

**McCann Technical School  
College Information Packet  
McCann Tech CEEB # 221575**

The information contained in this packet is intended to assist you through the college process. Included in this packet is information about college selection, the application process, required testing, action plans, and the college essay, letters of recommendation, resume tips, and checklists. You can also pick and choose sections to print out that will help with the application process.

Please make sure you share this packet with your parents/guardian. It is time to focus on your "life after McCann". And as always, if you need any help, please contact the guidance department.

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## Ten Ways School Prepares You for the Work World

The first day you head off to a professional job interview may seem far away, but the time to build strong skills and valuable habits is now. School is full of opportunities to develop the qualities most important to employers.

### **Writing Skills**

If you dread essays and other writing assignments, consider this: in a recent survey of employers, communication topped the list of skills they look for most. By doing your best on every research paper and lab report you write, you're preparing yourself for a career. Health professionals keep patient charts, researchers and artists depend on the money they collect by writing grant applications, software engineers write technical specifications, and nearly everyone writes email to people inside and outside their organization. And before you even get the chance to interview, you'll need to represent yourself in cover letters and résumés.

### **Speaking Skills**

Next time you're assigned a class presentation, think twice before dismissing it as an unimportant part of your education. Employers look for speaking skills in job hopefuls and it's never too soon to practice good eye contact and other public speaking techniques.

### **Teamwork Skills**

How many times a week does your class break into small groups to tackle a challenge? You practice voicing your opinions, listening and responding to others, and reaching compromises. By the time you leave high school, you can be an expert in teamwork, an increasingly important skill in today's workplace.

### **Problem-Solving Skills**

Problem solving goes far beyond your algebra textbook. Every school assignment is an opportunity to weigh all possible solutions carefully and select the one you think is best. As a working professional, you'll keep solving problems, whether computer programming bugs or budget shortfalls.

### **Initiative**

Every time you raise your hand in class, every time you choose your own research topic, every time you interpret a piece of literature, you take initiative. And employers value can-do professionals who come up with new ideas and chart their own course through projects.

### **Cool Under Pressure**

Who hasn't made the argument that testing isn't a real-life situation? It's not like your future boss is going to ask you to translate a Spanish passage without a dictionary in under 20 minutes. But try thinking of the pressure of testing as practice for the work world's own explosive situations. You could someday find yourself meeting tight deadlines, speaking with irate customers, holding a scalpel, or handling dangerous chemicals.

### **Attention to Detail**

When you double-check your calculations for a math problem, make sure you're using the correct homonym in an essay, or cite sources carefully in a research paper, you're paying close attention to detail. That habit will come in handy in any workplace, whether you maintain a database, keep a log of the hours you spend with clients, or simply write emails.

### **Time Management**

How many classes do you attend each day? How many homework assignments do you tackle each night? And what about sports practice, play rehearsal, and other extracurriculars? You have the chance to be a real pro when it comes to juggling the many demands on your time—and that's a good thing since most jobs require multitasking. Examples of on-the-job juggling feats include taking care of current clients while attracting new ones, responding to emails while working on a major presentation, and ordering tomorrow's produce while planning next week's menu.

### **Honesty**

Employers need to know that they can trust you with everything from credit cards to trade secrets. But how can you work at honesty? Every day that you do your own homework and resist the temptation to cheat on exams, you exercise your integrity muscle.

### **Love of Learning**

Last but not least, a love of learning will see you through the initial weeks of a new job. It will also serve you well as you advance in your working life, taking on new projects, building expertise, and branching into new areas of interest. While your grandparents may have worked for the same company their entire lives, today's workforce is mobile, with most people changing careers, not just jobs, throughout their lifetime.

Source: [http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/majors\\_careers/45548.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/majors_careers/45548.html)

## **Action Plan: High School Juniors**

### **Fall**

- Take the PSAT/NMSQT.
- Start your college search.
- Start with you: Make lists of your abilities, preferences, and personal qualities. List things you may want to study and do in college.
- Jumpstart your college planning by reading about majors and careers.
- Use college search engines to find colleges with the right characteristics.
- Start thinking about financial aid.
- Talk to your counselor about your college plans and attend college night and financial aid night at your school.
- Use financial aid calculators to estimate your aid eligibility and college costs.

### **Winter**

- Plan your spring testing schedule. You can take either the SAT Reasoning Test™ or up to three SAT Subject Tests™ on one test day. Plan your testing schedule carefully if you want to take both types of SAT®. See the SAT schedule of test dates and register online for the SAT.
- Continue searching for colleges.
- Write your resume.
- Talk with your counselor.

### **Spring**

- Get ready for the SAT®.
- Visit the [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) to take a free full-length official practice test and get a score and skills report.
- Explore colleges - Start visiting local colleges: large, small, public, and private. Get a feel for what works for you. Develop a list of 15-20 colleges that interest you.
- Plan ahead for the summer & senior year.
- Review your senior year class schedule with your counselor. Challenge yourself with honors and stick with sequences you've begun, in the languages, for example.
- Plan summer activities early. Enrich yourself by volunteering, getting an interesting job or internship, or signing up for special summer learning programs.
- Keep your counselor up-to-date on your plans.

### **Summer**

- Keep your momentum up this summer.
- Visit colleges. Take campus tours and, at colleges you're serious about, schedule interviews with admissions counselors. Be sure to bring your campus visit checklist.
- Request applications from colleges to which you'll apply. Check important dates; some universities have early dates or rolling admissions.

Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/action/juniors.html>

## **Action Plan: High School Seniors**

### **Fall**

- Take the SATs®. Decide which colleges should be sent your scores.
- Narrow your list of colleges to between 5 and 10 and review it with your counselor.
- Get an application and financial aid info from each. Visit as many as possible.
- Use the College Application checklist to keep track of deadlines.
- Ask for recommendations. Give each person your resume, a stamped, addressed envelope, and any required forms. Don't forget to send THANK YOU NOTES.
- Write application essays and ask teachers, parents, and friends to read first drafts.
- Applying Early Action or Early Decision? November 1.
- Ask if your college offers an early estimate of financial aid eligibility.
- Get Financial Aid Info- Attend financial aid info events in your area.
- Talk to your counselor about CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE®.
- Apply for scholarships.

