

Career Counsellor



Counsellor's Newsletter

As we near the conclusion of yet another successful academic year, our graduating Grade 12 cohort has been met with exceptional university offers from various countries. Regardless of their destination and cultural context, certain skills are universally essential for all students to navigate, thrive, and excel. Drawing from their aspirations, experiences, and profiles, we established guidelines and objectives to guide them toward their goals. Let us have a glimpse of the College Admission Trends, College success strategies and Secrets To College Admissions Success.

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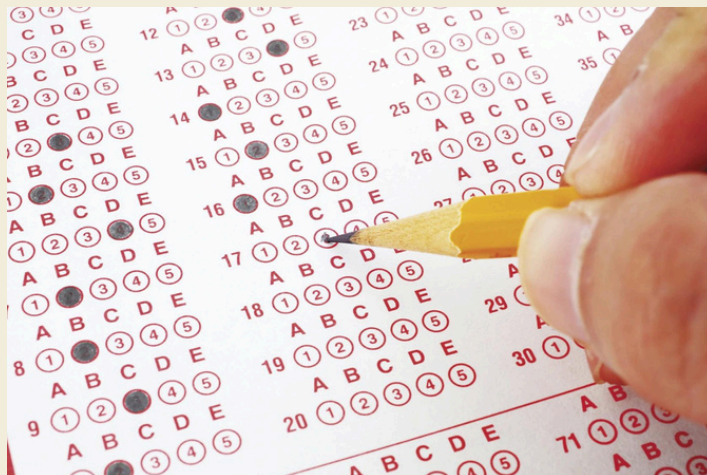
Secrets To College Admissions Success

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College Admissions Trends Shaping Top School's Decisions

Ivy Day 2024, the day when top schools' admissions decisions are released, is a pivotal moment to explore the evolving landscape of college admissions and anticipate future directions. This year's transformations are reshaping college application strategies in profound ways. Let's dive into the latest developments with [Dr. Aviva Legatt](#).

Standard Testing:



<https://www.chronicle.com>

The return to SAT and ACT requirements by institutions such as Dartmouth, Brown and MIT is a sign that many highly selective institutions may go back to requiring standardized tests. In a slight modification to the testing requirement, Yale's test-flexible policy allows students to submit Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate scores in lieu of the standard SAT or ACT. This shift may be in response to a decline in college readiness benchmarks; for instance, ACT exam scores are at their lowest in 30 years, even as GPAs in core subjects rise. This gap highlights a discrepancy between students' perceived readiness and their actual preparedness.

Although one foresees more colleges reinstating standardized testing requirements, there is expected to be the continuation of test-optional and test-blind policies. These policies serve not only to broaden application pools from underrepresented and disadvantaged groups but also as a strategy for financially challenged institutions to attract more applicants.

Many schools adopted test-optional policies during 2020 and 2021 college admissions. This continues to be the case in 2024. In fact, only 4% of Common App member schools require standardized test scores. Prior to the pandemic, during the 2019-20 college admission cycle, 55% of Common App member schools required standardized test scores. Despite the growing test-optional admission trend, some students believe that submitting SAT/ACT scores will give them the competitive edge they need to gain admission to a top school. According to an article by Forbes, however, only half of 2023 Common App applicants reported standardized test scores, as opposed to in 2019-20 when 80% of applicants submitted standardized test scores.

In other testing news, the College Board launched the first digital SAT, introducing a significant shift from its traditional format. This new version is adaptive and adjusts the difficulty level of questions based on the student's responses, a departure from the fixed difficulty level of previous exams. Notably, students report that the math section was more challenging than anticipated, diverging from their experiences with practice exams. Unlike the SAT, which has transitioned to a fully digital format, the ACT continues to offer both digital and traditional paper-and-pencil options. It's advisable for students to undertake diagnostic practice exams for both the SAT and ACT to ascertain which exam aligns better with their abilities.

Given the evolving landscape of testing policies, including recent SAT modifications, students should embrace a two-pronged approach: rigorously prepare for standardized tests while remaining flexible to the possibility of not submitting scores where test-optional policies prevail.

Rethink The Importance Of The College Essay:

Duke University has made significant changes to its admissions process by no longer assigning numerical ratings to applicants' standardized test scores and essays. This adjustment took effect in the current application cycle. Previously, Duke assigned values from one to five for essays and test scores, contributing to a holistic score on a 30-point scale. Now, the point system is applied only to curriculum strength, academics, recommendations, and extracurricular activities.

