an alumnus of a college to write just for that college. For the most part, however, the same teachers should be able to do all your recommendations. The back of the Handbook contains a page with more detailed guidelines, a sample cover letter and a sample résumé.

4. If you are applying to a technical institution or indicating science or engineering as a proposed field of study, at least one of your teacher reports should be from a math or science teacher.
5. It is an excellent idea to give each teacher a list of your outside interests and activities. In this way, your teacher can paint a vivid picture of the total student. Use your résumé and list of reasons for this.
6. Always thank your teachers in writing for their help. Recommendation writing is a time-consuming task. Often the only pay-off is your warm, genuine appreciation. Also, let them know how things work out later in the year; they are interested in your future.

D. Secondary School Report

The Secondary School Report is prepared by the college counselor and comprises four or five items: an official transcript, the school recommendation, a school profile, and the form (or forms) provided by the Common Application or college. It is your responsibility to meet with the college counselor to discuss your interests, hopes and dreams so that she can write the very best letter of recommendation for you. Sometimes these meetings can be challenging as you discuss difficult issues in your personal life. If the college counselor rarely sees you, your recommendation will be flat, not because the college counselor is uninterested but because you have not taken the time to engage her.

1. The transcript is the single most important item in the admissions folder. On it are your year-end grades from 9th, 10th, and 11th grades and, unless the transcript is due before January 15, Fall term grades from Senior year. If the transcript is sent before Fall term grades are entered, a second transcript, the mid-year report, is sent in late January. The transcript does not contain standardized test results.
2. The official school recommendation represents the collective judgment of the school community. It is based on reports from teachers and coaches, the self-assessment you filled out, and personal contact. Our goal is to present you in the best possible light while remaining balanced, fair, and honest. To that end, when you submit your request for transcripts and SSRs, you should also include a short note telling me why you think each college on the list is appropriate for you, what you think you'd like to study at each and something about yourself that shows you are suited to attend each. If there is something you especially want colleges to know about you, mention it in the note. I will provide samples at the Senior Retreat.
3. The school profile includes information about the curriculum, grading policies, school accreditation and history, test score averages for the last class, and a grade distribution chart for junior/senior classes. The Secondary School Report calls for information generally provided in the transcript, school recommendation, and profile. Specific questions not answered elsewhere are answered on the form itself. Some forms also include a grid calling for comparative ratings. I make those ratings, based on information in your school folder, whenever appropriate. To ensure that the same accurate information goes to each school to which you apply, York uses its own SSR. Waive your right to review the reference materials. A copy of the current York form appears in the back of the Handbook.
4. The Midyear Report is usually sent in with the Secondary School Report in January, but if the Secondary School Report must be sent before first-term grades are available, the Midyear Report is sent separately in late January, via Naviance, where possible.

5. You must give the college counselor a number 10 or 8" x 10 flat envelope to mail the secondary school report package. These should be pre-addressed to the college and for number 10 envelopes, two first-class stamps, and for flats, \$1.00 worth of postage.

E. Standardized Test Scores

Your folder in most admissions offices will include a complete report of standardized test scores provided, of course, that you have arranged to have the scores sent. **Remember, arranging to have your test scores sent is your job.**

F. The Interview Report

The importance of the interview varies from college to college. For some selective colleges, it still carries weight. Some colleges don't provide the opportunity for one. Generally speaking, the smaller the college, the more likely the interview is to carry some weight. If a college requires an interview and it is not within easy traveling distance, the college might arrange for you to be interviewed by local alum. Some tips on interviews:

1. Relax.
2. Go alone. Don't take your parents or your girlfriend or boyfriend with you.
3. Dress appropriately. Tidiness and taste are necessary.
4. Be prompt. When an alumni representative calls you to make the appointment, be sure you get her phone number so you can call if you are delayed or have to change the time.
5. Ask thoughtful, well-informed questions. Remember, the interview is your opportunity to find out about the college, not just the college's opportunity to find out about you.
6. Don't worry if the interview doesn't cover every wonderful thing about you. The admissions office will have all the objective information it needs; the point of the interview is to see how you think and how you handle yourself, not to find out your test scores or athletic honors.
7. Be yourself, not what you think the college expects you to be. Colleges want variety, not clones.
8. Don't judge the college on the basis of the interviewer. If you learn things from the interview that make you feel differently about the college, fine. But don't let your positive or negative feelings about an individual become too important a factor in your decision.

