



Richard Montgomery High School

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College Under COVID



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COLLEGE IS YOUR GOAL. . .

GRADES

ACTIVITIES

TESTING

SERVICE

LEADERSHIP

COLLEGE
VISITS

ESSAYS

INTERVIEWS

APPLICATIONS

. . .NOW HOW DO YOU GET THERE?

HERE'S WHERE TO START

WHAT COLLEGES ARE LOOKING AT



ACADEMIC NARRATIVE

- ❖ Grades
- ❖ Academic Rigor
- ❖ Test Scores



PERSONAL NARRATIVE

- ❖ Extra-curricular Activities
- ❖ Essays
- ❖ Letters of Recommendation
- ❖ Interviews
- ❖ Application Strategy
- ❖ Other Considerations

2019

**STATE OF
COLLEGE
ADMISSION**

MELISSA CLINEDINST

HOW IMPORTANT IS EVERYTHING, REALLY?



Applications consist of a lot of different moving pieces, some of which are more important than others.

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2017

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
Grades in All Courses	220	74.5	15.0	5.5	5.0
Grades in College Prep Courses	220	73.2	16.8	5.9	4.1
Strength of Curriculum	219	62.1	21.9	8.7	7.3
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	221	45.7	37.1	12.2	5.0
Essay or Writing Sample	220	23.2	33.2	24.1	19.5
Student's Demonstrated Interest	218	16.1	23.9	28.0	32.1
Counselor Recommendation	218	15.1	40.4	26.6	17.9
Teacher Recommendation	219	14.2	40.2	26.5	19.2
Class Rank	220	9.1	29.1	34.1	27.7
Extracurricular Activities	219	6.4	42.9	32.0	18.7
Portfolio	219	6.4	11.9	26.9	54.8
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	219	5.5	18.3	35.2	41.1
Interview	219	5.5	16.4	28.3	49.8
Work	217	4.1	28.6	36.9	30.4
State Graduation Exam Scores	218	2.3	8.7	18.8	70.2
SAT II Scores	216	1.9	5.6	14.8	77.8

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2018–19.





HOW DO COLLEGES EVALUATE STUDENTS?

Each year, colleges build an incoming class that they think will complement their community and meet their institutional goals.



ACADEMICS

GRADES + RIGOR + TEST SCORES

GRADES & ACADEMIC RIGOR



Do I need to
choose a
college major
already?



GPA....how
important is
that number?



What's better?
High grades
or high rigor?



The background of the slide features a soft-focus image of an open book. A hand is visible on the right side, holding a pen over the pages. The lighting is warm and natural, suggesting an indoor setting with light coming from a window. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

STANDARDIZED TESTING

PSAT

SAT[®]



ACT[®]

STANDARDIZED TESTING

achieve
more®

PSAT

SAT®

ACT®

SAT
Subject Tests

STANDARDIZED TESTING

PSAT

SAT



ACT[®]



STANDARDIZED TESTING

ACT

SAT
Subject Tests



What does Test Optional Mean?

- ❖ You do not HAVE to submit your test scores, Students are still invited to do so. (“Test Blind” means that colleges will not consider your scores even if you send them).
- ❖ Test optional does not mean that test scores are not an important part of the process, just that students have a little more control over how their test scores are used.
- ❖ Visit [Fairtest.org](https://www.fairtest.org) to learn more

How did Test Optional Work in 2020?

- ★ **About 50% of applicants overall submitted test scores with their applications in the 2020 cycle.**
- ★ **About 61% of applicants accepted to colleges overall did submit test scores.**

These numbers are NOT causation. But they do tell us that you may want to be strategic about testing in your application because a strong score might give you a slight advantage.

How will Test Optional Work in 2022?

The question to ask:

Does my test score strengthen my application?

(... Hint: the answer might be different for different colleges, so be thoughtful and remember that you are crafting your own narrative for colleges to see).

TONS of students get in to great colleges without submitting test scores.



PERSONAL QUALITIES

ACTIVITIES + ESSAYS + INTERVIEWS + LETTERS OF REC...

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

What activities look good on college applications?

Authenticity

Community
Engagement

Meaning vs.
Resume

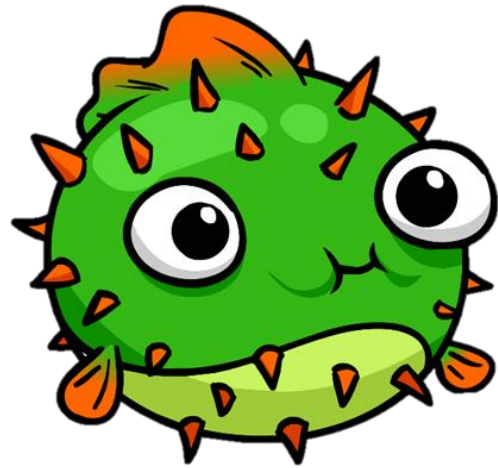
DEPTH vs. BREADTH

WELL-ROUNDED
STUDENTS



DEPTH vs. BREADTH

“SPIKY”
STUDENTS



WELL-ROUNDED
CLASSES





APPLICATION ESSAYS

- ❖ What makes a compelling college essay?
- ❖ When should students start working on their college applications and essays?

COLLEGE INTERVIEWS

A background image showing three people in a meeting or interview setting. A young man on the left is smiling and gesturing with his hands. A woman on the right is also smiling and looking towards him. A man in the background is looking at a laptop. The scene is brightly lit and has a professional, collaborative atmosphere.

Evaluative

- ❖ You are being assessed

Informational

- ❖ An opportunity to learn more

DEMONSTRATED INTEREST

Campus visits
Virtual offerings
Essays
Correspondence
Digital Engagement
Early Decision

...

*Demonstrated Interest =
Likelihood to Enroll*



LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- ❖ What about letters of rec. from teachers, counselors, and other people?
- ❖ Whom should I ask and when should I ask them?

The background features a collage of hands in various colors (orange, blue, green, purple, red, yellow, dark blue) reaching upwards, set against a background of vertical stripes in shades of orange, blue, and yellow. A diagonal white line runs from the top right towards the bottom left, separating the title area from the list.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ First generation to college
- ❖ Under-represented minority
- ❖ Recruited athlete
- ❖ Legacy/Development applicants
- ❖ International students
- ❖ Early Decision applicants

ADMISSIONS ABROAD



- ❖ Admissions factors: Numbers!
- ❖ Course of Study
- ❖ Application process
- ❖ French/English language proficiency

So... if COLLEGE IS YOUR GOAL...

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Your task: Authenticity

- 1) Know yourself.
- 2) Then use that knowledge to seek colleges that are a good fit.
- 3) Then use your knowledge of self AND of the college to write a great, authentic, application.

THANK YOU



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