The move to eliminate numerical scores for essays arises from concerns about the rise in AI-generated submissions and the possibility of essays being ghostwritten. Christoph Guttentag, the dean of undergraduate admissions, noted that although essays play a pivotal role in comprehending an applicant's profile, their reliability as indicators of a student's actual writing skills has diminished.

This adjustment is not a response to the Supreme Court's ruling against considering race in admissions decisions. Nonetheless, essays have frequently been a focal point in discussions about fostering diversity through admissions. It is expected that other institutions may similarly de-emphasize essays, thereby elevating the



<https://summer.harvard.edu>

significance of academic transcripts, the depth of extracurricular activities, and the relevance and demand for the selected major.

On the other hand, College essays are also becoming increasingly significant in the college application process for many universities. College essays, particularly supplemental college essays, help personalize the admissions process. Colleges want to admit diverse, vibrant student bodies. This is why holistic college admissions standards are so important. In some cases, colleges such as Brown, Bowdoin, and the University of Chicago are accepting video submissions in place of certain essays. Stellar test scores and impressive GPAs are important, but with the rise of test-optional college admissions, it is important to take every opportunity to stand out. Review the components of a strong personal statement and focus on writing a sincere, unique college essay. Let your passion and personality shine through!

Apply Early:

The number of early applications (a combination of early decision and early action) has jumped by 1 million, a 60% increase, over the last five years according to Common Application data in a New York Magazine report. In contrast, applications filed during the regular decision period increased by 26% over the same timeframe. This suggests a growing trend among high school seniors to leverage early application options as part of their strategy for college admissions, reflecting the competitive nature of securing admission to top institutions.

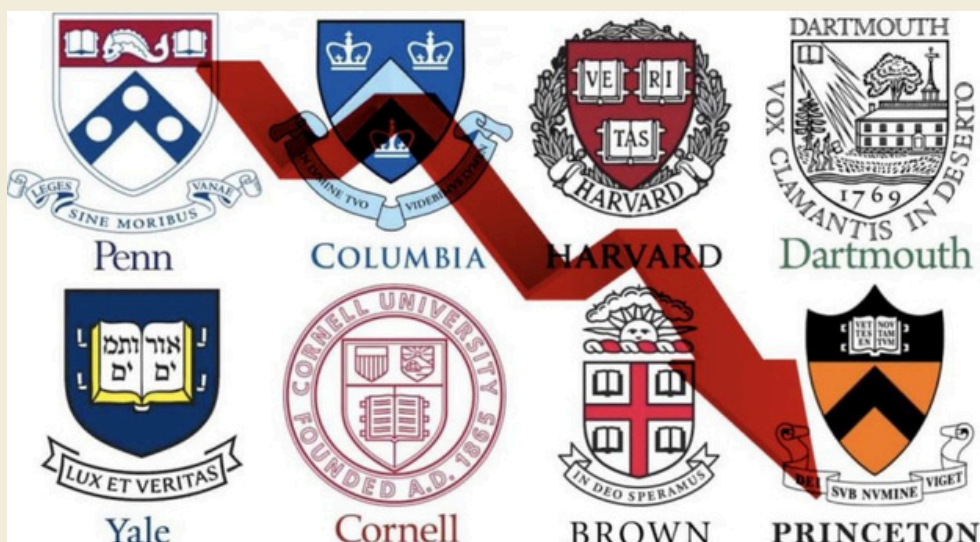


<https://www.collegedata.com>

Record low acceptance rates:

Acceptance rates are at a record low. This can partially be accounted for by the rising trend in test-optional admissions policies. Students who did not test well and would otherwise limit their college applications to “fit” and “safety” schools are applying to more prestigious schools.

So while what colleges are looking for in students largely remains the same, unfortunately, your odds of getting admitted to your dream school have become slimmer, simply due to competition. Check out these Ivy League Acceptance Rates 2023 for more information on how overall acceptance rates are being impacted by 2024 college admission trends.



<https://cvhsnews.org>

Popular Majors become more competitive:

Some of the Most Popular College Majors in 2024 are as follows: Computer Science, Engineering, Biology, Business, and Nursing. These majors are becoming increasingly competitive. In fact, students interested in pursuing one of these majors may have more difficulty being admitted into certain schools.

Students interested in pursuing a popular college major should keep in mind that a college's overall acceptance rate may not be reflective of the college major's acceptance rate. For example, a school with a 40% overall acceptance rate may have a 10% acceptance rate for Nursing students.

Master Your College Admissions Strategy:

As the 2024 college admissions landscape poses its share of complexities, students and families are encouraged to embrace a multifaceted approach tailored to the evolving standards of higher education.