G. Extra Letters of Recommendation

Extra letters of recommendation seldom have much of a positive impact in an admissions decision. For the most part, they are a neutral factor; in excess, they can become a negative factor. Letters that fall into the helpful category are those from coaches, employers, or family friends who have something significant to say about your character and growth. These letters can add information that otherwise wouldn't be in the folder. Letters from acquaintances of your parents that basically say "She's a nice girl" are useless. Letters from political figures who don't really know you, or alumni whose stake in you or the college is limited are equally meaningless. If you must have an extra letter, don't go overboard. An old adage in the world of admissions is "The thicker the file, the thicker the student."

H. A Graded Paper

More and more colleges are requiring that applicants send copies of graded papers including the teacher's comments. If you don't already do so, start saving your papers so you will have several from which to choose.

I. Peer Evaluation

Some colleges, such as Amherst, Dartmouth and Williams, require a peer evaluation. York seeks a peer evaluation, and the forms will be distributed at the senior retreat. You can use this evaluation to submit, if you would like.

J. The Complete Folder

How colleges pull all these parts together and weigh them varies, but according to a Fall 2005 survey conducted by the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC), a common order of importance goes something like this:

1. Grades earned in college prep courses.
2. Standardized test scores.
3. Grades in all of your courses.
4. Class rank (which does not affect you because York does not rank).
5. The essay or writing sample.
6. Counselor and Teacher recommendations.
7. Your extracurricular record and personal qualities as revealed in your application and essay (as well as through comments in recommendations and interviews).
8. The interview.

Any one of these factors if unusually strong or unusually weak can become more important than it might otherwise have been. In the end, however it is an imprecise synthesis of all these factors, not a predictable formula that will determine your admission to a private, selective college. It's important to remember that the weight of individual factors varies from college to college as well as from type of college to type of college. Objective, numerical factors have more weight at larger schools like state universities than at smaller, private schools, where extracurricular involvement can have more weight.

J. Factors Beyond the Folder

Two factors outside the usual criteria that can have an impact on admissions decisions are strong family ties to a college and unusual athletic promise. Some private colleges try to respond to the loyal support of their graduates by giving an edge to the children of alumni (legacies) in the admissions process. Being the son or daughter of an alum will not make

much of a difference for candidates who are significantly below the competitive edge. But for good, solid candidates, it can often provide the extra nudge that does make the difference. Some colleges are more responsive than others to alumni children.

The athletic factor is an even tougher one. Every year boys and girls have their hopes raised by coaches only to find that in the end it wasn't enough. It all comes down to how much a coach wants you. If you are high on the list he gives the admissions office and are otherwise qualified for admission, it can make a big difference. If a coach tells you that you are on his list, remember that it might be a very long list and you might not be at the top. Don't hesitate to contact coaches at colleges you are interested in and to use the athletic angle for all it's worth, but don't count on it.

Even if you only might think you will want to compete at an NCAA Division I or II school, you need to complete the NCAA Initial Eligibility form available at <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/> . You can be granted a fee waiver, if you cannot afford the application fee. Please see the college counselor.

It also helps to have a particular talent in music, art, dance, or drama, especially when applying to a private college.

J. A Note on Early Action and Early Decision

Many private colleges offer students who are keenly interested the opportunity to apply early and receive a decision early, usually before Christmas. Generally there are three approaches.

1. Early Decision programs allow strong students who have made a definite choice of college to apply in October or November of the Senior year. Admission under an Early Decision program is a contract to attend that college. Once admitted, a student must withdraw all other applications. If a student is admitted Early Decision, York only will send transcripts to that school. Clearly, any student applying Early Decision must be absolutely certain that he is making the right choice. **Applying Early Decision simply to avoid the anxiety of waiting until April is a mistake.** At some colleges, applying Early Decision will enhance the chances of admission, but only if a candidate is very strong to begin with. Applying early will not turn an indifferent candidate into a strong one, and such an applicant may find himself with an early denial rather than an early admission.
2. Early Action is a program whereby unusually strong candidates may apply in November, receiving an admission, denial, or deferral in December. Students admitted under this program are not committed and may, if they wish, file other applications. Students may apply to multiple Early Action schools. Students have until May 1 to make a decision
3. Single Choice Early Action is a program offered by a small number of schools. Like Early Decision, it restricts a student to applying to one early program. Like Early Action, it is not a binding program, and students will have until May 1 to make a decision.

