

# LWS College Application Guide



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*To be used in conjunction with the LWS College Application Program*

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## Introduction

You are about to enter the wonderful world of the college process! The adventure that you are about to undertake is a year-long one, full of test-taking, application writing, essay writing, and stress. The junior year is a great time to start this odyssey; you are enthusiastic, open-minded, and full of good energy. Over the next year, we need to keep this momentum going. You are in charge of the path that you will take. With the help of your parents and me, you will make lots of decisions. None of these decisions is irreversible, but the more that you know about yourself and your desires for the future, the better those decisions can be. Your parents and I will spend a lot of time with you, trying to ask you pertinent questions that will lead you toward the ultimate goal: a choice of colleges for you, all of which excite you. As the college counselor, I am here to assist you as you go through the process. You must take responsibility for your end of the process, but I will help guide you. After all, we are talking about your future, and this next year provides you with ample opportunity to decide on your own course.

While the reality of the college process is that the schools will carefully consider your grades and your test scores, our job is to give them a total picture of the talented person that you are. In order to do so, you want to submit an essay that reflects your interests and your ability to write clearly, as well as recommendations from your teachers so that the college will see you as a complete student and not just a set of numbers. In addition, I will send in a recommendation that addresses all of your activities: academic, athletic, and extracurricular. In order for me to write the most effective recommendation, I will need you to fill out the student survey located on TCCi. Your careful consideration of those questions will allow me to represent you in the most honest and complimentary light. This package of information, along with any supplemental athletic or artistic material that will help separate you from the crowd, is vital as we try to present the most complete package to your chosen colleges.

There's a lot of important work to accomplish along the way: writing applications, mailing transcripts, processing standardized tests, etc. While all that must be done, there's good, important, personal work for you to accomplish, too. You and I will work out which colleges and universities to investigate, what your chances of admission are, and how best to present your gifts to the colleges and universities to which you are applying. In the process of this good work, you can learn to trust yourself, to appreciate the best in yourself, to reflect on your past, and to anticipate your future. Most importantly, ***you will make choices for yourself.***

In order to achieve positive results in your college process, you must be willing to work hard and to take responsibility for your own work. You must investigate colleges, and you must investigate yourself. In the end, you cannot control the colleges' admissions decisions. While at times, it is tempting to lapse into a sense of helplessness, do not allow yourself to give in to that urge. After all, there are more colleges out there that want you than you can believe. You can decide which colleges you want to apply to, and you can set yourself up for good choices among fine colleges that will accept you. But

first, commit yourself to two necessary prerequisites: have a sense of perspective and have a sense of humor.

**PERSPECTIVE**: While choosing a college is an important decision and a great privilege, it is not likely to be the single most important choice you make in your lifetime. Nor is it irrevocable. In choosing an undergraduate institution, you are trying to maximize your personal and academic potential, to give yourself the opportunity to grow and change, and to broaden your future life. Many fine colleges will serve this purpose superbly!

**A SENSE OF HUMOR**: When college planning becomes dreary and laborious, you are doing something wrong. Step back, survey your limitless options, pat yourself on the back, and relax! Talk to a friend, your parents, me, or a pint of Ben and Jerry's. The process is finite. You are investing in your future. You are awesome!

There are more than 3000 accredited colleges in the U.S. There are a number of very fine colleges in Canada and the United Kingdom, as well. The variety among these colleges and universities is astounding. Given the plethora (SAT word – look it up ☺) of colleges and the impressive level of talent in your class, I can say confidently that we can find a great school for you.

What about the competition? Less than one percent of the colleges in the country admits fewer than 50% of its applicants. As you might expect, no matter how great you are, it's tough to get into the "elite" schools. So, it's important to remember a number of things. You need to apply to schools with a variety of acceptance rates. Just because you may not get into Harvard, it does not mean that you have to attend the local community college. There is a wide range of schools for all students and all interests. Our task is to find colleges that are "foundations" and "targets" for your list so that you have choices – whether or not you get into your "reaches." The truth that many people forget is that the quality of education available at College X is not necessarily proportional to the difficulty of getting into College X. In other words, just because it's easy to get in doesn't mean you can't get a great education there. And, just because it's tough as nails to get in doesn't mean you can't get a substandard education there. You need to think about what's right for you.

Be your own best advocate. The college process can be unfair, so give yourself options. Never believe that you cannot get in anywhere. Keep an open mind, and check out the possibilities. You will never know what's out there until you ask around and look.

One final note. . .your junior and senior grades are important in the process. Colleges will look carefully at the grades from your junior year and the first semester of your senior year. In addition, I will send a final transcript to the college at which you matriculate. So, keep up the good, hard work that has gotten you this far. **Most importantly**, the process of learning is our main goal at LWS. So, focus on working hard and learning well, and the rest will take care of itself.

## **The Year Ahead**

### **JANUARY (Junior Year)**

- Start researching colleges.
- Concentrate on your second semester grades!

### **FEBRUARY (Junior Year)**

- Parents' Weekend Information Session
- Set up an appointment with me
- All foreign travelers attend weekly college meetings
- Start talking to seniors about the college process.
- Keep working hard in your classes, and keep researching colleges.

### **MARCH (Junior Year)**

- Maintain a positive attitude about your school work!
- Foreign Travel juniors take the SAT.
- Skiers/Snowboarders must register for the May SAT before Spring Break.
- All juniors (and any interested sophomores) registering for the June SAT Subject Tests must do so before Spring Break.

### **APRIL (Junior Year)**

- Enjoy foreign trip. Think about your learning experience – good essay material!
- Skiers – start looking at books in the library! Do some research. Attend college meetings.

### **MAY (Junior Year)**

- Skiers take the SAT at the high school. Don't forget your ID, pencils, and calculator!
- Study hard for exams. End the year on a good academic note.

### **JUNE – AUGUST (before Senior Year)**

- Take SAT Subject Tests at SSHS or at your local high school. Don't forget your ID, pencils, and calculator.
- Take ACT at SSHS or your local high school. Don't forget your ID, pencils, and calculator
- Visit colleges!

### **SEPTEMBER (Senior Year)**

- Set up your individual senior conferences with me.
- Crucial time for skiers – the sooner you start, the less work you have to do when your life gets crazy!!!
- Register for the October SAT's. Check website for registration deadline.
- Register for the October ACT's. Check website for registration deadline.
- Register for the November SAT's. Check website for registration deadline.
- **Students applying early should submit a Secondary School Report to me and should ask teachers for recommendations.**
- Start filling out PROFILE forms for financial aid, if necessary.

### **OCTOBER (Senior Year)**

- Any students who want to apply early should have submitted a Secondary School Report to me and asked teachers to write recommendations. **We need a month's notice to make your application deadline.**
- Second individual conference – determine final college list
- Prepare early decision/action and rolling applications.
- Begin to submit Secondary School Reports and ask teachers for recommendations.
- SAT administration at LWS and ACT at the high school. Remember your pencils, ID, calculators, and admission ticket.
- Call for applications, get them on-line, or go to the common app website ([www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)).
- **Check all the requirements for admissions.** If you need additional standardized tests, sign up for the December or January dates. See the list of dates in the Standardized Test section.
- Check on **ALL** deadlines for applications and financial aid. **DON'T BE CAUGHT OFF-GUARD!!**

### **NOVEMBER (Senior Year)**

- Individual student conferences as needed
- November 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> – Early Decision/Action deadlines
- Submit Secondary School Reports to me.
- Ask teachers to write recommendations.
- Register for December SAT. Check website for registration deadline.
- Register for December ACT's. Check website for registration deadline.