<https://wgntv.com>

From adapting to the reemergence of

standardized testing requirements at esteemed institutions like Dartmouth, Brown, and MIT, to addressing the challenges posed by the digitalization of the SAT and the nuanced evaluation of college essays at Duke, it's clear that flexibility and strategic planning are paramount. Furthermore, the rise in early application submissions highlights the importance of proactivity and informed decision-making in securing a favorable college admission outcome. By fostering a thorough understanding of these trends and deploying an informed application strategy, students can enhance their prospects of achieving their academic and career aspirations in this dynamic admissions environment.

College Success Strategies For Gen-Z

Dr. Aviva Legatt says that success in college demands more than just academic knowledge—it requires a robust set of executive function skills. These skills, which include managing time, planning long-term projects, and regulating emotions, are essential for navigating the complex demands of college life. With more than 60% of Gen-Z reporting an anxiety disorder, per a report from data management firm Harmony Healthcare IT, it is necessary that students be intentional about developing executive function skills that allow them to decrease their anxiety and improve performance. Let's explore the crucial executive function skills every college student should develop, complete with practical strategies to enhance these skills.

Time Management:

Princeton's McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning highlights that effective time management is perhaps the most critical skill for college success. It involves not only keeping track of daily classes and assignments but also managing long-term projects and social engagements. The ability to balance these tasks efficiently can reduce stress and enhance academic performance. A structured daily schedule helps you manage your time effectively, ensuring that you allocate enough time for both academic responsibilities and personal care. Complement this with a longer-term task list that outlines major projects, upcoming exams, and application deadlines. This method keeps you motivated and engaged, with a clear view of upcoming responsibilities and milestones.



<https://dmitcounseling.com>

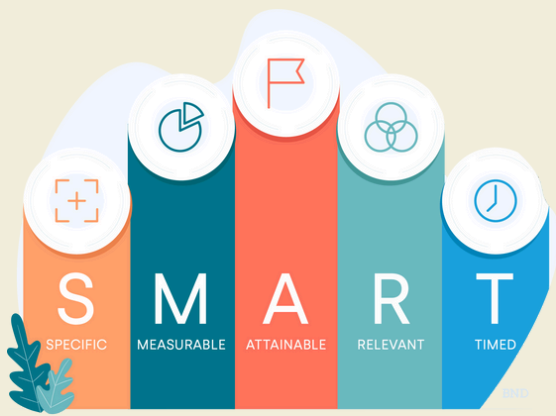
Planning And Prioritization:

College students face myriad tasks each day, from homework assignments to extracurricular activities. Learning to prioritize these tasks based on urgency and importance is crucial, according to best practices from WeWork. This skill ensures that students meet deadlines and allocate their time to projects that require more

focus and effort. For example, use a digital planner to mark critical deadlines and exams at the start of the semester. This will allow you to prioritize study time around these key dates, ensuring you are well prepared without last-minute stress. Likewise, it is essential to schedule downtime, or white space, on your calendar. This time is not for social media scrolling or video gaming; rather, it's for being bored and letting your mind wander. This practice is crucial for creativity and problem-solving. It allows the brain to form connections and come up with new ideas without the pressure of constant input.

Goal Setting:

Setting clear, achievable goals provides a road map for success in college. These goals can range from academic achievements, like maintaining a certain GPA, to personal development objectives, such as learning a new skill or participating in community service. A study by Taylor W. Acee and colleagues investigated how various properties of college students' self-set academic goals relate to their academic achievement. Key findings from the study suggest that students who set more specific academic goals tended to achieve higher GPAs. Specific goals provided clear performance standards and deadlines, aiding in better planning and effort allocation.



<https://www.businessnewsdaily.com>

In addition, goals driven by external pressures, like rewards or punishments, negatively affected students' GPA. This suggests that extrinsic motivators, such as rewarding yourself with leisure time or food, may undermine your intrinsic interest and autonomy, leading to poorer performance.

Self-Control And Emotional Regulation:

College life comes with its ups and downs. The ability to control impulses and manage emotional responses to both successes and setbacks can significantly affect a student's well-being and academic performance. For example, when a student receives a lower grade than expected, they can take the time to process their emotions rather than reacting impulsively. Scheduling a meeting with the professor to discuss how to improve can turn disappointment into a learning opportunity.