### **Winter**

- Apply to colleges. Most regular applications are due between January 1 and February 15.
- Keep copies of everything you send.
- Request transcripts to be sent to colleges.
- Contact colleges to make sure they've received all application materials.
- Submit your FAFSA as soon after January 1 as possible. Men 18 or older must register for the selective service to receive federal financial aid.

### **Spring**

- You should get acceptance letters and financial aid offers by mid-April.
- Talk to financial aid officers.
- If you haven't already, visit your final college before accepting.
- May 1: You must tell every college of your acceptance or rejection of offers of admission or financial aid by May 1.
- Send a deposit to the college you choose.

### **Summer**

- Ask that your final transcript be sent to your college.
- Start preparing for the year ahead.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/action/seniors.html>*

## What really matters to colleges...

### Many factors influence admissions decisions including:

Courses taken	Personal statements and essays
Grades received	Recommendations
Class rank	Standardized test scores
Extracurricular activities	Interviews

### Which factors most affect the admissions decision?

Many small, selective schools pay greater attention to personal statements and essays, teacher and counselor recommendations, leadership experiences, and the individual talents of applicants. They typically offer the chance for a face-to-face interview.

Large, public state university systems often use a mathematical formula based on a student's grade point average (GPA) and scores on the SAT or ACT. They tend to favor in-state applicants.

Regardless of the college's evaluation system, students should present a well-rounded picture of their skills, experience and personal traits. Applications should highlight their ability to succeed at each particular institution, and what they can contribute to student life on campus.

### Courses and grades

A student's grades in college-preparatory classes remain the most significant factor in college admission decisions.

Highly selective colleges look for students who:

- Complete core academic requirements
- Take more challenging classes, even though they may have slightly lower grades than they'd achieve in lower-level courses
- Enroll in several college-prep courses—such as AP® courses—and perform well
- Take four years of a world language, showing evidence of academic discipline and challenge

### Class rank

Although still reviewed by many colleges, class rank has declined in significance as many private and religious schools have eliminated student ranking.

### Test scores

Standardized test scores remain important at many colleges. Examinations such as the SAT Reasoning Test™ and SAT Subject Tests™, or the ACT, allow colleges to compare students from across the country.

Personal statements and essays are both a measure of writing ability and a window into each student's background. Admissions officers want to hear an original voice in the student's own words. For a successful essay, students should get to the point quickly and personalize their writing through specific examples.

### Recommendations from counselors and teachers

At selective colleges, strong school support in the form of recommendations from counselors and faculty members has become more important than ever. These recommendations should be highly specific, describing not just each student's love of learning, but the ways in which the students have demonstrated that they can

- Add to the classroom experience
- Challenge themselves
- Attempt original projects

### Extracurricular activities

Evidence of extracurricular activities is important to the admissions process, and depth of involvement is more impressive than breadth. Students can achieve this if they

- Focus on a limited number of interests
- Document long-term involvement with organizations
- Highlight activities related to a major or career goal
- Show leadership skills and ability

### Additional factors

Many schools set aside spaces for students who may not meet traditional criteria but will add to the class diversity. Geographic location, racial or ethnic background, extenuating or unusual life circumstances, and experience living or studying overseas may all be influential. Evidence suggests that in some cases seeking early decision may also increase the chances of admission.

Source: <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/applications/decision>

## **Tips for Finding Your College Match Characteristics You Should Consider**

How can you find colleges that match your needs? First, identify your priorities. Next, carefully research the characteristics of a range of schools. Finally, match the two. Here are some college characteristics you should consider.

### **Size of the Student Body**

Size will affect many of your opportunities and experiences, including:

- Range of academic majors offered
- Extracurricular possibilities
- Amount of personal attention you'll receive
- Number of books in the library

When considering size, be very sure to look beyond the raw number of students attending. For example, perhaps you're considering a small department within a large school. Investigate not just the number of faculty members, but also how accessible they are to students.

### **Location**

Do you want to visit home frequently, or do you see this as a time to experience a new part of the country? Perhaps you like an urban environment with access to museums, ethnic food, or major league ball games. Or maybe you hope for easy access to the outdoors or the serenity of a small town.

### **Academic Programs**

If you know what you want to study, research reputations of academic departments by talking to people in the fields that interest you. If you're undecided, relax and pick an academically balanced institution that offers a range of majors and programs. Most colleges offer counseling to help you find a focus. In considering academic programs, look for special opportunities and pick a school that offers many possibilities.

### **Campus Life**

Consider what your college life will be like beyond the classroom. Aim for a balance between academics, activities, and social life. Before choosing a college, learn the answers to these questions:

- What extracurricular activities, athletics, and special interest groups are available?
- Does the community around the college offer interesting outlets for students?
- Are students welcomed by the community?
- Is there an ethnic or religious group in which to take part?
- How do fraternities and sororities influence campus life?
- Is housing guaranteed?
- How are dorms assigned?

### **Cost**

Today's college price tag makes cost an important consideration for most students. At the same time, virtually all colleges work to ensure that academically qualified students from every economic circumstance can find financial aid that allows them to attend. In considering cost, look beyond the price tag.

### **Diversity**

Explore what you might gain from a diverse student body. Think about the geographic, ethnic, racial, and religious diversity of the students as a means of learning more about the world. Investigate what kinds of student organizations, or other groups with ethnic or religious foundations, are active and visible on campus.

### **Retention and Graduation Rates**

One of the best ways to measure a school's quality and the satisfaction of its students is to learn the percent of students who return after the first year and the percent of entering students who remain to graduate. Comparatively good retention and graduation rates are indicators that responsible academic, social, and financial support systems exist for most students.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/52.html>*

## **Types of Colleges Which Type Suits You Best?**

What kind of college do you see yourself attending? Different types of colleges suit different types of people. Take a look at these descriptions to help you see where you fit.

### **Liberal Arts Colleges**

Liberal arts colleges offer a broad base of courses in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. Most are private and focus mainly on undergraduate students. Classes tend to be small and personal attention is available.

### **Universities**

Generally, a university is bigger than a college and offers more majors and research facilities. Class size often reflects institutional size and some classes may be taught by graduate students.