### **DECEMBER (Senior Year)**

- Individual student conferences as needed
- SAT administration at SSHS
- ACT administration at SSHS
- Registration for January SAT's before you leave for break.
- Give teacher recommendation forms and stamped envelopes to teachers. Teachers need **at least** one month's notice to write your recommendations.
- Give Secondary School Reports to me, or have me sign the appropriate area of your application. I need one month to assemble your materials and write your recommendations.
- **Take financial aid materials home** with you so that you can review them with your parents and fill in the appropriate information.
- **Call me with all results of early applications.**
- **HOLIDAY BREAK! FINALIZE ALL APPLICATIONS!**

### **JANUARY (Senior Year)**

- Send in applications.
- File financial aid forms: FAFSA and institutional forms.
- January 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>: most regular decision applications are due by these dates!
- January SAT – last chance

### **FEBRUARY (Senior Year)**

- Send in **all** applications.
- The great wait begins. Keep me informed of all developments.

### **MARCH (Senior Year)**

- The great wait continues.

### **APRIL (Senior Year)**

- Decisions arrive from colleges. Let me know what happens.
- **Foreign Travelers** – remember that you may not have heard from all of your colleges by the time you leave on foreign trip. You should have a plan set up with your parents so that they can send your information in **on time** because you will still be traveling when the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline arrives. Be clear about your decision or how and when you plan to communicate with them. They will be unable to reach you!

### **MAY (Senior Year)**

- May 1<sup>st</sup> – Candidates' reply date – all students should make a deposit at **one** college by this date.

### **JUNE (Senior Year)**

- Graduation! Congratulations!

## THE GOALS OF THE COLLEGE OFFICE

My primary goal is to help you devote your time and energy to researching and identifying a *range* of colleges suited to your needs and abilities. There is not one single college that is the “only” one for you. A number of colleges will be wonderful matches for you, so your goal is to find which *group* of colleges will help you meet your goals and maximize your options.

You should have a final list of colleges by the end of October, and your list must include colleges in all ranges of selectivity. You should apply to colleges that are “reach” schools (where your competition for admission will be fierce), “target” schools (where your credentials will be similar to those of most other candidates), and “foundation” schools (where your credentials are stronger than those of most applicants and where acceptance rates exceed 50%). I recommend that you apply to a minimum of six schools (2 reaches, 2 targets, and 2 foundation).

Remember, a big state school will most likely place you on a chart that determines whether your SAT or ACT scores and your grades meet their requirements. Therefore, you are more likely to be a number or a statistic to them. A smaller college will have a more personal admissions process during which they will consider all of your wonderful attributes. In addition, smaller schools can often offer the smaller classes and the more personal atmosphere under which you have thrived here. So, look at a wide variety of schools and consider your areas of interest. After all, you are a unique individual, so it does not make sense to apply to College X just because “everyone” from LWS does. For example, Colorado is a wonderful place with a variety of terrific opportunities for outdoor experiences. There are, however, many other great places in the U.S. to explore. Before you limit your options by declaring that you would never consider leaving Colorado and that the East Coast is populated *solely* by pretentious, preppy jerks, look at all your options and visit a variety of places if you are able. After all, a well-informed geographical decision helps you find a great school for you.

### **Over the Next Year, I Will . . .**

1. Get to know you well enough to be able to advise you about colleges and programs that might suit you. More to the point, I will work with you to find your own list of possible colleges.
2. Write your counselor's recommendation. Present your Secondary School Report, your transcript, our school profile, and my counselor's recommendation to the colleges.
3. Act as your advocate.
4. Keep you informed of standardized test dates, upcoming college visits on campus, and important deadlines.
5. Read and critique your college essays.
6. Communicate with your parents about your progress throughout the college process and seek their help.

### **Over the Next Year, I Will Not . . .**

1. Hold your hand. This is the time to prove that you are ready for the independence and responsibilities of college. Take full advantage!
2. Chase you down for appointments. Instead, listen to the announcements, read the newsletter, and check your mailbox and e-mail.
3. Do for you what you can do for yourself.

### **Over the Next Year, You Will . . .**

1. Believe in yourself.
2. Engage in thoughtful, honest reflection on and analysis of your aspirations, hopes, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. Apply this knowledge of yourself to your advantage in the search, application, and decision process.
3. Do your best academic work throughout your entire junior and senior years.
4. Do the research it takes to find and apply to a variety of colleges you'd be happy to attend.
5. **Take control of the process rather than be dragged or coerced through it.**
6. **Memorize your social security number for standardized tests and applications.**
7. Fill out applications with care. Write the required essays with thought and honesty.
8. Be aware of all deadlines and other calendar events without my needing to remind you constantly.
9. Keep me informed as your interests and priorities change.
10. Talk to me. Ask me questions. Tell me what you're thinking. Let me know when you need help.

### **Over the Next Year, You Will Not . . .**

1. **Demand that your teachers write you a recommendation. Respect the teacher's workload and his or her right to refuse, especially if you are asking the teacher too close to the deadline.**
2. Remove any college material from the library or my office without informing me. These materials are there to help everyone, so they need to be available for everyone's use.

In sum, the first responsibility for applying to your colleges is yours. Delaying or avoiding will only make things worse.

## Pitfalls to Avoid

Many students fall into the following pits, which only makes the process harder than it needs to be. Try your best to anticipate and avoid these troubles. If you need some help, come see me:

1. **You vs. Your Parents.** Some of the best decisions are made in families in which there is plenty of difference in opinions. The trick is to be sure that, if at all possible, you and your parents put your ideas about college on the table. That way, your differences and disagreements will be out in the open, and you won't be second guessing each other.

2. **Procrastination.** The work in the college process, from calling for an appointment to filling out applications, seems intimidating before you get started. In fact, none of this is all that tricky, but you can't begin to relax until you begin to work. Let me help you. I know a lot about procrastination (I have about 37 years of personal experience!!). I can make it easier for you by helping you break up the jobs into manageable parts. As you accomplish each small step in the process and check it off your list, you will find it much easier to take another step instead of letting the college process pollute other parts of your life.

3. **Disorganization.** No question about it – you will be dealing with a number of variables in this process. So, you need a failsafe system for organizing your college materials and notes. Bring your college binder with you when you come for meetings. Make friends with the three-hole punch. Keep a current to-do list in the front and an envelope with your applications in the front and/or back pockets. Again, you will be more relaxed during the college process if you know where your materials are and what your deadlines are.