Unless a student has a very strong record up through the end of the Junior year, applying early is ill-advised. Many students need the Fall of their Senior year to present a complete picture to admissions committees. But for the outstanding candidate who is certain about what she wants, applying early is an excellent option.

Other "Early Notification" Plans are now common at many colleges. These range from binding "February Notification" and ED II plans to non-binding early notification plans.

Check each college's catalogue or consult the College Counselor if you are interested in such plans.

While technically not an early application, Rolling Admissions is a process in which colleges notify students of decisions as soon as they review a completed application, so an application submitted early will result in an early notification. Remember that your chances of getting into a college are greater at the beginning of the application window.

Note: The University of California does not have any kind of early action or early decision program.

Notes:

VI. FINANCIAL AID

Broadly, there are two kinds of financial aid available: need-based, and merit-based scholarships awarded for outstanding ability in areas such as academics, athletics, music, etc.

A. Need-Based Financial Aid

Financial need is determined through an analysis of the financial information reported by parents in the FAFSA and CSS PROFILE (see below). The individual college will then put together a financial aid "package" designed to meet that need. At most colleges, a package will include some combination of grant, loan, and job. Not every college can meet full need for every student; it is not uncommon for a student to be admitted but denied the complete financial aid needed to attend. At many of the most selective colleges, this is not yet the case. Some highly selective colleges have taken steps recently to minimize or eliminate the loan component for families with need.

Many students and parents wonder if applying for aid will hurt the chances of admission. Many colleges still try to make "need-blind" decisions, but some do take need into account in making their decisions and may choose to deny admission rather than admit a student and deny him the financial aid he needs. Students who think they need financial aid to apply for college are encouraged to apply. Ability to pay was ranked 14th of the 15 factors in the NACAC survey.

All students and parents applying for aid at any public universities will have to complete:

1. **The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).** This cannot be filed until after January 1 but should be filed as soon as possible after that date. It will call for figures from your parents' tax returns, so parents may choose to prepare taxes earlier than usual. It is not necessary, however, to file the Federal income tax return before completing the FAFSA; families can estimate. Filing the FAFSA should not be delayed beyond February 1 due to delays in completing federal income tax forms. The FAFSA is processed by an agency designated by the federal government that sends the forms and their "need analysis" to whichever colleges and scholarship programs you have designated. Be sure to designate the California State Scholarship Commission as one of the recipients. Effective April 1, 2009, the FAFSA website, <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>, contains a new link to FAFSA4caster, a tool devised to provide families with an early read on Federal financial aid eligibility. Each December we host a workshop on completing the FAFSA.
2. The application for California State Scholarships, commonly known as Cal Grant, is handled by the College Counselor. All California colleges and universities expect financial aid applicants to apply for the Cal Grant.

Parents of students applying to private colleges will usually have to file the **College Scholarship Service's PROFILE**. Register for it on line at www.collegeboard.com. In addition to those forms, most colleges will request a certified copy of the most recent 1040 Tax Form.

B. Merit Scholarships

Aside from the National Merit program and a few competitive scholarships sponsored by businesses and community service organizations, "no-need" awards are generally awarded by an institution specifically for use at that institution or are sponsored by a religious, ethnic, or professional group for students who belong to that religious or ethnic group or aspire to that profession. Some businesses also sponsor scholarships for the children of employees. Students should inquire wherever they apply about no-need scholarships. Many of these have early deadlines in October, so be aware! Alumni associations at the University of California campuses, for example, sponsor no-need scholarships for which outstanding students can compete. Some excellent private colleges have a limited number of merit-based scholarships for outstanding students. Students should inquire at their churches and parents at their places of employment or in their civic groups about scholarships available from those sources. Whenever I receive information about competitive or other merit-based scholarships, I will make that information available to students on the "Scholarship" section of Naviance.

Those colleges and universities which do award athletic scholarships have a limited number, and unless a student is among the players most sought after, she is not likely to be awarded an athletic grant.

Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarships, for use at colleges and universities with an ROTC program, cover tuition and books and provide a monthly stipend. Students must file applications by November 1 for Navy, Army and Air Force scholarships. Students interested in these scholarships should begin investigating them during junior year.

C. Financial Aid Bibliography

If you are applying for financial aid, you may wish to consult some of the following:

Barron's Handbook of American College Financial Aid.

