

THE COLLEGE PROCESS

A MATCH TO BE MADE, NOT A
PRIZE TO BE WON

HOW TO CHOOSE/EVALUATE A COLLEGE

3 points to keep in mind:

A. Get organized

B. When choosing a school, focus on
you

C. Get help

A. Getting organized

The high school diploma:

- a. A necessity for college
- b. Looking at the “a thru g” high school diploma requirements—what are they?
- c. Obtain a copy of one’s transcript (\$3. from Mr. Ronan)
- d. Transfer grades onto H.S. diploma check sheet
- e. Get updated transcripts as needed

“a thru g” subject requirements

- a. History/Social Sciences 2 yrs. req.
- b. English 4 yrs. req.
- c. Math 3 yrs. req./4 rec.
- d. Laboratory Sciences 2 yrs. req./3 rec.
- e. Language Other than Eng. 2 yrs. req./3 rec.
- f. Visual and Performing
Arts 1 yr. req.
- g. College Preparatory
Electives 1 yr. req.

DIPLOMA REMINDERS

- 1. A 4.0 GRADE INDEX DOES NOT GUARANTEE ONE OF A H.S. DIPLOMA!**
- 2. A STUDENT'S GRADES CAN EXCEED MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR UC AND CAL STATE SCHOOLS *PROVIDED* THOSE GRADES ARE C OR BETTER ON "a thru g" REQUIREMENTS.**
- 3. THE ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR KEEPING TRACK OF ONE'S GRADES, LIES WITH THE STUDENT!**

OBTAINING INFO. ON COLLEGES

Check notice boards & windows in 400 and 600 buildings at least once a week for information on following:

- a. College visits
- b. College fairs
- c. Summer programs
- d. Fast Web bulletins
- e. College posters

MANAGING COLLEGE INFORMATION

Possibly use a system of keepers, sleepers, and toss back boxes.

Keepers—colleges that match your most important needs and wants

Sleepers—colleges you're not sure about and want to reflect on more

Toss Back—colleges that don't fit what you want or feel is important at the moment

IMPORTANT COLLEGE WEB SITES & CALENDAR INFORMATION

Important internet web sites to keep in mind as students and parents navigate their way through the college process (refer to page 55 of the **2006 – 2007 L.A. County Career/College Planning Guide**)

Important calendar info. is on pp. 15 & 16 of the **L.A. County Career/College Planning Guide**

B. Choosing a School

(Focus on You)

Set Priorities—which is most important to **YOU**:

- Name?
- Location?
- Program?
- Other factors? (ex. cost, campus life, size, housing—see pp. 37 & 38 of **L.A. County Career/College Guide**)

C. GETTING HELP

See pp. 39 & 40 of **L.A. County Career/College Planning Guide** for information on following:

1. Printed materials
2. Videos
3. College fairs
4. Visits
5. Websites

STANDARDIZED TESTS: THE SAT AND ACT

The SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) a.k.a. The SAT Reasoning Test

- Measures critical thinking skills for academic success in college
- Assesses how well students analyze/solve problems
- Contains 3 sections (math, verbal, & writing); each is scored on a scale with a maximum point total of 800 (Maximum verbal + math + writing = 2400)

The SAT

(continued)

- Generally taken by high school juniors and seniors
- Developed and administered by Educational Testing Service
- Formerly referred to as SAT I

The SAT

(continued)

Writing Section Facts:

- similar to an on-demand college writing assignment
- prompt is given and **must** be addressed
- essay is read twice by test scorers and graded
- once scores have been issued, colleges you've submitted your scores to can read and download them
- you can review your essay on-line, but you can't change it

SAT Subject Tests (formerly the SAT II)

- Measure knowledge and skills in particular subject areas and ability to apply that knowledge
- Are 1 hour multiple choice tests
- Some colleges specify subject test(s) required while others let students choose which tests to take

SAT subject tests

(continued)

- SAT subject tests are given in following areas: writing, literature, American history and social studies, World history, Math I, Math IC (with a calculator), Math II C, Biology, Chemistry, and 9 foreign languages

Personalized College and Career Planning with *MyRoad*

- ***MyRoad*** (offered by the Educational Testing Service's **College Board** which gives the PSAT and SAT tests) gives students an opportunity to explore colleges, majors, and careers to build a plan for the future. This is only available *online*, that is, through the use of a computer.
- *All students who take the PSAT receive **free MyRoad** accounts. These accounts will last for the entirety of one's high school career.*
- Speak to your counselor for more information.