<https://www.linkedin.com>

The Journal of Educational Psychology article "A Stitch in Time: Strategic Self-Control in High School and College Students" by Angela L. Duckworth and colleagues, explores the role of self-control in achieving academic success and its broader implications. Overall, the research highlighted that strategic self-control, especially strategies implemented early in the impulse generation process, significantly influences academic success. Students often recognize the utility of these strategies but may not always use them effectively. The findings suggest the importance of teaching and encouraging the use of effective self-control strategies to improve educational outcomes. This research highlights the importance of early intervention in combatting habits that have the potential to diminish our self-control and emotional regulation.

Flexible Thinking:

The ability to adapt to new situations and solve problems as they arise is invaluable in the dynamic college environment. Flexible thinkers can handle unexpected changes, such as shifts in course schedules or group project dynamics, without excessive stress. A Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability study by Kercood et al. investigates the role of cognitive flexibility in the academic and career trajectories of college students, focusing on those with and without attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

The study demonstrated that cognitive flexibility positively predicts academic achievement, particularly in reading, where higher subjective cognitive flexibility leads to better reading skills. It also influences mathematical and writing skills but through objective measures of cognitive flexibility. In addition, there is a significant relationship between cognitive flexibility, especially subjective cognitive flexibility, and career confidence. Students with ADHD who have high cognitive flexibility tend to feel less confident about their career choices compared to those with lower cognitive flexibility. In contrast, non-ADHD students with higher cognitive flexibility feel more confident about their career paths. Enhance your cognitive flexibility by taking time each week to reflect on what's working and what isn't. Self-reflection can help you adjust your strategies, whether it's reshuffling how you prioritize tasks or finding better ways to manage stress. This habit encourages continuous improvement and personal growth.

Use Tools And Resources:

Leverage tools such as digital planners, apps that block distracting websites, or methods like the Pomodoro Technique to enhance focus during study times. The Pomodoro Technique, a popular time management tool, is designed to enhance focus and productivity. The technique uses a timer to break work into intervals, traditionally 25 minutes in length, separated by short breaks, typically 5 minutes. In addition to self-management tools, don't hesitate to seek resources available in high school and colleges such as tutors, counseling centers, and executive function coaches, which can provide additional support to meet academic and personal challenges. Developing strong executive function skills is a dynamic process that extends beyond mastering a set of tasks—it involves cultivating a mindset geared toward continuous improvement and adaptation. For college students, these skills are not just about achieving academic success; they are about setting the foundation for lifelong resilience and achievement. By incorporating these strategies into your daily routine, you'll be well on your way to a fulfilling and successful college experience.



Secrets To College Admissions Success

Navigating the complexities of college admissions can be daunting. As mentors and leaders in empowering youth, we have distilled our experiences into four actionable steps that can serve as a compass for your journey to college acceptance.

Build Your Community With Intention:

Your network isn't just a collection of contacts; it's a community of mentors, peers, and professionals who resonate with your aspirations. Consider Charles Xi, an emerging swim tech entrepreneur. His ambition to create a biometric wearable for swimmers could have remained an unfocused dream



<https://www.linkedin.com>

without the right guidance. By connecting with a professor specializing in thermal fluids at Columbia University, Xi honed his ideas and crafted a patent-worthy design paper. It's crucial to engage with individuals who not only broaden your perspective but also challenge you to refine your goals. Like Xi, you can take action to identify and reach out to potential mentors in your field of interest. Make sure to utilize your LinkedIn account and be proactive in seeking internships or research opportunities that align with your aspirations. Engage and build relationships with others in order to improve your impact and yourself. And remember, when it comes to building relationships, make sure to focus on your ability to give just as much as what you hope to get.

Define Your Impact Through Intellectual Vitality:

Intellectual vitality goes beyond academic prowess; it's the spark of curiosity that drives you to explore and contribute meaningfully. Take Anthony Smith, a student passionate about economics without practical experience. By collaborating with an MIT mathematics lecturer, Smith delved into financial data analysis, learned new statistical software, and translated classroom knowledge into practical skills. Colleges seek students who demonstrate this kind of intellectual initiative. You can replicate this success by creating a substantial research project or founding your own nonprofit or business. Julia Howe did this when she created the Hitting The Wall podcast. Her experiences as an endurance athlete and her participation in an entrepreneur program, prompted her to explore the possibility of taking personal experiences and turning them into a business that could help other athletes. You can seek out programs, courses, and support that match you with experts to undertake significant projects. Document your learning process and outcomes as tangible evidence of your intellectual vitality.

Know Your Audience And Craft Your Narrative Accordingly:

Understanding what colleges value in an applicant is pivotal. Every institution has its unique ethos and set of priorities. Students can spend efforts gaining press and recognition to enhance their impact outside of the classroom and craft their narrative. Further, students can deepen their understanding of colleges by connecting directly with individuals on campus to support their high school initiatives.