### **Community or Junior Colleges**

Community colleges offer a degree after the completion of two years of full-time study. They frequently offer technical programs that prepare you for immediate entry into the job market.

### **Upper-Division Schools**

Upper-division schools offer the last two years of undergraduate study, usually in specialized programs leading to a bachelor's degree. You'd generally transfer to an upper-division college after completing an associate's degree or after finishing a second year of study at a four-year college.

### **Agricultural, Technical, and Specialized Colleges**

Have you made a clear decision about what you want to do with your life? Specialized colleges emphasize preparation for specific careers. Examples include Art/music, Bible, Business, Health Science, Seminary/rabbinical, and Teaching.

### **Public vs. Private**

On the one hand, public colleges are usually less expensive, particularly for in-state residents. They get most of their money from the state or local government. Private colleges rely on tuition, fees, endowments, and other private sources. On the other hand, private colleges are usually smaller and can offer more personalized attention (and some believe, more prestige).

### **Special Interests**

*Single-Sex:* All four-year public colleges and most private schools are co-ed. In terms of single-sex colleges, there are about 50 specifically for men and about 70 specifically for women. Some may enroll a few men or women.

*Religiously Affiliated Colleges:* Some private colleges are affiliated with a religious faith. The affiliation may be historic only or it may affect day-to-day student life.

*Historically Black Colleges:* Historically-black colleges find their origins in the time when African American students were systematically denied access to most other colleges and universities. These schools offer students a unique opportunity to experience an educational community in which they're part of the majority.

*Hispanic-Serving Institutes:* There are about 135 institutions designated by the federal government as "Hispanic-Serving" At these schools, Hispanic students comprise at least 25 percent of the total full-time undergraduate enrollment.

### **Bottom Line**

What's right for you depends on your situation and goals. For more information about planning for college, and how to build your college list, check out the College Board's College Handbook.

Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/where-to-start/2.html>

## **Working with Your Counselor During the College Application Process**

### **Four Simple Tips**

Completing the college application process can certainly be nerve-racking, for students and parents alike. By the time colleges have been selected, recommendations requested, essays written, and applications filled out, most families have hit the height of anxiety.

Then, quite often, the unthinkable happens. You ask your school counselor to send out your transcript, and he informs you that it will go out within the next week. "That's not soon enough," you think to yourself. "It needs to go out tomorrow." The reality, though, is that counselors need a lot more than 24 hours to process college applications.

### **A Counselor's Work**

Counselors also have other duties on top of college counseling, including: helping students with academic, career, and personal issues; providing classroom assistance; administrative support; and more. In short, counselors are busy people.

Helping students apply to college is a priority for counselors. However, sending application packets along with recommendations and transcripts takes time. Plus, at peak application times, counselors can be inundated with requests to process college applications.

### **Four Tips for Working with Your Counselor**

So what can you do to make sure that your applications go out on time and that you keep your stress level to a minimum during this anxiety-filled process?

#### **1. Be Responsible.**

Ultimately, you want to go to the college of your choice. Because you have one counselor and that counselor has many students, take charge of the application process. Know your deadlines, keep in contact with your counselor, and perform the legwork necessary to get the job done.

#### **2. Be Organized.**

Make a chart to keep track of different colleges' requirements, and mark a calendar with your application deadlines. Have a separate folder for each application so you can keep materials organized and easy to access. Ask for recommendations in September, and write your essays well ahead of the deadlines.

#### **3. Be Early.**

In the case of college applications, on time might not be good enough. Essays, recommendations, and transcript request forms should all be completed and submitted at least two weeks prior to the application deadline. Counselors and support staff fill these requests on a first-come, first-served basis, so get in the line as early as possible. Most application packets are mailed, so don't forget to leave time for the U.S. Postal Service to deliver your application and for the college's internal mail service to process it. Finally, factor in some additional time for unanticipated errors and delays.

#### **4. Be Relaxed.**

Filling out college applications can be stressful. Try not to let it get you down. Make sure to go out and have fun with your friends; to take breaks when you need them; and to remember that, in the end, the college application process is just a series of steps you need to complete. Just focus on the tasks at hand.

The college application process can be stressful and exhausting—but it doesn't have to be. Organization, communication, patience, and reasonable expectations are the keys to making it a manageable and successful experience.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/apply/the-application/50530.html>*

## MATCH, REACH, AND SAFETY SCHOOLS

There is no rule that dictates how many colleges you may apply to. If you're willing to pay the application fees, you can apply to dozens. But that's a poor strategy. Take the time to research and you'll be able to whittle your initial list down to a manageable number of schools.

Once you know what you're looking for, you can start crafting a list of colleges that fit your specifications. Don't include a school on your list that you wouldn't be willing to attend. As your list takes shape, include schools that fall into one of the following three categories: **match, reach, and safety**.

A *match* school is one where your academic credentials fall well within (or even exceed) the school's range for the average freshman. There are no guarantees, but it's not unreasonable to be accepted to several of your match schools.

A *reach* school is one where your academic credentials fall below the school's range for the average freshman. Reach schools are long-shots, but they should still be possible. If you have a 2.0 GPA, Harvard is not a reach school—it's a dream.

A *safety* school is one where your academic credentials fall above the school's range for the average freshman. You can be reasonably certain that you will be admitted to your safety schools.

Apply to a few schools from each category (many applicants apply to around three reach schools, three match schools and two safety schools). Separating them will help you manage your expectations throughout the admissions process. And it will ensure that you set ambitious goals *and* give yourself some back-up options.

*Source: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college/match-reach-safety.aspx>*

## The Letter of Recommendation

GPA and test scores are the two most important factors in college admissions, but that doesn't mean you should neglect the other parts of your application.

Competitive colleges use the letter of recommendation to assess your passions, goals and character. They want more than just a statistic.

Solid recommendations tell a college whether you're the type of candidate they seek. Most schools ask for two recommendations, generally from teachers at your high school. Some allow you to submit additional recommendations from employers, counselors or coaches.

To snag strong recommendations, consider the following advice.

### Start Early

Start thinking about recommendations in junior year. You don't need to sip tea in the teacher's lounge or invite them to a matinee. Just take advantage of opportunities to speak with your teachers, especially the ones that you like. Visit after class. Seek help or advice when you have a tough paper or a difficult test.