College Cost & Financial Aid Handbook

Scholarship Handbook

Need A Lift? American Legion

Your Own Financial Aid Factory

Peterson's College Money Handbook

Peterson's Scholarships, Grants, and Prizes

Get A Jump

www.collegeanswer.com

www.fastweb.com

www.scholarships.com

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Notes:

VII. RESOURCES AT YORK SCHOOL

Although applying to college is essentially a one-person operation, resources in the York community can make it easier and less solitary.

Members of the faculty have attended some of the finest colleges and universities in the United States and Europe. Among the institutions represented are Oxford, Brown, Georgetown, Stanford, Yale, USC, Scripps, several of the California State University campuses, and some of the University of California campuses. Ask your teachers about their college experiences or if they, knowing you as a student, have suggestions about the kind of college or university you should be looking for.

York School alumni, particularly recent graduates whom you already know, are a wonderful source of the kind of information that's hard to get from a catalogue. Your response to a college may be very different, but knowing the source of the information will help you assess its validity for you. See Mrs. Mann in the Development office for email addresses. Also, some York School parents are active in their college alumni associations or school committees and are often happy to talk with prospective applicants.

Finally, there is the College Counseling Office, where you will find college catalogues, financial aid forms, ACT, SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject Tests registration forms, addresses, phone numbers, information about visiting college representatives, and just about anything else having to do with applying to college. Most important, you will find answers. If I don't know the answer to your question, I'll find it or help you find it. If you are entirely lost, want to expand your knowledge, or open up your options, I have several excellent resources for research. The College Counseling Office will not get you into college; that is your job. But if you do your part, we will do whatever we can to make sure you have the best possible chance of being admitted to the college to which you apply.

How to make the best use of the College Counseling Office:

1. Ask questions. Make appointments for longer conferences--and keep them. The College Counseling Office is especially busy from September to February, when you are likely to have the most questions. For brief consultations and quick questions, please stop by whenever you like. I am available for appointments before and after school if that is the only time your parents can join you.
2. Check your email, announcements at break, the college counseling website, and the College Counseling Office daily.
3. Pick up standardized test forms, financial aid applications, and other forms from the College Counseling Office. Help yourself to the college catalogues, videos, and leaflets on the designated shelves, but remember to sign them out and return them if you wish to borrow the material overnight.
4. Memorize this number 052053. It is York's school code number, and you will need it every time you take a test, request scores, or fill out an application.
5. Keep your parents informed. Communication is a critical part of the college admissions application process.
6. Don't leave things to the last minute. The earlier you begin the process, the more time everyone at York has to do the best possible job in assisting you with your college application. **BEAT THE DEADLINES!!**

VIII. GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION REQUEST

Provide teachers with a pocket folder/envelope containing a cover letter that answers the questions found below, a résumé, your reasons for wanting to attend each school, addressed and **stamped** envelopes, and a list of colleges and their **deadlines**. (Some teachers prefer that you list the colleges in order of deadline). Remember to fill out the top portion of the recommendation form with your information and the appropriate parts of the form with the teacher's information (name, address, phone number, etc.). Use York's address as the return address on the envelopes, and make the envelopes the self-adhesive type. Don't make the teachers lick. Do not make copies of the Common Application form. When there are multiple forms, paperclip the corresponding forms and envelopes.

Here are the questions:

1. As you consider the required readings for this class, which did you enjoy? Why? Which did you not find to your liking? Why?
2. The particular moment or experience that stretched me the most in your class was . . .
3. Indicate an instance when you were a strong collaborator in a group project.
4. I believe the best piece of work (paper, lab report, oral presentation, group project, etc.) that I did in your class was . . .
5. My proudest moment in your class was . . .
6. What I found to be most challenging about this class was . . .
7. I believe I grew in your class because . . .
8. Are you passionate about this academic area? Why?
9. Have you functioned as a leader in this class? Provide examples.
10. Cite an example where you were an effective communicator in this class in a writing assignment and/or an oral presentation.
11. In retrospect, what could you have done to make this class more meaningful for you?
12. Evaluate your time management skills and daily preparation for this class.

You do not need to respond to all 12 questions. They are suggestions, and some will not apply. Remember that the more detail you can provide the teachers, the stronger the letters they can write for you.

This page elaborates point 2 on page 13 of the College Counseling Handbook.