## How to Help Your Classmates

Try not to get so busy that you forget to play and relax. Talk to your classmates, but more important, listen to them. Ask good questions about your classmates' thinking. Can you imagine a particular person in an urban setting? Has your classmate really explored a college, or is he or she stuck on a name? Is your classmate letting his or her family expectations cloud the process? Have you visited another campus someone in the class might like? Most of all, honor each other's opinions. Some of your classmates will be crazy about one college while others will not like it at all, and it can be hard to hear someone trampling a college you are excited about. So, be sensitive to those around you.

## The Beginning of the Process . . . January – March

In the spring, you will meet with me at least one time. The preliminary meeting will consist of a session of getting to know one another and talking about goals. Before that session, you must complete the questionnaire that addresses your strengths and weaknesses, your goals, your ideas about college, and your thoughts about the college process. This information will help us have a more productive session. The questionnaire can be found at TCCi.

After the first session, you will do some research so that you can come up with a working list of colleges. Once you have developed that working list, you will enter it on TCCi so that we can discuss the list, make sure it is balanced with reaches, targets, and foundations, and start thinking about setting up your college visits for the summer. This component of the process is essential as it gets you started on the right foot and sets you up for an easier, more organized senior fall!!

### A List to Help You Through Summer

1. VISIT COLLEGES! Call the colleges. Find out what their tour schedules are, and sign up for an interview. Find out if the colleges are offering information sessions before and after the tours. Find out if your parents can stop by the financial aid office while you are interviewing. After you have discerned the critical data from your colleges, sit down with your parents and plan an itinerary for your summer visits. Then, travel and enjoy!
2. Call, write, or e-mail admissions offices for information. Ask them for a course catalogue, a view book (pretty pictures!), an application, and financial aid information. If you're interested in a particular academic program or a particular activity, ask for specific information on it. Talk to coaches, if applicable. If you're interested in seeing a video of campus, ask if one is available.
3. Get on-line! All colleges have web sites, and you can glean a lot of quick information just by visiting them on the Internet. TCCi has links to all colleges, and it has a search feature.
4. Take notes on colleges you are visiting and researching (otherwise, you will not be able to keep them all straight in your mind).
5. Continually revise your "Working list" of 10-15 colleges as you read, research, and visit.
6. Be prepared for the first day of school. Besides shuffling off to classes on that first day of school, you need to chat with me. And, the first thing I am going to want to know is: what's on your college list!

## Desert Week

Summer is the best time to visit colleges. You have more time to spend on the campus, and the people that you talk to are not caught up in the flurry of school activity. Trying to squeeze your college visits into Desert Week is neither practical nor timely. Please use the summer as your opportunity to investigate colleges so that you can make informed, well-considered choices. If you have **further** exploration to do, you may visit colleges under the following conditions. (1) You must have already visited colleges during the summer. (2) You must make **at least** three appointments to tour and/or interview at colleges in which you are genuinely interested. (3) Your parents must contact me by phone, e-mail, letter, or fax to support your plans. (4) You must have your plans made by the middle of September. (5) If you return to campus during Desert Week, you will participate in community service activities.

## Skiers and Boarders

As we all know, you have a crazy schedule exactly at the time that most of the college process is in full swing. Therefore, the work that you do during the spring, summer, and fall is *critical* to successful completion of this process. Even if you are going to be skiing full-time for the next five years, we still want to get you into the college of your choice. Once you get in, you can then defer your entrance to the college for as many years as the college will allow. If they are hesitant about extending your deferment, you can always ask them to keep your admissions folder on file so that you can easily apply at a later date. You can also attend college for a quarter or semester and then take time off. Trying to apply once you are two, three, four years out of school is harder for you to arrange. So, the bottom line is to get your applications in during your senior year and make your decision when the time comes.

You deserve the best options that are available to you when it comes to college. Therefore, carefully following all of the steps of the process through the spring, summer, and fall will allow you to be excited about both the academic and the athletic opportunities at the college of your choice. You will want to contact the coaches. They can be instrumental in helping you secure a place at the college of your choice. Look at your options; research the colleges carefully; and apply before you spend three months of the winter winning races and competitions throughout Europe and the U.S.! In order for me to be the best advocate for you, I need to know about your many accomplishments. Come brag about yourself!! In addition, we will want to put together a resume with pictures to send to the colleges so that they can “ooh and ah” over your accomplishments as well.

The key to success in this process is organization, and that is especially true for competitive athletes. Organization includes seeing colleges and having interviews during the summer, writing your essay early, and taking standardized tests when it is most convenient. **Because many of the standardized test dates are in the winter, you need to take all the available opportunities during the spring and fall. Please make sure that you see me about registering for the appropriate tests.**

## Making a College List

The existence of more than 3500 colleges virtually guarantees your ability to choose a college to attend. But this also means that you must choose where to apply. For some students, trying to choose among so many options can seem daunting or confusing at first. Here's some help for where to start.

Before we begin, however, it's important to help yourself by having a positive attitude about all this. There are **many** fine colleges in every nook and cranny of this country. There is **no** reason for fear or discouragement. There are **many** reasons to be genuinely excited about this process.

Please fill out the student questionnaire using the following guidelines.

**STEP ONE:** Ask yourself if you have a vision of what the "perfect" college would be. If you do, write down a description of that ideal place. You may or may not find it in your college search, but let's start with your ideal vision – because that will tell you what's most important to you about picking a college.

If you do not have a picture of "the ideal college," but you know there are some things you are sure you want in a college ("I have to be in a big city." "My college has to have marine biology." "I want a strong art program.") make a list of those criteria. It doesn't matter whether you make a long or a short list. It does matter that these things on your list are the things you really want.

**STEP TWO:** Are there any specific colleges or universities you already know you are interested in? If there are, write them down, and write down your reasons for being interested in those schools. Can I guarantee that you will get into those schools? No, I can't, but it's important to know what you're thinking about. I do not intend to squash your dreams, but I will help you build a realistic list of colleges.

**STEP THREE:** This will depend on your circumstances, but if at all possible, I urge you to ask your parents or other relatives if they have any specific expectations about your college choices. Do your parents want you to apply to their alma maters? Do they have geographic restrictions? Do they have financial concerns? Do they have any other ideas? It's not a bad idea to hear from your parents about the kind of college they think you would like. In fact, you might be surprised by how helpful your parents can be! Write down any relevant points that evolve from your family discussions. After asking your family for input, ask your friends if they have any helpful ideas about the kind of college you would like.

**STEP FOUR:** Primary general criteria. Ask yourself the following questions about the colleges you might consider.

A. Location: City, suburb, rural?

B. Geography: West coast, northwest, west, east coast, Canada?

C. Size: Large, medium, or small? What do those sizes mean to you? Remember, Whiteman is a TINY school. Even small colleges have a couple of THOUSAND students. If you liked the class sizes here, be wary of schools in which your entire freshman year will consist of classes of 100-500 students!

STEP FIVE: Based on your responses to steps 1-4, open a college book like *Fiske*, *Barron's*, the *Insider's Guide* and **read, read, read** descriptions of colleges. When you come across a school that sounds good to you, give it the following 30-point review. (Not all the following 30 points may be important to you, so just concentrate on the points that are.)