When you cultivate a relationship with a teacher, he or she will be able to speak to your true character and your strengths, not just your score on the last exam.

### Pick Wisely

Don't feel compelled to get a letter of recommendation from a teacher just because he or she gave you an A+. You're looking for a well-written, compelling letter from a faculty member who knows you well or who teaches a subject you're interested in. Sometimes, you can get a very strong recommendation from a teacher who has seen you struggle or overcome difficulties.

Don't be afraid to ask potential recommenders whether they feel comfortable writing for you. Some will say no (they're overworked or don't feel they know you well enough), and that's okay. You want recommenders who are enthusiastic about the task.

### Treat Your Recommenders Well

Give your recommenders plenty of advance notice that you want them to write for you. Once they agree, make their job as easy as possible. Give them everything they need to complete the task, including a stamped envelope, the recommendation form (with your information already filled out), and a clear list of deadlines and addresses.

We also recommend that you provide a list of your achievements, activities, goals and any other topic you think is important. Keep it brief. Deliver all this material to your recommender in person and ask if there is anything else they need from you.

**And don't forget to write a thank-you note. This person is doing you a big favor!**

*Source: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college/letter-of-recommendation.aspx>*

## THE COLLEGE ESSAY

### **How important is the essay?**

Many students feel overwhelmed by the task of writing a personal essay for college applications. But this essay is your opportunity to reveal your best qualities and to show an admissions committee what makes you stand out from other applicants.

A 2006 report published by the National Association of College Admission Counseling (NACAC) found that while grades, admission tests, and class rank remain the top factors in the college admission decision, a majority of colleges and universities consider the essay to be a key factor in determining which academically qualified students they would choose.

In other words, when all else is equal between competing applicants, a compelling essay can make the difference. A powerful, well-written essay can also tip the balance for a marginal applicant.

### **What are colleges looking for in an essay?**

College admission officers look to the essay for evidence that a student can write well and support her ideas with logical arguments. They also want to know something about the personality of the student.

### **What are the different types of essays?**

There are typically three types of essay questions: the "you" question, the "why us" question, and the "creative" question. The following descriptions and tips are based on information found in McGinty's book.

#### **The "you" question**

- This question boils down to "Tell us about yourself." The school wants to know the student better and to see how she will introduce herself.
- Example: "UVM values a diverse student body. What contributions might you make to our campus community outside of academic achievement?" (University of Vermont, 2005)
- Plus: This type of direct question offers students a chance to reveal something about themselves other than grades and test scores.
- Danger: The open-ended nature of these questions can lead to an essay that's all over the place.

Students should

- Focus on just a few things and avoid the urge to "spill everything" at once.
- Not write out their resume in paragraph form. It's better to develop one small event, person, place, or feeling with a lot of narrative and specifics.
- Tell a story that only they can tell.

#### **The "why us" question**

- Some schools ask for an essay about a student's choice of a school or career. They're looking for information about the applicant's goals, and about how serious his or her commitment is to this particular school.
- Example: "How did you become interested in American University?" (American University, 2007)
- Plus: This type of question provides a focus for the essay; that is, why the student chose this particular school or path—and the answer to that will (hopefully) be clear to her.
- Danger: Any factual errors in the essay will reveal that the student really hasn't thought deeply about her choice. For example, writing that she wants to attend Carleton College to major in agriculture would be a blunder. (Carleton doesn't have an agriculture major.)
- An upside to this type of question is that, while working on the essay, the student might realize that she is not a match for the college—and it's better to know that sooner than later.

Students should

- Make absolutely sure they know their subject well.
- Not go overboard with flattery. They should sound sincere but not ingratiating.

### The "creative" question

- The goals of the "creative" question are to evaluate a candidate's ability to think and write creatively and to assess the breadth of her knowledge and education.
- Example: "Sharing intellectual interests is an important aspect of university life. Describe an experience or idea that you find intellectually exciting, and explain why." (Stanford University, 2007)
- Plus: This kind of question gives students an opportunity to convey their personalities and views.
- Danger: Some students may take the "creative" aspect of the question as license to be obscure, pretentious, or undisciplined in their writing.

Students should

- Understand the importance of writing an informed essay. For example, they should not write about a fantasy meeting with a famous artist and get the titles of his paintings wrong.
- Use common sense ("creative" doesn't mean eccentric or self-indulgent).
- Not write about high-minded topics or exotic locales simply to impress the reader.

Source: <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/guidance/applications/essay>

### 15 Essay Tips from Admissions Counselors

1. **View it as an opportunity.** The essay is one of the few things that you've got complete control over in the application process, especially by the time you're in your senior year. You've already earned most of your grades; you've already made most of your impressions on teachers; and chances are, you've already found a set of activities you're interested in continuing. So when you write the essay, view it as something more than just a page to fill up with writing. View it as a chance to tell the admissions committee about who you are as a person.
2. **Be yourself.** If you are funny, write a funny essay; if you are serious, write a serious essay. Don't start reinventing yourself with the essay.
3. **Make it fun.** If you're recounting an amusing and light-hearted anecdote from your childhood, it doesn't have to read like a Congressional Act — make it fun!
4. **Tell us something different** from what we'll read on your list of extracurricular activities or transcript.
5. **Take the time to go beyond the obvious.** Think about what most students might write in response to the question and then try something a little different.
6. **Don't try to take on too much.** Focus on one "most influential person," one event, or one activity. Tackling too much tends to make your essay too watered down or disjointed.
7. **Concentrate on topics of true significance to you.** Don't be afraid to reveal yourself in your writing. We want to know who you are and how you think.
8. **Write thoughtfully and from your heart.** It'll be clear who believes in what they are saying versus those who are simply saying what they think we want to hear.
9. **Essays should have a thesis** that is clear to you and to the reader. Your thesis should indicate where you're going and what you're trying to communicate from the outset.
10. **Don't do a history report.** Some background knowledge is okay, but do not re-hash what other authors have already said or written.
11. **Answer each school's essay individually.** Recycled "utility essays" come across as impersonal and sanitized. The one exception is an essay written for and submitted to Common Application member schools.
12. **Proofread, proofread, proofread.** Nothing says "last-minute essay" like an "are" instead of "our" or a "their" instead of "they're."
13. **Keep it short and to the point.**
14. **Limit the number of people** from whom you request feedback on your essay. Too much input creates an essay that sounds as though it has been written by a committee or results in writing that is absent your own voice.
15. **Appearances count.** Formatting and presentation cannot replace substance, but they can certainly enhance the value of an already well-written essay.