STUDENT REponsIBILITY

It is the individual student's responsibility to know which colleges require which tests and to request that they be sent from the Educational Testing Service to the colleges of his choice. This can be done when a student registers for the test, when he takes the test, or when he receives his test scores.

The ACT (American College Test)

- Curriculum-based achievement test that examines what students know and are able to do
- Tests one's academic skills in following areas: English, math, reading and science reasoning
- **It is the student's responsibility to know which test (the ACT, SAT, or both) are accepted by a college**

The ACT

(continued)

- Designed and administered by The American College Testing Service
- Test dates and test locations are different from those of SAT
- Emphasis is on verbal skills and one's ability to draw conclusions, see implications and apply facts
- Optional writing test segment

The ACT

(continued)

Points to consider:

- Students who are strong verbally and find they have difficulty with math portions of standardized tests should consider taking ACT
- **Once again, it is the student's responsibility to request that test scores be sent from The American College Testing Service to the colleges of his choice**

ACT vs. SAT: What's the Difference?

ACT

- Tests math science, reading, and English
- Curriculum based
- Basic Fee: \$29.00
- Writing test (essay) is optional (add \$14.00)
- Writing essay: 30 minutes
- Highest score: 36

SAT

- Tests critical reading, math, and writing
- Reasoning based
- Basic fee: \$41.50
- Writing essay is mandatory
- Writing essay: 25 minutes
- Highest score: 2400

ACT vs. SAT

(continued)

ACT

- No penalty for guessing
- Students choose best score to report to colleges
- Accepted nationally (UC, CSU, and Ivy Leagues included)

SAT

- Penalty for wrong answers
- All scores reported to colleges
- Accepted nationally (UC, CSU, Ivy Leagues included)

Remaining SAT Dates (for more info. contact www.collegeboard.com)

Registration Postmark

Deadline:

Dec. 26, 2006 for
Feb. 2, 2006 for
April 3, 2006 for
April 27, 2006 for

Test Date:

Jan. 27, 2007
March 10, 2007 *
May 5, 2007
June 2, 2007

* SAT only; subject tests not included.

Remaining ACT Dates

(for more info. contact
www.act.org)

Registration Postmark

Deadline:

Nov. 3, 2006 for

Jan. 5, 2007 for

March 9, 2007 for

May 4, 2007 for

Test Date:

Dec. 9, 2006

Feb. 10, 2007

April 14, 2007

June 9, 2007

PLAN AND PSAT TESTS

Note: Bosco Tech students take the PLAN test in the fall of their sophomore year. The PLAN test gives a projected score of the **ACT** test. In their junior year students take the PSAT test which gives a projected score of the **SAT** test.

Having these projected scores will help the student and his counselor discuss which test would be to his advantage to take for college admission.

California's Public Colleges and Universities

(L.A. County Career/College Guide pp. 42 & ff.)

California has a 3-tiered system of state financed universities and colleges. They are divided into the following groups:

1. University of California (UC)
2. California State University (CSU)
3. Community Colleges (CC) a.k.a.
junior colleges

University of California schools (www.ucop.edu/pathways)

Includes 10 campuses:

UC Berkeley

UC Riverside

UC Davis

UC San Diego

UC Irvine

UC Santa Barbara

UCLA

UC Santa Cruz

UC Merced

UC San Francisco*

* UC San Francisco is devoted solely to study of health sciences. UCSF programs have special application forms.