1. Academic program: Does the college offer the program(s) you are interested in?
2. Quality of program: Is the college known for a particular program? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program(s) you are interested in? Some of this information can be found in *Rugg's Recommendations* (There are copies in my office and in the library).
3. Selectivity: Is the college most competitive, highly competitive, very competitive, less competitive, or non-competitive?
4. Chances of Admission: Be realistic. What are your chances of getting in? Is this a "reach," a "target," or a "foundation" school for you?
5. Difficulty: Will the work be a challenge for you? Too advanced, or too easy? Is it a grind school? Or a party school?
6. Costs: What is the cost, including tuition, fees, room and board, books, transportation, and pocket money?
7. Financial aid: Does the school offer merit-based aid or is all financial aid based on need? Does the school negotiate its financial aid offer? What percentage of the student body is on financial aid?
8. Commuters vs. Residents: Do most students commute from within town, or do most students live on campus?
9. Living Conditions: Is campus housing available and guaranteed for all four years? Are the dorms co-ed? Are there single sex dorms? Are alternative housing arrangements available?
10. Location: Is the school close to home or clear across the country? Could you easily go home for a weekend? How about Thanksgiving break?

11. Campus safety: Are the dorms secure? Does the college offer escort service at night? Are there police phones on campus?
12. Location: Is the campus in a rural, suburban, or urban setting? Is it a college town? Does it have a “Campus feel” or is it a bunch of buildings on busy city streets?
13. School size: Is the school small (2,000 students), medium (4,000-6,000) or large (10,000+)?
14. Geographical Diversity: Is the college a regional one, attracting students from the same state or region? Or does the school attract students from all over the U.S. and the world?
15. Ethnic Diversity: What percentage of the students are from minority groups?
16. Other students: What are the students like? Will you fit in?
17. Faculty: Are most classes taught by professors or teaching assistants?
18. Curriculum: Are there general requirements for all students? How much freedom do you have in choosing what courses you can take to meet academic requirements?
19. Advanced Placement: Does the school accept AP credits? For what score?
20. Honors Program: Are there honors programs available? Who is eligible?
21. Study Abroad: Does the school offer a study abroad program?
22. Graduation Rates: What percentage of students graduate? How long does it usually take for most students to graduate?
23. Graduate School: What percentage of graduates go on to graduate school immediately after graduation?
24. Placement: How many graduates go right into the market place? Is there a job placement office?
25. Library: How many books does the library have? Is it computerized? Is the campus linked into a larger network?
26. Facilities: Are there adequate sports and recreational facilities?
27. Athletic Programs: Does the school offer either the intercollegiate or intramural sports you want?

- 28. Computers: Are computers required of freshmen? Are there adequate computer facilities on campus? Are the dorms wired?
- 29. Socialization: Are there fraternities and sororities? Are there interesting clubs and activities?
- 30. Internships: Are there opportunities for hands-on experience while you are in college? Do any of these pay a salary or provide a stipend?

Keep reading and asking yourself questions until you have a list of roughly 10-15 colleges that you are interested in. Make sure you have a handful of colleges in each category: reach, target, and foundation. Then, start VISITING! Take a tour. Have an interview. Grab a soda at the student union. Remember: the one thing that students repeatedly tell me made a difference for them in the college decision process was VISITING the schools. Get on campus. Get a gut feeling. Come back and tell me what you saw and felt.

## College Possibilities

A "Working List"

**Reaches:**


**Targets:**


**Foundations:**


## 10 Questions to Evaluate Your College Preferences

1. Why do you want an education? Why are you going to college?
2. What satisfaction and frustrations do you expect to encounter in college? What are you looking forward to? What worries you the most? What is the overriding consideration in your choice of college?
3. How do you want to grow and change in the next few years? What kind of environment would stimulate or inhibit your growth?
4. Which interests do you want to pursue in college? Do your interests require any special facilities, programs, or opportunities? Consider ALL your interests: field of study, activities, community, and cultural opportunities. Are you most interested in career preparation? Technical training? General knowledge? Skills of critical thinking?
5. What degree of academic challenge is best for you? What balance of study, activities, and social life suits you best?
6. How would you feel about going to a college in which you were rarely told what to do? How much structure and direction do you need? Be honest and think carefully about this one!
7. How would you enjoy living in a different part of the country? How often do you want to be able to go home? What kind of change in your lifestyle and perspective might be exciting?
8. What surroundings are essential to your well being? Are there certain places, activities, landscapes, climates, or paces of life which make you happy? Do you prefer a fast-paced environment in which something is happening all the time? Or do you want an organized environment in which you can join a wide variety of planned activities? Or do you prefer a serene and relaxed environment in which you can go your own way?
9. Would you prefer to be with people who share your viewpoints and lifestyles or those who challenge and make you question your values?
10. How free do you feel to make your own college decisions? Do you and your parents agree about your plans for college? How important to you are the opinions of your parents, teachers, college counselor, and friends? Would you consider going to a great place that a lot of people don't know about?

## Getting and Giving Information

### SAMPLE LETTER ASKING FOR INFORMATION AND/OR AN APPOINTMENT

Letters to Admissions Directors should be brief, concise, and specific. The following letter is a good example.

Your mailing address  
e-mail address

Date

Director of Admissions  
\_\_\_\_\_ College (or University)  
City, State Zip Code

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am a senior (junior) at The Lowell Whiteman School in Steamboat Springs, CO. I will be graduating in June, \_\_\_\_\_.

Please send me a copy of your college catalogue, application for admission, and any other brochures or information that you feel would be helpful to me. (If you know about specific programs (academic, athletic, or other) that you know you are interested in, be specific here) My interest is in the field of \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,  
(Put your signature in this space)

Your name (typed)

Note: If you wish to make an appointment with the Admissions Director and to take a tour of the campus, the following paragraph could be included:

I plan to visit your campus on (date). I would appreciate the opportunity to tour the campus and talk with one of your admissions officers. Would you please confirm this date and notify me of a convenient time to visit your office.

Note: You can also request information by phone or by one of the e-mail services.

Note: **If you are a boarding student**, a brief letter or e-mail to the admissions office when school starts in the fall will inform them of the best address at which to reach you during the school year.

## SAMPLE LETTER INTRODUCING YOURSELF TO A COACH

Letters to coaches should be brief but informative. In a concise manner, you want to provide the coach with as much data as possible. Include facts: what your statistics are, what awards you've won, what places you've come in, what your coaches' names are, what camps you attend in the summer, etc. We suggest attaching an "athletic resume" to your letter.

A good time to write coaches is at the end of your junior year, particularly if you are going to a summer camp. Coaches typically attend camps to scout out possible recruits.

The following letter is a good example of how to introduce yourself to a coach:

Your mailing address

Your e-mail address

Date

Coach's name

College or University

Street Address

City, State zip code

Dear Coach \_\_\_\_\_:

I am a senior (junior) at The Lowell Whiteman School in Steamboat Springs, CO, and I am an alpine skier with the Steamboat Springs Winter Sports Club. (or the U.S. Ski team, etc.) I am very interested in (name of college or university), and if I am fortunate enough to be admitted to the school, I would love to ski on your team.