<https://www.sender.net>

For example, three of our students with an interest in history got a museum internship at their top-choice colleges, which was very helpful for building their candidacies and sharing a personal vantage point into university life and environment. An important part of preparing for the application process is researching your target colleges extensively. Know their mission statements, department strengths, and cultural nuances. Just as artists adapt to different mediums, students must tailor their applications to resonate with their chosen schools.

Take Meaningful Actions To Showcase Leadership And Initiative:



<https://execleadercoach.com>

Leadership isn't just about titles; it's about the impact of your actions and your ability to inspire change. And there are programs like ours, such as Research Science Institute and NIH's Summer Internship Program, that want to help you make that change. The essence of "doing WIT" is encapsulated by the entrepreneurial spirit of leadership. WIT, standing for Whatever It Takes, is a global nonprofit dedicated to making sure young people have the tools, access, and programs

needed to become entrepreneurs and leaders. The core of the College Admissions X-Factor, which is the strategic framework for Dr. Legatt's organization Ivy Insight, underscores the importance of living out and showcasing your built expertise and exponential impact to match with fitting colleges. Ivy Insight also provides professor research mentorships that enable students to maximize their intellectual vitality ahead of the college application process.

You aren't too young to start engaging in leadership roles within your community, whether by leading a team, organizing events, or launching a venture that addresses a social issue. Tackling real societal issues, pitching solutions to city officials and leaders, and documenting the journey through visuals and words demonstrates the initiative and influence of a true leader.

Tyden Chinowsky did just that by dedicating his time to cleaning up a park area near his favorite beach. What started as a giving back project turned into the non-profit Native Del Mar. For Mike Shi, a collection of poems turned into a novel focused on the teenage mental health journey when Shi published his own book. Remember, sometimes taking small actions can lead to big impact. It's just important to start. And when it comes to taking what you've done and articulating it in your applications, make sure to reflect on how these experiences have shaped your character and problem-solving abilities. Embarking on the path to college requires a blend of introspection, strategic action, and purpose-driven engagement. By building your network, showcasing intellectual vitality, tailoring your narrative to your audience, and demonstrating impactful leadership, you can distinguish yourself as more than a candidate—you become a story worth investing in and remembering. Remember, college admissions officers are not just looking for students; they are looking for future alumni who will contribute to the world and bring further acclaim to their alma mater. So, document your journey, curate your experiences, and when the time comes, present a compelling narrative that's uniquely yours. Also, don't forget that you are the driver in this process. You get to choose the college that is the right fit for you.

Events

NMIMS Day: 12 April 2024

NMIMS faculty and admission team visited our school campus and provided valuable insights into several key schools at NMIMS. The faculty of Pravin Dalal School of Entrepreneurship & Family Business Management, Sarla Anil Modi School of Economics, and Jyoti Dalal School of Liberal Arts discussed the BBA, Family Business Management, BSc Economics, BSc Finance and liberal arts programs.



<https://www.nmims.edu/>

Profile Building Session: 12 April 2024

Profile Building Session was conducted for Grade 9, 10 and 11 students to introduce them to the importance of profile building, profile building activities they can participate in and how to use the summer effectively.



<https://eduquest.org.in>

Grade 12 2024–25 Application Bootcamp: 18 April 2024

Bootcamp session was conducted for Grade 12 2024–25 students to discuss the documents required for applications – Transcript, Resume, Personal Statement, College essays, and Letters of Recommendation. The students were given a detailed timeline for submission of documents and the application deadlines.



<https://www.usnews.com>

Queen Mary University London session on Law and Business: 19 April 2024

The QMUL event featured a captivating case study presented by faculty member Jeevan Hariharan, offering students a glimpse into the dynamic classroom experience at the university. Our visitors provided invaluable insights into the diverse range of programs available, alongside discussing teaching methodologies and entry requirements.



<https://aeo.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/>

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<https://www.facebook.com>

Links for websites

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/avivalegatt/2024/03/28/college-admissions-trends-for-2024/?sh=477f9479245a>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/avivalegatt/2024/04/25/6-college-success-strategies-for-gen-z/?sh=5d6fd7c924bb>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/avivalegatt/2024/04/05/4-secrets-to-college-admissions-success/?sh=20e0bb8d1960>

<https://prepory.com/blog/college-admissions-trends-in-2024/#:~:text=Some%20of%20the%20Most%20Popular,being%20admitted%20into%20certain%20schools.>