IX. SAMPLE COVER LETTER FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION REQUESTS

Dear Mr. Scheel:

Thank you for agreeing to write college recommendations for me. I am applying to eight colleges, and each of the evaluations you write is an important part of my application. The colleges will use the evaluations to get a better idea of who I am beyond my grades and test scores, so the more detailed and personal you can make the evaluations, the better. To help with your evaluation I am including a summary of my work in your class.

I began last year writing a paper on the summer reading assignment. Although I earned a B+ for my paper on *The Color Purple*, I improved throughout the year. I received improving grades on my essays, scored well on all the vocabulary quizzes, and was never late for class. I was well prepared for the Spring final and received an A.

Several of my papers received comments similar to the “much better than others in the class” you wrote on my paper on *The Scarlet Letter*. You found the paper to be well researched and said it displayed my skills in analytical thinking and my knowledge of current events. You also commented favorably on several of my creative projects including my parody of Emily Dickinson’s “Because I Could Not Stop for Death.”

Along with this cover letter, I am also including my résumé and statements of reasons for applying. When you are finished with my evaluations, please mail them directly to the colleges in the stamped, self-addressed envelopes I have enclosed. Thank you for your time and effort. The colleges to which I am applying are listed below, along with the deadlines for your recommendation. The colleges suggest you make a copy of the evaluations as they have been known to get lost in the mail. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

Kate Winslet

Harvard (November 1)
Stanford (December 15)
USC (January 10)
NYU (January 15)

Santa Clara (February 15)
Pomona (January 1)
Penn (January 1)
Occidental (January 15)

X. SAMPLE RESUME

Kate Winslet

123 S. South St.
Monterey, CA 93940

Phone: (831) 555-1234
duchess@red.com

OBJECTIVE: To pursue a course of study in political science at a liberal arts college that will prepare me for a career in government.

EDUCATION: YORK SCHOOL, Monterey, CA

Grade 12	Grade 11	Grade 10	Grade 9
AP English Lit	English IV A-	English III A	English II A
AP French Lang	French III B+	French II B+	French I B+
Calculus AB	Precalculus B+	Algebra II A-	Geometry A
Physics	AP Chemistry B+	Chemistry A	Biology A
Asian/African History	AP US History A	European History II A	World History I A
Chamber Choir	Chamber Choir A	Choir A/B	Latin B+
			Foundation Art A
			Computers B

ACTIVITIES:

Junior State
Model United Nations
Choir
Cross-Country
Wilderness Club
Shield
Film Club

Grades Involved

9-12
9-12
9-12
9-12
10-12
10-12
11-12

Accomplishments/Awards

Bill Director, Northern California
Treasurer
Central Coast Honor Choir (11)
Varsity
Vice-president (12)

HONORS/AWARDS

National Merit Semifinalist
Science Fair 1st Prize
MVP (Cross-Country)
Coach's Award (Cross-Country)

Grade Awarded

12
11
11
10

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Beach Cleanup
Meals on Wheels

Grades Involved

9-12
10-12

Employment

Movie Theater

Grades Involved

10-12

Hours/Week

8

ADVANCED PLACEMENT:

AP Chemistry '09 4
AP US History '09 5

SAT I & II:

SAT I Mar '09 Verbal 690
Math 650
Writing 680
SAT Subject Tests
May '09 U.S. Hist 750
Jun '09 Math 2 630
French 700

XI. SAMPLE SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT

Michele M. Radcliffe, Ph.D.
 Director of College
 Counseling
mradcliffe@york.org
 831.372.7338 ext.119



CEEB Code: 052053
 9501 York Road
 Monterey, California
 93940-6530
 FAX: 831-372-8055

Secondary School Report

PART 1: STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: _____ Birth date: _____

I have known this candidate as counselor for ___ years and have based this assessment on my personal contact with the student, academic and non-academic records, teacher comments and other pertinent resources.

Weighted GPA on a 4.0 scale: _____. This GPA covers the period **8/2006** through **6/2009** and includes all classes. Highest GPA in the class: _____. York School does not rank.

PART 2: ACADEMIC INFORMATION

- Graduation Date: May 29, 2010
- Due to the selectiveness and size of the student body, York does not rank students. Please refer to page three of the accompanying profile for GPA and grade distribution.
- The senior class size is 46 students, of whom 100% will attend a four-year college.
- York offers 13 AP courses and 4 Honors courses. Students are limited to 2 AP classes each year unless the Academic Dean approves a larger load.
- York does not release standardized test scores. Students are required to submit scores directly from testing agencies.
- If the student has provided your school's forms, the checkboxes have been completed.