The UC Admissions Process

(www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions)

- UC system is designed to take top 12.5 percent (top 1/8) of high school graduating class in state of California
- Freshman applicants must complete the “a thru g” requirements (15 units)
- SAT Reasoning Test **or** the ACT taken
- If ACT is taken, so must the ACT writing
- 2 SAT Subject Tests must be taken
- Minimum high school G.P.A. of 3.0 in “a thru g” courses is required

(For a complete listing of the admission criteria used by the UC schools, see p. 49 of the LA Career/College Guide)

The UC System (continued)

There are a few ways to gain admission to UC schools:

1. Eligibility in the Statewide Context—students must meet requirements for coursework (“a thru g” courses) GPA, and standardized test scores
2. Eligibility in the Local Context—students must rank in the top 4 percent of their high school class
3. Eligibility by Examination Alone—Students qualify by achieving high scores on the ACT/Writing exams or SAT Reasoning + 2 SAT subject tests

Note: Once again, the UC system is designed to take the top 12.5 percent of all graduating high school seniors in California.

UC Eligibility Index

<u>“A thru G” G.P.A.</u>	<u>Minimum UC Score Total</u>
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

Selected UC Score Indexes Based on the SAT

<u>SAT Score</u>	<u>Equivalent UC Score</u>
800	100
750	92
700	83
650	75
600	67
550	58
500	50
450	42
400	33

Selected UC Score Indexes Based on the ACT

<u>ACT Score</u>	<u>Equivalent UC Score</u>
36	100
33	90
30	80
27	70
24	60
21	50
18	40
15	30
12	20

UC cost (based on 2004 – 2005 estimates)

Approximately \$21,700 per year (\$6,600 fees + \$14,100 for room, board, books, and transportation)

Examples of Distinctive Programs at Some UC Schools

- UC Merced: Earth system science which includes atmospheric sciences and climate sciences
- UC Irvine: 3 – 2 business program which gives you a B.S. or a B.A. in any major (except engineering) **and** an M.B.A.
- UC San Diego: Urban studies and planning
- UC Davis: Viticulture and enology

California State University

(www.csumentor.edu)

Has 23 campuses:

Bakersfield

Long Beach

San Diego

Chico

Los Angeles

San Francisco

Channel Islands

Maritime Academy

San Jose

Dominguez Hills

Monterey Bay

San Luis Obispo

East Bay

Northridge

San Marcos

Fresno

Pomona

Sonoma

Fullerton

Sacramento

Stanislaus

Humboldt

San Bernardino

The Cal State Admission Process

- CSU system is designed to take top 33 percent (1/3) of CA. high school graduates
- Must have completed 15 prescribed courses on “ a thru g” list
- SAT Reasoning Test **or** ACT must be taken
- Must take appropriate admissions tests

Cal State Eligibility Index Table

<u>GPA</u>	<u>ACT score</u>	<u>SAT score (Math/Verbal—1600 max score)</u>
3.0 and above	qualifies with any score	qualifies with any score
2.90	12	580
2.80	14	660
2.70	16	740
2.60	18	820
2.50	20	900
2.40	22	980
2.30	24	1060
2.20	26	1140
2.10	28	1220
2.00	30	1300

Note: Cal State schools do not require taking the ACT writing component or the SAT writing segment or the SAT subject tests.

CSU cost (based on 2004 – 2005 estimates)

Total cost of approximately \$15,600
(\$2800 in fees + \$12,800 for room, board,
books, and transportation costs)

Examples of Some Distinctive Programs at CSU Schools

- CSU Chico: Mechatronics
- CSU Sacramento: B.A. in photography
- CSU Stanislaus: 4 – 1 – 4 program
- Cal Maritime: Cadet corps, Golden Bear cruise
- CSU Monterey Bay: Individual learning plans culminating in a Capstone project

CSU Distinctive Programs

(continued)

- Fresno State: Biomedical Physics, that is, an interdisciplinary major for students good in physics, math, and biology
- CSU Fullerton: Animation and Entertainment Arts

Community Colleges

(www.cccco.edu)

109 total campus locations:

- 56 in southern California
- 53 in central and northern California

Note: see pp. 42 - 44 of L.A. County
Career/College Guide for further info.