During the 2006 - 2007 season, I went to the Junior Olympics and placed first in downhill and third in slalom. (Fill in all wonderful things here.)

This summer, I will be attending the summer camp at Mt. Hood from July 17-25, and if you will be visiting the camp, I would like the opportunity to introduce myself to you. I will also be visiting (name of coach's college or university) in August, and I will call to see if you are in your office at that point in the summer. In the meantime, please feel free to contact me or to call my coach (give coach's phone number).

Thanks, and I hope to meet or talk to you sometime soon.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Type your name

## SAMPLE ATHLETIC RESUME

Peter Sampras  
42605 RCR 36  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487  
(970) 879-1350  
samprasp@whiteman.edu

- Personal: Born 1/27/70  
Height 6' 0"  
Weight 180 lbs.  
S. S. number 123-45-6789
- Education: The Lowell Whiteman School (a private, coeducational boarding and day high school)  
42605 RCR 36  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487  
(970) 879-1350
- Grades A's and B's; Dean's List 3 semesters
- SAT I Verbal 580; Math: 600
- SAT II Writing: 540; Math IC: 590; Chemistry: 610
- Athletics: Varsity Tennis (Steamboat Springs High School)  
Grades 9 to present  
Played first singles since grade 9  
Most Valuable Player in 1999 (grade 11)  
All-state in 1998 and 1999 (grades 10-11)  
Team Captain 1999 and 2000 (grades 11-12)
- Extracurricular: Tennis  
United States Tennis Association/ Western States Section Rankings:  
9<sup>th</sup> Boys 14 and under in 1997 (grade 9)  
12<sup>th</sup> Boys 16 and under in 1998 (grade 10)  
4<sup>th</sup> Boys 18 and under in 1999 (grade 11)
- References: John Doe, Steamboat Springs Boys' Varsity Tennis Coach  
(970) 879-2000 ext. 21  
Meg Morse, The Lowell Whiteman School College Counselor  
(970) 879-1350 ext. 23

## Standardized Testing for Juniors and Seniors

### SAT Dates in 2006/2007/2008

October 14, 2006: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
November 4, 2006: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
December 2, 2006: SAT and SAT subject Tests  
January 27, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
March 10, 2007: SAT only  
May 5, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
June 2, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
October 6, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
November 3, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
December 1, 2007: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
January 26, 2008: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
March 1, 2008: SAT only  
May 3, 2008: SAT and SAT Subject Tests  
June 7, 2008: SAT and SAT Subject Tests

### ACT Dates in 2006/2007/2008

October 28, 2006: ACT  
December 9, 2006: ACT  
February 10, 2007: ACT  
April 14, 2007: ACT  
June 9, 2007: ACT  
October 27, 2007: ACT  
December 8, 2007: ACT  
February 9, 2008: ACT  
April 12, 2008: ACT  
June 14, 2008: ACT

\*I suggest that students take the SAT during March or May and the ACT during June of their junior year. Their senior year, they should retake one or both of the tests depending on their preference. If students know that they are interested in competitive East Coast colleges or in the University of California system, they should consider taking SAT Subject Tests the June following their junior year.

\*\* Please check for all registration deadlines and test center locations at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) and at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org).

**Checklist for Standardized Tests - #2 Pencils, Calculator, Registration Ticket, and ID (if you are testing at a center other than Whiteman. If you forget your ID, you will not be able to take the test!!!!)**

**New SAT**: The New SAT has a writing section that asks the students to write a short essay and to answer grammar and style questions. Many colleges will require that students in the Class of 2006 and beyond take the New SAT; however, you will need to check with each college to see about its policy. Changes to the SAT are explained at the College Board website ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)).

Most LWS students take the SAT in the fall of their senior year so that they have sets of SAT scores from both junior and senior years (some even have two sets from junior year). Fortunately, most colleges determine your overall SAT score by combining your highest verbal score (regardless of the test date) and highest math score (regardless of test date). Because improving your score on either section on *any* test date can improve your overall SAT score, I recommend that you automatically send colleges your SAT scores when you take the test in the fall, especially if you are applying early action or early decision. **At the time of the test, the first FOUR score reports you request are free.** At any other time you have to pay for them all. Bear in mind, however, that while I have never noted a disadvantage in taking the SAT up to three times, students do not seem to improve their scores by taking the test four times or more. Finally, Whiteman sends *all* of your SAT scores (if we have them) to the colleges with your transcripts. **Nonetheless, some colleges will require you to contact Educational Testing**

**Services directly and have official copies of your scores sent from the testing service to the colleges. You must do this if you have taken the SAT or ACT before coming to Whiteman, and you want to send those scores.** I do not have access to any scores of tests taken before you came here.

**SAT Subject Tests:** These are the old achievement tests that students typically take at the end of the year to demonstrate the knowledge they have acquired in a certain course that year (i.e. Biology, American History, French, etc.). **Some colleges require applicants to submit 3 SAT II subject tests. The schools will often specify which tests or types of tests a student should take. Be sure to check with all colleges to determine their testing wishes.** Rather than just assessing a student's aptitude, these tests are designed to measure the student's skills in each area. Therefore, these test scores can help a college identify a student's strengths. You may wish to re-take some subject tests or to take additional ones in the fall or winter, depending on the requirements of the colleges to which you are applying – check these requirements very carefully! For preparation, we have several subject-specific books in the library.

**ACT and ACT Plus Writing:** As of the spring of 2005, students may elect to take either the ACT, which includes sections on English, Math, Reading, and Scientific Reasoning), or the ACT Plus Writing (which will add a writing section at the end of the regular test). Some colleges will either recommend or require the writing test, so it is important to check with each college individually. There is more information about the changes and the colleges on-line ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org)). Many colleges accept the ACT in lieu of the SAT. Some Whiteman students perform better on this test than they do on the SAT because the ACT is more "achievement" oriented than the SAT is. ACT test dates are different than those of the SAT, but the registration process is roughly the same. I strongly recommend that each student take the ACT once for experience and for the opportunity to have another score to send to colleges.

## **Standardized Testing for Students with Disabilities**

Students with **documented** disabilities are eligible for non-standard SAT testing. The SAT services for Students with Disabilities recognizes the following kinds of disabilities: visual, physical, hearing, learning, and ADD/ADHD. If you have one of these disabilities and wish to take the SAT's under special circumstances, you must have **current** (no more than three years old) documentation of your disability and the special accommodations that you require on file in Whiteman's main office. You must also qualify as "eligible" by the SAT Services for Students with Disabilities in order to qualify for taking non-standard SAT's. **I have eligibility forms in my office, so if you have a disability, come talk to me.**

The eligibility guidelines for taking non-standard SAT's have become increasingly strict over the past few years. Among the seven guidelines your documentation must satisfy, for example, is the following: your documentation must "describe the comprehensive testing and techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis (including evaluation date(s) and test results with subtest scores from measures of cognitive ability, current academic achievement, and information processing)."

Now, for SAT's, you only need apply for special testing circumstances once. So, come into my office this spring and get it done. **When you receive permission to take the extended time tests, you will receive a letter from the College Board company. As of now, you may register for the SAT's on-line if you want the extended time. You will need to know your SSD code in order to do so.**

One final note: Not surprisingly, reviewing your documentation, determining your eligibility, and filling out your paper work take *time*. So, be sure to come talk to me *well in advance* of any looming SAT deadlines.