Source: [http://apps.carleton.edu/admissions/apply/essay\\_tips/](http://apps.carleton.edu/admissions/apply/essay_tips/)

## Extracurriculars

You won't impress an admissions committee by asking for a tour of the all-night study lounge. Yes, colleges want bright students. But even more, they want bright, *well-rounded* students.

Grades and test scores are very important, but so is what you choose to pursue outside of the classroom. Admissions officers are looking to create a class made up of students with diverse interests and backgrounds. They'll look closely at your extracurriculars to get a sense of who you are and what you're passionate about.

**How much you do isn't as important as *being committed to what you do*.** An application with scattered interest and involvement over four years looks flakey. A student that runs track and sings in the choir throughout four years of high school shows passion and commitment. Find out early on what sparks your interest and stick with it.

**Demonstrate leadership.** If you have the opportunity and drive to be the captain of a sports team, president of a club or editor of the school newspaper, seize the opportunity. Colleges like responsible leaders who earn the respect of their peers.

**An after-school job shows maturity.** Don't fret if an after-school job prevents you from participating in extracurriculars. If you have to work so that your family can make ends meet, be sure the colleges you apply to understand that. Helping to support a family is a serious responsibility that demonstrates character. And just as with extracurriculars, it's impressive if you retain a job for an extended period and rise to a position of responsibility.

**Extracurriculars can be valuable experience.** If you have a career or study interest that you can pursue outside the classroom, take advantage. Think you might be interested in medicine? Try volunteering at a local hospital. Are you destined to be a writer? Join your school's newspaper or literary magazine. These activities can help give you a strong foundation should you decide to pursue them further, academically or professionally.

Source: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college/extracurriculars.aspx>

## Resume Tips for High School Students:

A resume is the one tool that can help you realize your future employment dreams. It does not matter if your first job is working at an ice cream shop or at a toy store. A good resume will lead you toward job success.

Think about this: Most employers are truly impressed with high school students who provide a resume when looking for a job. Imagine being the employer and two people apply for a job and one fills out an application and the other provides a resume. Who do you think is going to impress the employer the most?

If you want to find a great job, do what it takes to ensure you are looked at more favorably than your competitors.

**Make sure you include the main sections** within your resume. Typically, they are: Heading, Objective, Education, Experience, Activities/Awards and References. Employers like to know where to find the information they are seeking.

**Choose a common resume format**, such as: Chronological, Functional or Combination.

**Proofread everything** until you are certain that your resume contains no mistakes. Also, have someone else read your resume in an effort to ensure it is free of errors. Typos and grammar mistakes are the first things an employer looks for when weeding out the good resumes from the bad ones.

**If you do not have any work experience**, consider listing volunteer work and/or school-related experiences, such as laying out copy for a yearbook, tracking equipment for a sports team, creating programs for school event or something similar. Anything that might be considered a task associated with the work environment is fine to use on your resume.

**Accomplishments** are probably the most important things you can list on a resume. This is true regardless of how old you are or how much experience you have. The reason is that accomplishments show that you worked hard, were involved and got things done.

Four main themes you should always include in your resume, no matter where you're applying, are **volunteerism, association memberships, computer proficiency, and knowledge of other languages.**

### Volunteerism

No matter where you're applying or what you plan to study in college, potential employers want to know you're a well-rounded member of society. Listing your participation in a program, such as Habitat for Humanity or your weekly work at a local soup kitchen, can definitely add some pizzazz to a resume short of work experience.

### Association Memberships

It's also an added bonus for younger high school students to list any associations they've belonged to. Juniors and seniors probably have more experience in this area, but never underestimate participation in group roles. This includes any club participation at school or in your community.

### Computer Proficiency

Let's face it, technology is everywhere. Knowledge of computers will most likely be a requirement for just about any job. List any and all experience you have with computers, naming the actual program names you're familiar with (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Photoshop).

### Other Languages

The world is getting smaller and smaller, especially in the job market. Knowing a second or third language can put you at an advantage in qualifying for a job and will certainly separate you from other candidates.

### Resume Resources

Monster Jobs, [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com)

Yahoo! HotJobs, [www.hotjobs.yahoo.com](http://www.hotjobs.yahoo.com)

JobSniper, [www.jobsniper.com](http://www.jobsniper.com)

CareerBuilder, [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com)

MSN Careers, [www.careers.msn.com](http://www.careers.msn.com)

JobWeb, [www.jobweb.com](http://www.jobweb.com)

Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/plan/high-school/36957.html>

Source: <http://www.professional-resume-example.com/resume-tips-for-high-school-students.html>

## **Your Face is Out There - Facebook & College Admission**

From the *MCG 2009* edition

Think your Facebook profile has nothing to do with college admission? Think again. The face you showcase on online networking sites could also be the face you present to admission representatives. And, while you should consider who's looking at your profile, you should consider, too, the ways that Facebook might be able to assist you in your college search.

First and foremost, make sure your Facebook profile is rated PG. Why? A quarter of colleges use search engines to research potential students, and a fifth use social networking sites like Facebook to see what students are like outside of their applications. So, choose photos that don't incriminate you in any inappropriate or illegal activities. And instead of listing "hanging with my peeps" as one of your activities, use your profile to your advantage by including the kinds of interests and extracurriculars that would appeal to admission officers, like your volunteer work or interest in journalism. (But that being said, don't lie or embellish just to impress admission reps. And yes, you can keep your "fun" stuff on your profile, too -- just keep it clean!)

Being smart about Facebook doesn't mean limiting your contacts, however. In fact, some college admission offices have even created Facebook profiles of their own where students can learn more about the school, as well as ask questions or open a dialogue. The admission offices of the University of California, Davis, the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, Penn State University, Lehigh University and Centre College, to name a few, are all accepting new Facebook friends.