Community Colleges Admission Requirements

- Open to all California residents (100 percent of California high school graduates)
- A California high school graduate may attend a community college anywhere in the state
- Financially, a unit costs \$26.
- If no cost for living at home, then approximate total cost including books and fees is about \$2600 (based on 2004 – 2005 estimated figures)

Things about community colleges to keep in mind

- Many community colleges have written transfer guarantees and **all** have priority admission to UC and CSU schools
- CC's offer a way to explore various subjects while deciding on a major or a career
- CC's offer excellent value in terms of high quality and low cost
- CC's can be a good initial transition from high school to college before advancing to a major university or 4-year college

Independent/Private Universities and Colleges

- Majority of colleges in U.S. are independent, that is, privately supported
- California has 77 independent colleges and universities
- Independent/private colleges can vary; some examples are as follows:

Major research universities—Stanford, NYU

Comprehensive universities—Fordham University (N.Y.)

Small liberal arts college—Williams College (Mass.)

Faith-based universities—Loyola Marymount

Specialized colleges—College of Culinary Arts (Pasadena)

Things to consider about private colleges

- There are private colleges designed to fit all budgets, locations, and GPA's
- **Do not assume** that all private schools expect high GPA's or perfect SAT/ACT scores
- You may get a better financial package from a private school than a public one
- A college/university with a high endowment is probably financially strong and may have a lot of scholarship money available

Further items to consider about private colleges & universities

- Ask the school's admission's officer "What is the average debt incurred by students who complete their degree?"
- Remember this possibility:
A lot of financial aid may be **in the form of loans which must be paid back**. Take this into account when evaluating your financial aid package.

General application procedures for private colleges/universities

- Write for applications early in your senior year (or in the spring of your junior year if you're considering *early admission*)
- Identify and meet deadlines
- All colleges require a transcript
- Almost all require the SAT or ACT
- Almost all require letters of recommendation
- Many require a personal essay
- Some require personal interviews

Websites for information on private colleges/universities

- California.....www.aiccu.edu
- National site.....www.naicu.edu

Online Application Sites

- California State University.....www.csumentor.edu/
- University of California...[www.university of california.edu/admissions](http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions)
- Independent California Colleges and Universities.....www.aiccument.org/AdmissionApp
- Common Applications for 227 Colleges.....www.commonapp.org

Military Academies—General Information

- Contact the service academy of your choice to obtain full details
- Apply early—by the 2nd semester of your junior year
- Contact your state senators and U.S. representative for a nomination; it is not necessary to know the the officials personally
- You must qualify academically, physically, and medically
- Submit paperwork on time

Military Academies

(continued)

- Take SAT and/or ACT
- Show leadership and emphasize leadership potential
- Class rank is important
- Must show you can positively contribute to activities you're involved in
- Stay fit—athleticism is important

Service Academy Websites

- West Point (Army).....
www.usma.edu
- Annapolis (Navy & Marines).....
www.usna.edu
- Air Force Academy.....www.usafa.edu
- Coast Guard
Academy.....www.cga.uscg.edu
- Merchant Marine
Academy.....www.usmma.edu

Different Admission Options

Early Decision:

- Initiated by the student (start process in spring of junior year)
- Colleges notify students usually by or before Dec. 15 of senior year
- For applicants who are *absolutely* sure about attending their chosen college
- If accepted, you *must* withdraw all other applications to other schools
- *You are obliged to accept your chosen college's offer of admission*

Early Decision

(continued)

- Take this option very seriously
- Recommended that you visit the school of your choice *before* going with an early decision
- *If you visit the school after you have been accepted and decide you don't like it, you are duty-bound to attend!*

Early Action

- Similar to Early Action in time frame
- Non-binding, that is, you need not make a commitment to attend if accepted nor withdraw other applications to other schools
- You can wait and see what other offers you receive before making a decision

Early Admission

- Limited to exceptional students who wish to attend college after their junior year of high school

Rolling Admission

- Colleges will review your application as it is received
- Students are usually notified if they are accepted or not, generally within 2 weeks after their application is received