Registering for the ACT's extended time testing is similar to the process for the SAT's. The one big difference, however, is that you need to fill out the paperwork every time you plan to take the test. Please come see me for more details.

## Standardized Test Terminology

**On-line registration** – Students can register on-line for the SAT's and ACT's, as long as they have a credit card number. Although the first on-line registration can be time-consuming, subsequent registrations are easier. Students can simply go to **www.collegeboard.com** (for the SAT) and **www.act.org** (for the ACT). As a reminder, students who take the tests with extended time cannot register on-line for the ACT's yet.

**Late Registration** – If a student misses the regular deadline, he or she can register late (usually within a two week period of the regular deadline). The late registration deadlines are available on-line or in the college counseling office. Late registration requires a late fee (about \$20).

**Stand-by Testing** – If students miss the registration deadlines (both regular and late), they may still take the test as a stand-by. Stand-by testers should arrive at the test center no later than 8 a.m.. If the center has extra tests, stand-by testers will be accepted in the order in which they arrived. They will need to have a filled-out registration form (available in the college office) and the fee for taking the test plus an extra stand-by fee (about \$35). If the center does not have enough tests, the stand-by tester is out of luck. **Anyone that needs extended time cannot test as a standby.**

**Test Date or Test Center Changes** – If a student realizes that he cannot take the test on the day that he chose or at the center that he chose OR is absent on the day of the test, it is still possible to change the date and/or the center. Simply call **SAT Customer Service at 1-888-728-4357** (Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 8:45 p.m. Eastern Time) or **ACT Customer Service at 319 – 337 – 1270** (Monday – Friday 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Central Time). Both programs charge you about an extra \$19, but it is better than losing your original \$41.50 (SAT), \$28 (ACT), or \$42 (ACT Plus Writing) and having to pay that amount again next time.

**Extended Time** – Extended time for the SAT means that a student has 4 ½ hours, not including breaks (as opposed to 3 hours) to finish the sections. On the ACT, the student has 5 hours, including break time. Students taking the ACT Plus Writing will have an additional 45 minutes for the test.

## College Application Terminology

EARLY DECISION ~ This is the application format under which a candidate indicates to *one* college that he will attend that institution if admitted early in the year. (Generally, early decision applications are due by November 1, and notification about decisions is mailed to you by December 15.) You should apply early decision if you are absolutely CERTAIN of your intention to attend that particular school. **Applying early decision for strategic purposes is simply not worth it – for one thing, you will not have the luxury of comparing financial aid offers among a batch of schools to which you have been admitted.** A college counselor whom I talked to said that during her years of college counseling, she had seen Early Decision students transfer at a much higher rate than regular decision students. Unfortunately, colleges will sometimes try to talk you into applying early decision in order to increase their own yield, and the pressure that colleges are putting on students to apply early has increased dramatically in the last few years.

EARLY ACTION ~ A few colleges offer this option instead of early decision. Under the early action plan, you have the option to receive an admissions decision early in the year WITHOUT the obligation to attend that particular school – you have until May 1 to make up your mind. Applicants benefit from the early action plan because they get an answer without a binding obligation to attend the school, but many colleges simply reject early action applicants rather than keeping them in the pool until April and reading them with the “regular decision” applications. As always, read the fine print carefully and discuss the early action option with me before applying.

DEFERRED APPLICATION ~ Deferral does not mean rejection. When colleges cannot make up their minds about an early applicant, they typically “defer” the student, meaning they put the applicant’s file “on hold” and read it with the “regular decision” applications in the spring. Senior year grades and standardized testing in the senior year are two kernels of new information that colleges consider when reading a deferred application in the spring.

DEFERRED ADMISSION ~ Once you are admitted to a school and have planned to put down a deposit and attend that institution, you may request to defer your matriculation for a year. To do so, you write a request in the spring of your senior year, asking for a deferral and providing a detailed account of how you expect to fill the intervening time between high school and college. (Even if you know going into the college process that you want to take a year off after high school, you should still go through the application process. Apply; get in; then defer.)

ROLLING ADMISSION ~ Under this plan, you send your application materials to an institution, and the institution renders you a decision several weeks later. In other words, colleges and universities that offer rolling admission do not have one specific application deadline; instead, they will accept applications at any time during a specific window (September 1 through March 1, for instance) and will notify applicants about admission decisions on a rolling basis (no mass mailings on April 1). File early in the fall under the

rolling admission plan before the college class fills up and no spaces are available. There are instances, however, when more testing and fall grades might make your application stronger in December than it would be in September. Talk to me about the timing. Schools that offer rolling admission usually offer housing on a first-come, first-serve basis, so act swiftly.

WAIT LIST ~ Colleges always accept more people than they can accommodate. Why? Because colleges know that some of the people they accept will choose to go somewhere else. Obviously, the world of admissions is not an exact science, and for that reason, colleges develop wait lists. Colleges will wait to see how many beds fill up with the “first cut” admits, and then – if there are still empty beds left over – offer admission to some lucky people on the wait list.

Increasingly, it seems more difficult than ever to get pulled off of the wait list, so it is not, unfortunately, a time to get your hopes up. If you are wait-listed at a school you would like to attend, you still need to make a deposit at ONE other college by May 1, 2006 so you have a school to attend in the fall of 2006. If you are then taken off the wait list at the school of your dreams, you will have to notify the school where you deposited, tell them you will not be attending, and sacrifice your deposit (which will be up to \$600).

DOUBLE DEPOSITS ~ **It is highly unethical to send deposits to two schools.** Therefore, even if you are waiting for a crucial decision about financial aid, etc., you should only send in one deposit on May 1<sup>st</sup>. To do otherwise jeopardizes our relationship with the colleges in question. Pick one school. Deposit at one school. Be happy!

## Application Materials

College applications are typically composed of five parts: the application, the essay, the secondary school report, the recommendations, and the financial aid application. Here is a brief synopsis of what each component is about and what you will need to do for each part.

### INFORMATION YOU WILL NEED

**SCHOOL CODE NUMBER (CEEBS OR SAT/ACT CODE): 061312**

**The Lowell Whiteman School  
42605 RCR 36  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487  
970-879-1350**

**We do not rank students at The Lowell Whiteman School.**

Margaret Morse – Director of College Counseling

**A. Application** – Applications require you to provide colleges with facts. Colleges will ask for information such as your name, address, birth date, social security number, extracurriculars, senior year course schedule, etc. Colleges will also ask you for information about your parents and your siblings. You may also be asked what major you are considering or, in the case of universities, what division (arts and science, engineering, nursing, etc.) you are applying to enter. **I highly recommend that you type your applications to make them appear both legible and professional.** Fortunately, many college applications can be downloaded from web sites and filled out on the computer. **I strongly encourage on-line submission of applications. Colleges process these applications more quickly and more accurately.** Some web services like College Link or Apply! can filter your information into the appropriate spaces on a number of applications, but it does not cover all colleges. The common application is the same, so all of these are helpful but not comprehensive.

