

Finding the Right Fit,  
Developing the College List,  
and guiding students to college...  
***during a global pandemic!?!?***

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# Agenda

## **Some things remain the same:**

- Reflection helps students to determine their academic, social, and financial fit
- Research helps us determine “reach, target, and likely” colleges for admission

## **What’s new? What’s changed?**

- Testing -- the good, the bad, the ugly
- Curriculum is EVERYTHING
- Early applications, and MORE applications
- Compromised Activities List
- More online resources
- Moving/rebuilding your program online

## **Tips, Trends, Talk Story (Q&A)**

# Finding the “fit” during a pandemic

**Ask students, “What does college look like to YOU?”**

- A good college match happens when students know themselves well.
- Students need to spend time considering the academic, social and financial fit of each college, and determine if it fits them.

**Questions for students to consider:**

- How do you learn best? (class size, college size, structure and course offerings)
- What environment suits you best? (location/setting, distance from home)
- What is the overall cost? (Grad rates, tuition/room & board, scholarships)

**Some students opted to remain closer to home - or delayed entering college during the pandemic. Online learning vs. tuition costs. Campus safety/Covid-19.**

***How do we counsel students during uncertain times?***

**Provide a variety of options and prepare for different scenarios.**

**Offer patience, grace, kindness, reassurance.**

**The challenge? Allowing students to engage at their own pace vs. looming deadlines...**

# Researching Colleges...*Online?*

Colleges have moved many more resources online to serve students and counselors:

- Videos, chats with current students, faculty presentations, open house events, financial aid programming, essay/application advice and more.
- Be sure to also check out campus tv stations and college newspapers.
- More access for students to college fairs and programming.

# Tried and True Resources

**Books:** Rugg's Recommendations, College Finder, Wintergreen College Atlas, Colleges That Change Lives, The Truth About College Admission (workbook too!)

**Blogs and Podcasts:** [gatech.edu/admission-blog/](http://gatech.edu/admission-blog/) [mitadmissions.org/blogs](http://mitadmissions.org/blogs), UC resources

**Websites:** CCGI, College Navigator, Maia Learning, Wiki College Lists (*life-changing!*), Common Data Set, Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), RACC (Regional Admission Counselors) UC/CSU, College Board's Big Future

**In-Person Visits:** Visit local colleges and also tour campuses anytime you travel, attend in-person and virtual college fairs.

**College Admission Officers/Representatives:** They're ready to help and to answer questions -- don't hesitate to reach out with questions.

**Professional Associations and Conferences:** Western Association for College Admission Counseling (WACAC), College Board Conference, NACAC -- More virtual professional development options!

# Research and reflection lead to a balanced college List

A strong college list includes Reach, Target, and Likely colleges that **fit** the student academically, socially, and financially.

## REACH

- 1-3 applications
- Student's academic record is below the profile of accepted students, but (hopefully) other attributes are compelling

## TARGET

- 2-3 applications
- Student's academic record **is at or slightly above** the profile of accepted students

## LIKELY

- 1-3 applications
- Student's academic record is well above last year's profile of accepted students

# Reach, Target, and Likely Colleges

**How do we determine this? Has this changed because of the pandemic?**

Check the admission rates that are on the websites (average testing and gpa).

Check CCGI stats for your school.

## **Case Study:**

Student has a 3.7 gpa and an SAT of 1050/ACT 27 [TABLES](#)

Curriculum? W/UW gpa? Major? Submit testing?

- Seattle University, Northern Arizona University, Chico State, St. Mary's College
- San Diego State, Loyola Marymount, Chapman, UCR
- Pomona College, UCLA, USC, Boston College

# The New Testing Landscape

## **Test Optional vs. Test Blind**

“Test Optional” serves colleges well -- increase in applications and increase in testing averages

## **Should students submit test scores?**

Middle 50% of reported average? Submit!

Report AP scores of 4 or 5 on applications (including the UC's)

## **Without test scores, how are colleges making admission decisions?**

Curriculum is everything...

Increased focus on the transcript and curricular choices



# The new testing landscape

## Should students take standardized tests?

- Generally yes. They can choose later whether or not to submit their scores.
- Offer resources for a Practice ACT and Practice SAT and provide the concordance table for comparison. TABLES

Whether we like them or not -- standardized tests are part of the educational landscape: PSAT, AP exams, college placement exams, LSAT, GRE, GMAT, NCLEX, licensure exams, etc.

# Building/Rebuilding your program

Begin with the end in mind...

What skills should a student be building?

What should they be able to do?

When do you begin? 9-12 grade programming.

**What programs are helpful? Virtual vs. in-person programming -- what works best? Survey your community.**

College Fairs, Financial Aid Programs, Case Study Events, Application/Essay Workshops, Practice SAT/ACT, Recommendation Writing Workshops for Faculty, Programming for First Gen Students, Going out-of-state Presentations, Parent Coffees, Student Book Clubs, etc.

# Current trends in college admission that can impact admission decisions:

- Early application plans can have an impact on admission decisions and financial aid -- especially during the pandemic. Colleges with Early Decision plans are filling a larger portion of the class with ED applicants.
- More applications = challenge in predicting yield = increased use of demonstrated interest and/or the waitlist option.
- Changes in reporting discipline on Common Application.
- Colleges are concerned about gaps in learning during online schooling.
- Activities have changed -- how did students spend their time during the pandemic?
- Increased interest in engineering, business and all things STEM – colleges need humanities majors too!



Questions?

Thoughts?

Ideas?

Insights?