The College Application

- Gives readers opportunity to discover who you are and what's important to you
- Make a copy of blank application form
- Type or write neatly. **Many colleges now require on-line applications.**
- Proofread for typos or spelling mistakes
- Keep a copy of completed application

The College Application

(continued)

- Be honest
- Answer the questions asked
- Give yourself plenty of time to complete
- Take completed application to post office and request a certificate of mailing

Note: Registered and certified mailing can actually delay the handling of one's application because a signature is required upon receipt

The Application Essay

- Gives chance for one to go beyond objective data
- Should be well-written, carefully edited, and within prescribed length
- Stay focused on topic; avoid tangents
- Give lots of details to paint a picture of event(s)/person (applicant) described

Letters of Recommendation

- Begin asking teachers in September of senior year; **don't wait until last minute**
- Use a post-it on essay form to remind recommendation writer of deadline date
- Provide stamped addressed envelope if recommendation must be mailed directly
- Politely check back with recommendation writer before deadline date
- Follow-up with thank-you note to writer

Financial Aid

(pp. 30 – 36 of L.A. County Career/College Guide)

- Help for meeting college costs ex. tuition, fees, books, room/board, personal expenses, and travel
- 2 types of financial aid:
 - A. Need based—determined by college scholarship service (CSS), federal guidelines, and institutional policies
 - B. No-need scholarships—awarded for academic excellence, athletic prowess, artistic talent, leadership, or other criteria

Financial Aid

(continued)

How is financial aid usually given:

- Grants—funds that **do not** have to be paid back
- Loans—money that **must be** repaid, usually after one's college graduation

Financial Aid Forms

- FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- CSS PROFILE (College Scholarship Service)
- Cal Grants GPA Verification Form
- College/universities own institutional forms

Financial Aid Forms

(continued)

- Previously mentioned forms are used to determine the EFC (estimated family contribution)
- Difference between cost of college and EFC is the **need**
- Individual colleges put together a financial aid package to meet that need
- At most colleges, financial aid packages include combination of grants, loans, and work-study dollars

Financial Aid Websites

(p. 36 of L.A. County Career/College Guide)

- www.FastWeb.com
- www.scholaraid.com
- www.students.gov
- www.finaid.org *a/so* www.finaid.com
- www.collegeboard.com
- www.act.org
- www.salliemae.com
- www.CollegeView.com
- www.fafsa.ed.gov
- www.csac.ca.gov

Top 5 Factors Influencing College Admissions (G-R-E-E-T)

- **G**rades (college prep classes + G.P.A.)
- **R**ecommendations (counselor + teachers)
- **E**xtra-curricular activities (ex. sports, clubs, part-time job, volunteer work)
- **E**ssay (follow instructions)
- **T**ests (SAT Reasoning + SAT subject tests and/or ACT)

Senior Year and the College Application Process

Summer before senior year

- Research colleges and narrow choices
- Save money for senior year expenses
- Do volunteer work, work as an intern, get a part-time job, or take a college class at local community college
- Update resume
- Consider recommendation writers
- Have draft of CSU/UC application complete

Senior Year

Fall

- Define college application list
- Be aware of deadlines
- Write and re-write essays
- Register for government PIN number
- Request transcripts to be sent where necessary
- Submit recommendation requests to counselors/teachers for schools requiring them
- Attend college fairs & visit colleges
- Attend Bosco Tech college info. night for seniors

Senior Year

Winter

- Get college applications completed
- FAFSA/Cal Grant forms completed
- Heavy application period for college scholarships
- Send mid-year grades to colleges where necessary

Senior Year

Spring

- Receive decision letters (March – April)
- Receive financial aid packages (March – May)
- Student Intent to Register [SIR] (May 1)
- Maintain grades—**college acceptances are conditional and can be revoked!**

Simple Strategies for Students

- Know your interests and capitalize on your strengths
- Better to focus on a few things and do them well instead of doing many things o.k. (ex. activities)
- The important thing to remember is to find a college that will promote your strengths and give you the guidance to develop other areas to become a successful adult