You might also want to use Facebook as a means to connect with other prospective students or to chat with enrolled students. (It's currently estimated that 90 percent of undergraduate students are signed up with Facebook, where it's available.) Who better to talk to about the college of your choice than a student who's already there? Current students can alleviate your fears and give you the inside scoop, revealing what college life is really like -- beyond what they show you in college guidebooks and on college websites.

Nervous about what's in store for you in college? Worried about making friends? Facebook searches are an easy, non-threatening way to reach out to other students who might be able to curb your anxiety. According to Gary L. Ross, dean of admission at Colgate University, several groups of students from various regions around the country used Facebook over the summer to organize regional gatherings before coming to college. As a result, many incoming freshmen arrived on campus already having established friendships with other students from their region.

The very night she was accepted, Prachi Priyam, for example, created the "Stanford 2011" Facebook group, according to *The Daily Stanford*. About 80 percent of Prachi's freshmen class eventually joined her online, and Prachi used Facebook to meet up with other Bay Area admits prior to starting school in the fall.

No matter how you use Facebook, make sure you're getting as much out of it as you can. Don't let it hinder your college prospects. Instead, allow social networking to aid you in your college quest and make your transition from high school to college as smooth as possible.

*Source: [http://mycollegeguide.org/articles/6/85/facebook\\_and\\_college\\_admission](http://mycollegeguide.org/articles/6/85/facebook_and_college_admission)*

## **Campus Visit Checklist**

### **Make the Most of Your Trip**

Here are things you shouldn't miss while visiting a college. Take a look at this list before planning campus trips to make sure that you allow enough time on each campus to get a sense of what the school—and the life of its students—is really like.

- Take a campus tour.
- Have an interview with admissions officer.
- Get business cards and names of people you meet for future contacts.
- Pick up financial aid forms.
- Participate in a group information session at the admissions office.
- Sit in on a class of a subject that interests you.
- Talk to a professor in your chosen major or in a subject that interests you.
- Talk to coaches of sports in which you might participate.
- Talk to a student or counselor in the career center.
- Spend the night in a dorm.
- Read the student newspaper.
- Try to find other student publications—department newsletters, alternative newspapers, literary reviews.
- Scan bulletin boards to see what day-to-day student life is like.
- Eat in the cafeteria.
- Ask students why they chose the college.
- Wander around the campus by yourself.
- Read for a little while in the library and see what it's like.
- Search for your favorite book in the library.
- Ask students what they hate about the college.
- Ask students what they love about the college.
- Browse in the college bookstore.
- Walk or drive around the community surrounding the campus.
- Ask students what they do on weekends.
- Listen to the college's radio station.
- Try to see a dorm that you didn't see on the tour.
- Imagine yourself attending this college for four years.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/college-visits/101.html>*

## Choosing a Major

There are two reasons to choose a major: to prepare for a specific field or job, or to immerse yourself in a subject that fascinates you.

Some students choose a major because it will prepare them for a specific career path. Career-focused majors include engineering, business, education or nursing. If you are committed to a vocation, majoring in it will give you specific, practical skills that will be directly applicable to your post-graduation career.

Other students choose a major simply because they love the subject matter. If you choose this path, you may pursue a career that has little to do with what you studied in college. That doesn't mean you'll graduate without skills, however. For example, most history majors don't become historians, but they do graduate with critical thinking and writing abilities that are highly valued by employers.

Here are some ideas on how to start your search for the right major:

**Explore every option, Think outside the box.** College is a whole new ball game. Subjects you hated as a high school student might turn out to be completely different in a new educational setting. In other words, don't automatically rule anything out, even if you don't think it's for you. Give everything at least a small chance. You never know.

**Make the most of the general education courses you're required to take.** Don't just pick whatever's easiest; choose ones that appeal to you, even if they are upper-level courses. You don't yet know what will really compel you. Have your radar on for clues that might be pointing you in new directions.

**Talk to your advisors.** They know what it takes to tackle certain academic disciplines. Tell them your strengths and your interests. They'll be able to highlight courses that might excite you as well as classes that are popular with other students. A great class on nihilism may be the thing that gets you to declare a philosophy major.

**Check the Major's description and course requirements.** What are the requirements? Do the courses seem compelling to you? If you start nodding off while reading the description of the major, perhaps it's best to cross that field off your list.

**Ask upperclassmen.** They are the real experts at your college, and they have faced the daunting task of declaring a major themselves. Older students can tell you the questions they considered and how they went about finding the answers.

**Engage professionals in fields you find interesting.** Ask them exactly what their jobs entail and how their careers do (or don't) relate to their majors. Learning about the paths others took to get where they are is often valuable and enlightening, and even more often, surprising.

The bottom line is that your major does not determine your life. You should choose a subject that interests you and that has some connection to the post-collegiate life you want to build for yourself. But keep the decision in perspective; you can always change careers or go back to school.

*Source: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college/choosing-a-major.aspx>*

## **Six Benefits of Community Colleges It Might Be the Right Path for You**

Community colleges were developed, and still exist, for two major purposes. The first is to serve as a bridge from high school to college by providing courses for transfer toward a Bachelor of Arts (B.A) or Bachelor of Science degree (B.S.). Four out of 10 college-bound high-school graduates start their college education this way.

The second function of community colleges is to prepare students for the job market by offering entry-level career training, as well as courses for adult students who want to upgrade their skills for workforce re-entry or advancement.

Here, then, are some reasons why you might attend a community college:

### **1. You're Not Sure about College.**

Maybe you'd like to begin by aiming for a two-year associate's degree and assess as you go whether you want to pursue a bachelor's degree. Taking classes toward an Associate of Arts (A.A.) degree, for example, would give you a feel for the type of education you'd get at a liberal arts college.

### **2. You Aren't Sure What Kind of Program You Want to Pursue.**

Many people enter college without a clear idea of what they want to focus on. At a community college, you can explore different subject areas before committing to a program, without having to be so concerned about finances. To assist with the career decision-making process, many community colleges offer intensive guidance counseling that can help you assess your abilities, interests, and educational options.

### **3. Your GPA Isn't so Great, and You Want to Build Your Skills Before Transferring.**

Whereas many four-year colleges and universities have selection criteria for attendance, such as a minimum required GPA, community colleges are open to everyone. If you want to pursue college-level coursework but aren't academically ready, community colleges offer classes and one-on-one tutoring to help you strengthen your basic skills. Keep in mind that the average class size at most community colleges is significantly smaller than at public four-year universities.