PART 3: COUNSELOR'S COMMENTS

This student's program is best described as:

Not Demanding Demanding Very Demanding Most Demanding

The first words that come to mind when describing this student are: _____

	Below Average	Average	Good	Very Good	Outstanding	One of the Top Few of My Career
Academic						
Personal						
Extracurricular						
Overall						

I recommend this student for admission:

without enthusiasm fairly strongly strongly very strongly enthusiastically

Signature: _____

Date: _____

York School has developed this form to provide consistent information to all admissions officers. Also enclosed are an official transcript and a school profile. If you need additional information regarding this student, please call or email me.

XII. Application Deadline Form

Activity	College	College	College	College	College	College	College	College
Deadline for submitting the application								
Last date you can take SAT I or ACT								
Last date you can take SAT II								
Deadline for submitting test scores								
Deadline for submitting recommendations								
Deadline for filing FAFSA								
Deadline for filing CSS Profile								
Deadline for filing other required financial aid forms								
Deadline for submitting AP scores								

Write the names of the colleges to which you plan to apply at the top of each column, and complete the chart for a quick reference. Review it weekly to make sure you are on schedule for all the schools on your list.

XIII. Application Deadline Checklist

Activity	College	College	College	College	College	College	College	College
Application in hand								
Application completed								
Application printed/copied								
Essay completed								
FAFSA submitted								
Profile submitted								
Other financial aid forms submitted								
Counselor form/SSR/ Mid-year report to Dr. Radcliffe								
Application submitted								
Test scores sent								
Recommendation requested								
Recommendation requested								
Recommendation requested								
Campus visit								
Interview								

At the top of each column, write the names of the colleges to which you will apply. Enter the dates when you complete each step in the process. Also fill in the names of the people from whom you request recommendation.

XIV. Standardized Test Centers

Local Test Center codes for the ACT:

Hartnell College 002800

Soquel H.S. 208210

Local Test Center codes for the SAT:

Seaside H.S. 05-798

Aptos H.S. 05-115

Soquel H.S. 05-804

Salinas H.S. 05-649

Santa Cruz H.S. 05-774

XV. UC Eligibility Information

Subject Requirement ("A-G" Coursework)

To satisfy this requirement, you must complete the 15 yearlong high school courses listed below. These courses are also known as the "a-g" subjects. At least seven of the 15 yearlong courses must be taken in your last two years of high school.

California High School Students

The courses you take to fulfill the Subject Requirement must be certified by the University as meeting the requirement and must be included on your school's [UC-certified course list](#).

Required "A-G" Courses

a | History/Social Science – 2 YEARS REQUIRED

Two years of history/social science, including one year of world history, cultures and geography; and one year of U.S. history or one-half year of U.S. history and one-half year of civics or American government.

b | English – 4 YEARS REQUIRED

Four years of college-preparatory English that include frequent and regular writing, and reading of classic and modern literature. No more than one year of ESL-type courses can be used to meet this requirement.

c | Mathematics – 3 YEARS REQUIRED, 4 YEARS RECOMMENDED

Three years of college-preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry. Approved integrated math courses may be used to fulfill part or all of this requirement, as may math courses taken in the seventh and eighth grades that your high school accepts as equivalent to its own math courses.

d | Laboratory Science – 2 YEARS REQUIRED, 3 YEARS RECOMMENDED

Two years of laboratory science providing fundamental knowledge in two of these three foundational subjects: biology, chemistry and physics. Advanced laboratory science classes that have biology, chemistry or physics as prerequisites and offer substantial additional material may be used to fulfill this requirement. The final two years of an approved three-year integrated science program may be used to fulfill this requirement.

e | Language Other than English – 2 YEARS REQUIRED, 3 YEARS RECOMMENDED

Two years of the same language other than English. Courses should emphasize speaking and understanding, and include instruction in grammar, vocabulary, reading, composition and culture. Courses in languages other than English taken in the seventh and eighth grades may be used to fulfill part of this requirement if your high school accepts them as equivalent to its own courses.

f | Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) – 1 YEAR REQUIRED

A single yearlong approved arts course from a single VPA discipline: dance, drama/theater, music or visual art.

g | College Preparatory Electives – 1 YEAR REQUIRED

One year (two semesters), in addition to those required in "a-f" above, chosen from the following areas: visual and performing arts (non-introductory level courses), history, social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science and language other than English (a third year in the language used for the "e" requirement or two years of another language).