**B. The Essay** – Colleges typically ask you for a writing sample called the famous “college essay.” In reviewing these essays, colleges seek to learn more about you as an individual and to evaluate your writing skills. College essay questions are usually very general and allow you to talk about almost anything you want. The essays only need to be about a page long (250-500 words), and most colleges only ask you for one essay. Sometimes, however, colleges will ask you for a couple of other small essays (why do you want to go to College X? what do you think you want to study? etc.) of about a paragraph in length.

**C. Secondary School Report** – Most applications contain either a secondary school report form OR a request that a transcript be sent to the college. Give the secondary school report or your request to me. I will log in your request, assemble the appropriate

materials (including your “counselor’s recommendation”), and fill out the form. **Do not bring a request or report in unless you are absolutely sure you are applying to that college!** In addition, be prepared to address an envelope in which to send out your information.

**D. Recommendations** – Colleges normally require you to submit two academic recommendations from teachers who have taught you in the 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade OR from teachers who have taught you in specific disciplines. Even if the school does not require recommendations, please have your teachers send them. The college will then have a more complete picture of you as a student, instead of just judging you by your grades. When you send your application, just write a note telling the college to expect teacher recommendations so that they will not make a decision before receiving those recommendations. **REMEMBER: Writing recommendations is not something a teacher is obliged to do, and students always need recommendations at the busiest time of the year.** Therefore, follow these guidelines:

1. **ASK TEACHERS EARLY!** These recommendations require careful thought, and teachers need time to get them done. The day before winter break is just too late to ask a teacher for a recommendation – in fact, I encourage teachers to turn you down if you wait that late to ask! **December 1<sup>st</sup>** should be the **last** day that you ask for recommendations.
2. Pay close attention to what the college wants! Each college wants a way to assess your ability to succeed in its academic environment. Therefore, they would like to hear from core course teachers (English, math, science, history) unless your focus is in another area. Think carefully about whom you want to ask for recommendations – talk to your parents and me for suggestions.
3. On the teacher recommendation forms, fill out your name and address and sign any waivers. A teacher should never have to track you down to sign forms – we do enough filling out and signing ourselves.
4. When you give the teachers the recommendation forms, provide them with **STAMPED** envelopes addressed to the institutions to which you are applying. Include the sheet from the appendix of this handbook with a full list of the colleges to which you are applying and the appropriate application dates. Deadlines are critical, especially for early decision/early action applications. Files are not complete unless teacher recommendations are there, so give your teachers at least a month to write recommendations and alert them of deadlines!
5. **THANK YOU** – Please thank your teachers or anyone who writes to colleges on your behalf. **Teachers, in particular, are not required by the school to write recommendations, are not paid by the school to write recommendations, and are not given release time from teaching to write recommendations. Teachers write recommendations only out of the goodness of their hearts.** So, thank them! And then tell them the outcome of your applications and where you decide to go!

**E. Extra Recommendations** – A recommendation from a coach, drama teacher, or employer (just to name a few) may be very helpful in completing your file and adding perspective to your candidacy. Some colleges even ask for a peer recommendation. While colleges usually only ask for two academic recommendations, you may submit a couple of extras without appearing to go overboard. That said, however, you want to make sure that the person writing this extra recommendation has something **new** to say about you (i.e. if your teacher or I has already said it, the colleges do not need it repeated). Finally, be VERY skeptical of the friend of a friend who knows someone on the Alumni Board at College X and wants to write a recommendation on your behalf. These recommendations are generally gratuitous statements of fact about you that do not help your case at all.

**F. Other Materials** – Most colleges welcome slides, tapes, and other evidence of your creative work (artistic, drama, or otherwise). Check with the colleges to which you are applying to see if submitting this kind of material is appropriate and, if so, how to go about doing so. Also, check with an objective source (a teacher or professional) to see if the work you are planning to submit is representative of your creative talent at its best.

**G. Financial Aid** – Most colleges try to allocate their available funds in a way that will make it possible (though not necessarily *easy*) for anyone to attend. However, financial aid policies vary from college to college, so it is important for you to ask *each college* about its financial aid program.

Financial aid is awarded in a package. At the outset, you are expected to contribute some of your family income to your college costs. Your package will then probably consist of: 1) a scholarship (grant money that does not have to be paid back); 2) a loan (or loans) (money that does have to be paid back); 3) a “work study” position (a job on campus for which you will receive a regular paycheck). Most scholarships are awarded on the basis of need, though some scholarships at some schools are awarded on the basis of merit.

All colleges require the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) form, which should be available in the college office after Thanksgiving break. **The FAFSA should be completed by the parents and submitted as soon as possible after January 1. The FAFSA strongly encourages on-line submission of this form.** The FAFSA website is [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). **Beware**, the FAFSA form asks detailed questions about your taxes. You do not have to *file* your taxes, but you do need to have them filled out. Some colleges also require the PROFILE form, which is available in the college office starting in October. **The PROFILE form should be completed by Thanksgiving, if possible, and mailed in no later than January 1.** In addition, some colleges may also require you to fill out their own financial aid forms. If you are applying to a college in the western states and you live in one of the western states, you can also look into the WUE scholarship that allows you to pay a tuition that is closer to in-state tuition in another state. **Check each college to which you are applying for specific deadlines.**

College costs are astronomical. The world of financial aid is changing rapidly in an effort to make college affordable for everyone, but unfortunately, qualifying for

significant financial aid is not easy for most Whiteman families. And, even if you do receive significant aid, your college costs will by no means ever be “cheap.” Increasingly, college costs are becoming a most influential factor in our students’ college decisions. So here are some financial aid guidelines to bear in mind in your college search.

1. Fee Waivers – The College Board offers a “fee waiver” service to families from “very low incomes.” The fee waivers cover the cost of taking the SAT’s, registering for the CSS Profile (a financial aid service), and applying to colleges. There are two catches to using fee waivers. First, in order to receive fee waivers, your financial situation must qualify as a “serious barrier” to your applying to college otherwise. Second, in order to use fee waivers for your college applications, you *have* to have used fee waivers for your SAT’s. In most cases, fee waiver recipients should be members of families whose annual income falls between \$14,300 and \$29,600 (for a family of two to six, respectively).
2. Consult some of the financial aid resources listed in the resource section to develop a sense of the basic nuts and bolts of financial aid. Remember, there are two main sources of financial aid – financial aid from the state and federal governments and financial aid from colleges.
3. **Be sure to ask individual colleges about their financial aid policies.** While the state and federal governments use very standardized and uniform methods of calculating your financial aid awards, individual colleges have lots of latitude in how they determine your financial aid needs. That is, you may receive very different packages from different schools, so it is a good idea to know how each school determines aid before you decide whether or not to apply. What you learn about a school’s financial aid policy may make or break your decision to apply to it – or at the very least, it may help you prioritize your college choices. **The people in the financial aid offices at the colleges have the most knowledge. Feel free to use their expertise.**
4. To get the best financial aid packages, MEET ALL DEADLINES. The bottom line is: if you file your information on time, you will increase your chances of receiving aid and you will receive your financial aid package before May 1, 2005 when you have to notify colleges of your final choice. You may not postpone making your decision until after May 1 because you haven’t heard about your financial aid package. (If you haven’t heard, you didn’t file on time.)