### **4. You'd Like a Career-Oriented Degree, Such as a Fashion Design or Computer Certification Program.**

Programs like these are often not available at four-year institutions. If you're thinking of seeking employment after finishing up at community college, there are several routes you can take.

You can earn an associate degree—an Associate of Arts or Science (A.A. or A.S.) or an Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.). These degrees take about two years to complete. However, if you want to take courses in a specialized area of study but don't want to spend the time necessary to earn an associate's degree, many community colleges have certificate options that provide intensive training in a specialized field like computer-assisted drafting, food service technology, or paralegal studies. These certificates usually take six months to a year to complete.

### **5. You Work, or Have Commitments, and Need a Flexible Schedule.**

At four-year colleges, course schedules are geared primarily toward full-time, traditional students who take classes during the day. At community colleges, the student population tends to be highly diverse with regard to age, experience, family background, socioeconomic level, and employment status. Course schedules are developed with attention to the variable needs of both part-time and full-time students, so classes are usually offered throughout the day and evening, and sometimes on weekends. Many of these colleges offer online courses.

### **6. You're Tight on Funds.**

Community colleges cost significantly less (particularly for state residents) than state or private colleges and universities. This means that they can be a cost-effective way to complete the first two years of college. The money you save by living at home and going to your local community college can help pay for your last two years at a four-year college or university.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/where-to-start/8169.html>*

## PSAT & SAT FAQ

### What do the initials "SAT" mean?

Originally, SAT was an abbreviation for the Scholastic Aptitude Test. In 1993, the test was renamed the SAT I: Reasoning Test. At the same time, the former Achievement Tests were renamed the SAT II: Subject Tests. In 2004, the numerals "I" and "II" were dropped, and the tests are now named the SAT Reasoning Test (or just SAT) and SAT Subject Tests. SAT is a simple and recognizable way of referring to the SAT Reasoning Test.

### What does the SAT cost?

SAT Reasoning Test™	\$45
SAT Subject Tests™ Basic registration fee	\$20
<b>Additional Processing Fees</b> (add to test fees)	
Register by phone (available only if you have registered before)	\$12.50
Change fee (test type, center, or date change)	\$22
Late fee	\$23
<b>Fees for Receiving Your Scores</b>	
Early scores by Web	<b>Free</b>
Official score report (automatically mailed after you test)	<b>Free</b>
Scores by phone (fee per call)	\$12.50
<b>Fees for Sending Your Scores</b>	
Score report requests at registration*	4 reports included
Each additional score report request*	\$9.50
Order additional reports by phone service	\$10 plus \$9.50for each report

### What about fee waivers?

Students who meet fee-waiver-eligibility guidelines and cannot afford test fees should see their counselor to request fee waivers. Fee waivers are not permitted with late registrations (except for the October test). High school juniors or seniors who are eligible to receive an SAT fee waiver can order up to four additional flexible score reports at no additional charge, while they are in high school. These four additional flexible score reports for fee-waiver eligible students can be used at the time of registration to order additional score reports beyond those included with the registration fee. They can also be used to send scores after scores are reported. Only four flexible score reports for fee-waiver eligible students can be used, regardless of the number of times a student registers. Students who have previously used a fee waiver to register for the SAT or Subject Tests automatically receive flexible score reports for fee-waiver eligible students. Students who meet our fee-waiver eligibility guidelines, but have not yet used a fee waiver to register, can still utilize the flexible score reports. Students should obtain a fee-waiver card from their counselors and use the fee-waiver code (listed on the card) to order additional reports at no cost.

### What is the PSAT?

The Preliminary SAT®/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test is a co-sponsored program by the College Board and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). PSAT/NMSQT stands for Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. It's a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the SAT Reasoning Test™. It also gives you a chance to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs. The PSAT/NMSQT measures: critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills, and writing skills.

### What are the similarities and differences between the SAT and the PSAT/NMSQT®?

Both the SAT and the PSAT/NMSQT measure reasoning skills in critical reading, writing, and mathematics. The PSAT/NMSQT contains actual SAT questions, but it is designed to be slightly easier than the SAT. The PSAT/NMSQT is 2 hours and 10 minutes, whereas the SAT takes 3 hours and 45 minutes. The SAT is used for college admissions, but PSAT/NMSQT scores are not sent to colleges. The PSAT/NMSQT Score Report gives you personalized feedback on areas in which you could improve, along with specific advice on how to improve. Taking the PSAT/NMSQT gives you a chance to qualify for scholarship and recognition programs and is the best practice for the SAT.

**How much time do I have to complete the SAT?**

Unless otherwise instructed, you need to arrive at your assigned test center by 7:45 a.m. and testing should be completed between 12:30 and 1 p.m. The total testing time for the SAT is 3 hours and 45 minutes—not including breaks, check-in time, and pre-administration activities. The total time you should plan on being at the test center is approximately five hours.

**What about students with disabilities?**

Students with disabilities, whose documentation has been validated by the College Board, will receive testing accommodations. Students with disabilities that necessitate the use of a computer for writing will be able to do so for the essay portion of the writing section. Students should speak with their guidance counselor.

**May I bring something to eat or drink during the test?**

Although for security reasons you cannot open or consume food or drinks during testing, you are encouraged to bring snacks in a book bag on test day. These snacks must be stored under desks or chairs in the testing room. They can be consumed in designated areas during breaks.

**How are SAT scores reported?**

The SAT has three scores, each on the scale of 200-800. Your score includes writing (W 200-800), mathematics (M 200-800), and critical reading (CR 200-800). Two subscores are given for the writing section: a multiple-choice subscore on a scale of 20-80, and an essay subscore on a scale of 2-12.

**What will I be asked to write about in the essay?**

The essay question will ask you to develop a point of view on an issue and support it with examples from your studies and experience. You can answer the question successfully in many different ways. You won't have to have any prior knowledge about the topic to write an effective essay. However, you will have to answer the essay assignment directly.

**Are all SAT questions multiple-choice?**

In addition to multiple-choice questions, the SAT has a 25-minute written essay and 10 student-produced response math questions. The math questions ask you to fill in, or "grid-in," your own answers using a special section of the answer sheet.