UC Eligibility Index	
Below are the combinations of GPA and UC Score Totals that meet UC's minimum requirements.	
California Residents	
"A–G" GPA	Minimum UC Score Total
3.00 – 3.04	223
3.05 – 3.09	210
3.10 – 3.14	198
3.15 – 3.19	187
3.20 – 3.24	175
3.25 – 3.29	165
3.30 – 3.34	157
3.35 – 3.39	152
3.40 – 3.44	147
3.45 & above	143
Non California Residents	
3.40 – 3.44	147
3.45 & above	143

Form to Calculate Preliminary Freshman Eligibility
Grade Point Average

To determine your eligibility, the University calculates your GPA in the "a-g" subjects by assigning point values to the grades you earn, totaling the points and dividing the total by the number of "a-g" courses. Points are assigned as follows: A=4 points, B=3 points, C=2 points, D=1 point, and F=0 points. (Pluses and minuses are not calculated in the grade point average.)

Only the grades you earn in "a-g" subjects in the 10th and 11th grades - including summer sessions - are used to calculate your preliminary GPA. Courses you took in ninth grade can be used to meet the Subject Requirement if you earned a grade of C or better, but they will not be used to calculate your GPA.

Honors Courses: The University assigns extra points for up to eight semesters of University-certified honors-level and Advanced Placement courses taken in the last three years of high school: A=5 points, B=4 points, C=3 points. No more than two yearlong UC-approved honors level courses taken in the 10th grade may be given extra points. A grade of D in an honors or advanced placement course does not earn extra points.

The courses must be in the following "a-g" subjects: history/social science, English, advanced mathematics, laboratory science, language other than English, and visual and performing arts. Also, they must be certified as honors courses by the University. In these subjects, as well as in computer science, acceptable honors-level courses include Advanced Placement courses, Higher Level and designated

Standard Level International Baccalaureate courses, and college courses that are transferable to the University.

D and F Grades: If you have earned a D or F in an "a-g" course, you must repeat the course with a grade of C or better in order to apply it toward your Subject Requirement. The original D or F grade will not be included in the GPA calculation, and the new grade will be used. If you repeat a course in which you initially earned a grade of C, the second grade will not be used.

UC Score Total

The University calculates your UC Score Total as follows:

If you took the SAT Reasoning Test: The University converts your highest scores in critical reading, math and writing from a single sitting and two SAT Subject Tests from different subject areas to equivalent UC Scores (see translation table below). Then all five UC Scores are added together to produce your UC Score Total (critical reading + math + writing + subject test 1 + subject test 2).

If you took the ACT plus its Writing exam: The University takes your highest math, reading, science and combined English/writing score from a single sitting and converts them to equivalent UC scores (see the translation table at right). To give the ACT writing component equal weight to the SAT writing exam, the University multiplies the sum of your converted math, reading and science scores by two-thirds, then adds the converted English/writing score. This subtotal is then added to your two highest SAT Subject Test scores from two different subject areas, which are also converted to equivalent UC Scores, to reach your UC Score Total $([\text{math} + \text{reading} + \text{science}] \times 0.667 + \text{English/writing} + \text{subject test 1} + \text{subject test 2})$.

SAT Test Score Translation			
SAT Score	UC Score	SAT Score	UC Score
800	100	490	48
790	98	480	47
780	97	470	45
770	95	460	43
760	93	450	42
750	92	440	40
740	90	430	38
730	88	420	37
720	87	410	35
710	85	400	33
700	83	390	32
690	82	380	30
680	80	370	28
670	78	360	27
660	77	350	25
650	75	340	23

ACT Test Score Translation			
ACT Score	UC Score	ACT Score	UC Score
36	100	20	47
35	97	19	43
34	93	18	40
33	90	17	37
32	87	16	33
31	83	15	30
30	80	14	27
29	77	13	23
28	73	12	20
27	70	11	17
26	67	10	13
25	63	9	10
24	60	8	7
23	57	7	3
22	53	1-6	0
21	50		

640	73	330	22
630	72	320	20
620	70	310	18
610	68	300	17
600	67	290	15
590	65	280	13
580	63	270	12
570	62	260	10
560	60	250	8
550	58	240	7
540	57	230	5
530	55	220	3
520	53	210	2
510	52	200	0
500	50		