**What's the difference between the SAT and Subject Tests?**

The SAT measures what you have learned in school and how well you can apply that knowledge. It assesses how well you analyze and solve problems. SAT scores are used for college admissions purposes because the test predicts college success. The SAT Subject Tests are one-hour, primarily multiple-choice tests in specific subjects. Subject Tests measure knowledge or skills in a particular subject and your ability to apply that knowledge.

**How many times can you take the test?**

You can take the test as many times as you want. Your official score report shows your current test score, in addition to scores for up to six SAT and six Subject Test administrations.

**What do my SAT scores tell college admissions staff members about me?**

Your SAT scores can tell admissions staff members how well prepared you are for college-level academics. The scores also allow colleges to compare your college readiness with other students in a standardized way. That's because all scores are reported on the 200-800 scale. For example, if your scores are roughly 500 on each section, which is the mean (average) score, college admissions staff knows you scored about as well as half of the students who took the test.

The SAT is the best independent, standardized measure of a student's college readiness. It is standardized across all students, schools, and states—providing a common and objective scale for comparison. High school grades are a very useful indicator of how students perform in college, yet there is great variation in grading standards and course rigor within and across high schools.

Remember, too, that the SAT is only one of a number of factors that colleges consider when making admissions decisions. Other factors, like your high school record, essays, recommendations, interviews, and extracurricular activities, also play a role in admissions decisions.

*Source: <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/sat/about/sat/FAQ.html>*

## **What's a Good SAT Score or ACT Score?**

So, you just received your SAT or ACT scores and you're not sure whether you should crack open that '72 sparkling cider or immediately register for the next test date. Well, it all depends on the colleges you are considering. A 23 on the ACT or an 1800 on the SAT may be above average at one university but below average at another. The higher your score, the more options are open to you.

### **The Higher, the Better**

The national average for the new SAT is 1500. For the ACT, it's between 20 and 21. If you are close to these averages you will likely be accepted into a considerable number of colleges and universities (as long as you have decent grades), but may not be considered at more selective schools. Above average SAT/ACT scores will improve your chances of getting into a more selective school.

Scores below an 1100 on the SAT or a 15 on ACT are considered low at just about any four-year college. You can overcome low scores with good grades or an outstanding application. But even if you're accepted by a four-year college, the school may advise or require you to take some remedial courses as a freshman.

Not sure where you stand? Most colleges publish admission data regarding the previous year's freshman class. Check out the range of scores.

### **Room for Improvement**

Unless you pulled in a perfect 2400 or 36, you can always improve your score. Some students are confident that their numbers are high enough to get them into the college of their choice. But unless you're an honorary member of the admissions committee, you never know.

A good SAT score or ACT score can also help you snag additional scholarship money. Even if you have already been accepted to a college, you may want to consider taking the test again (say, in December or January of senior year) for that reason.

*Source: <http://www.princetonreview.com/college/good-sat-score-act-score.aspx>*

### **Need help prepping for the SATs? Check out the following websites:**

[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)- official practice questions and tests  
[www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com)- increase your vocabulary & help the UN World Food Program  
[www.testprepreview.com](http://www.testprepreview.com)  
[www.satpracticetest.us](http://www.satpracticetest.us)  
[www.majortests.com/sat/](http://www.majortests.com/sat/)

There are many more practice sites on line, this is just a sampling.

Application Checklist	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4
<b>Applications</b>				
Request info/application				
Regular application deadline				
Early application deadline				
Safety? Match? Reach?				
<b>Grades</b>				
Request high school transcript sent				
Request midyear grade reports sent				
<b>Test Scores</b>				
SAT® required				
SAT Subject Tests™ required				
Release SAT Subject Test scores				
Send SAT scores				
Send AP® grades				
<b>Letters of Recommendation</b>				
Request recommendations				
Send thank-you notes				
<b>Essays</b>				
Write essays				
Proof essays for spelling and grammar				
Have two people read your essays				
<b>Interviews</b>				
Interview at college				
Alumni interview				
Send thank-you notes to interviewers				
<b>Send and Track Your Application</b>				
Make copies of all application materials				
Apply online				
Include application fee				
Sign application				
Confirm receipt of application materials				
Send supplemental material, if needed				

<b>Financial Aid Forms</b>				
Priority financial aid deadline				
Regular financial aid deadline				
Mail FAFSA				
Mail PROFILE, if needed				
Mail institutional aid form, if needed				
Mail state aid form, if needed				
<b>After You Send Your Application</b>				
Receive letter from office of admissions				
Receive financial aid award letter				
Send deposit				
Good luck!				

College Comparison Worksheet

1.	2.	3.	4.
<b>School and Location</b>			
Public or Private (2- or 4-year)			
Size (student enrollment)			
City/State (distance from home)			
Setting: Urban or Rural- Co-Ed			
<b>Academics</b>			
Student-to-faculty ratio %			
% Classes under 20 students			
% Classes with 50+ students			
% Graduation			
<b>Cost</b>			
Private Tuition and Fees			
Public In-State Tuition and Fees			
Public Out-of-State Tuition and Fees			
Room/Board			
<b>Financial Aid</b>			
Type Financial Aid Package			
\$ Average Financial Aid Package			
\$ Scholarship Package			
\$ Work Study Package			
\$ Other Financial Aid Package			
<b>Scholastic Strength</b>			
Average High School GPA			
Average Entrance Test Scores			
National Ranking			



McCann Tech Guidance Department  
Student Brag Sheet and Recommendation  
(please return to your Guidance Counselor)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print clearly)

1. Activities: List the activities you have participated in, the number of years, and the amount of time per week you spent, and what you have gained or learned from each activity. Consider artistic, athletic, literary, community service, and leadership positions.

2. Which activity was most important to you? Why?

3. What are your proudest accomplishments?

Academic?

Personal?

4. Are there any factors related to your grades that you would like colleges to be aware of?

5. List 5 adjectives that describe something about you as a person.

6. Describe the school accomplishment (major paper, science experiment, shop project) you are most proud of, and tell why you take pride in it.

7. What do you hope to accomplish in college and after? Consider your career and broader goals.

\*please use the back of this paper or another sheet if you need to