**H. A Note on “Senioritis”** – There is a myth among seniors that “senior year doesn’t count.” NOT TRUE! First, colleges will ask you to tell them which courses you are signed up for during both semesters of your senior year. Second, colleges will receive your first semester grades. Those grades do count in the admissions process. Finally, colleges are increasingly reviewing grades that change dramatically from fall to spring. (One senior at a school in Philadelphia was “out to lunch” during second semester and had to start college in the fall on academic probation as a result.) So, be prepared and forewarned – you are responsible for maintaining the same level of work all year long, and I will not come up with innovative ways to bail you out of academic disaster during your senior year!

## Mailing College Applications

**COPY AND XEROX** –Make copies of every piece of material you send to the colleges. Every once in a while an application gets lost. No one wants to reconstruct an application and an essay from scratch in the middle of February. So, make copies just in case. If you are applying on-line, print out a copy of your application, if possible.

**TIMING** – Observe deadlines! Colleges can easily minimize the number of applications they have to read by refusing to accept any that arrive after the deadline. Read applications carefully to see whether they must be *postmarked* by the deadline or *in* to the college office by the deadline. Be especially aware of all the deadline restrictions during the holiday mail crush and **PLAN AHEAD!**

**FEDERAL EXPRESS, ETC.** – Colleges pull applications out of whatever conveyance they arrive in, and then they stamp the applications with a receipt date. Thus, you only need to use one of these expensive, speedy services if you are in real deadline trouble.

**CONFIDENTIALITY ENVELOPES** – Some colleges want **ALL** of your application materials (including the school report, recommendations, etc.) to be mailed to them in **ONE** big envelope. (This practice saves colleges a lot of filing on their end.) If this is the case, give me a large, addressed envelope with your application, essay, and check, and I will mail everything off once I have received your recommendations and assembled your school report. Allow for extra time in assembling your materials if you are required to use this one-envelope format.

## What I Send to Colleges

**Secondary School Reports** – All secondary school reports or requests for transcripts should be submitted to me by DECEMBER 1, and the earlier the better. If an application has an early deadline, you should submit your request at least one month in advance. Remember, I am writing counselor recommendations for about 28 students, and I have to assemble about 270 secondary school reports in the space of a few weeks – so, please, be considerate of the time it takes me to do this well.

Every packet I send to the colleges consists of the following: a college counselor recommendation, your transcript, an academic information sheet, and a school profile.

**We do not rank students.**

**Requests Filed After December 1** – I will deal with requests filed after December 1 as quickly as I can, but you simply cannot drop a number of school report forms off on December 15<sup>th</sup> and expect them to be in to the colleges by January 1.

**Waiver** – Students have the opportunity to “waive” their right to examine part or all of their admissions folders. I write a positive, objective, and confidential recommendation that is exactly the same whether you waive your access to see it or not. Colleges prefer, of course, that you waive your right to see your folders because they feel the information they receive from Whiteman will be more forthright in that event than it would be otherwise.

**\*The colleges receive tons of mail (a good argument for on-line applications), and the first packets that they open are the applications themselves. They then log-in your information and send you a card that indicates the part of the application that is missing. Often, when they send this card, the material from your teachers and from me is waiting in the pile of mail to be opened. Therefore, do not panic when they say they have not received your transcript, test scores, secondary school report, and/or teacher recs, but instead wait about a week. Then, call the office of admission and check to see if the missing information has arrived. If not, ask them if we can fax it and/or re-send it.**

## April 1: Considering Your Options

April 1 is the universal reply date by which colleges must notify you of their admissions decisions (unless it is rolling admissions). Some colleges will even begin mailing out decisions in March. Either way, by the beginning of April, you will know which colleges have accepted you and what your choices are.

Some colleges send out financial aid packages with their acceptance letters, and some colleges send the financial aid information separately, a couple of weeks after they mail out their acceptances. Once you have the financial aid packages in hand, you can weigh the pros and cons of the packages from each college. Often, financial considerations play into students' college choices. You will want to consider how much you, and perhaps your parents, are willing to take out in loans. You will also want to consider accepting a work study position on campus.

## May 1: Deciding Where to Go (or April, if you are a foreign traveler!)

I believe that you can be happy at dozens of different colleges across the country. There is not “one and only one” school out there that is a good match for you. To the contrary, there are at least a dozen schools out there that are good matches for you, and you need to remember, when May 1 rolls around, that you researched and applied to at least six of those dozen good matches. What that means is *there is no wrong answer!* They are all good matches for you!

So how do you pick? What students tell me is that they picked their colleges based on a “gut feeling” they had about their schools. Sometimes, it is helpful to visit schools again. Spend the night; visit classes. **For those seniors on foreign trip, you have to make your decisions before you go. Therefore, you have very little time to reflect. Use spring break to revisit colleges if necessary. Try to have your list of colleges ranked before you get acceptances so that your ultimate decision is easier.** Then, talk to anyone and everyone. Reread the material on the schools. Finally, make the decision, and relax!

## Sample Letter Informing Colleges of Your Final Decision

After you have made your final choice, it is appropriate to notify **all** of the other colleges to which you applied and were accepted. The following is an example:

Your mailing address

Date

Director of Admissions  
\_\_\_\_\_ College (or University)  
College's address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Thank you for your consideration of my application. I was happy to have been accepted by you. After much deliberation, however, I have decided to attend another institution (name it if you want to) next fall.

Again, thank you very much.

Sincerely yours,

Your signature

Type your name here

## List of Resources

Here is a list of resources for you to use during your college process. This list is by no means complete, but it will provide you with a number of starting points for your research process.

Resources with **objective data and information** will supply you with facts and statistics. They will usually list every major a college offers, every extracurricular sport a college fields, every club a college supports, etc. These types of resources do not, however, do a very good job of distinguishing between schools using less quantifiable measures.

*Cass & Birnbaum's Guide to American Colleges* by Harper Collins  
*The College Handbook* by The College Board  
*Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges* by Peterson

Resources with **subjective evaluations and descriptions** of colleges will supply you with a feeling for the schools and the students who attend them. Subjective sources are written in paragraph form and are usually entertaining and great for getting to understand the atmosphere of the college. When I want to know more about colleges, I go to these sources.

*The Insider's Guide to Colleges* by St. Martin's Griffin  
*The Fiske Guide to Colleges* by Edward B. Fiske  
*Colleges That Change Lives* by Loren Pope  
*The 331 Best Colleges* by The Princeton Review  
*100 Colleges Where Average Students Can Excel* by ARCO

While SAT prep courses can be valuable, you do not have to drop a lot of money into one to get results. Two suggestions that I have found work for practice (which is the main component to doing well) are *The Official SAT Study Guide: For the New SAT* by The College Board and computer programs for students who would rather interact with a screen than a book (a couple of examples are Kaplan's, Score Builder, and Inside the SAT, ACT, and PSAT). Also, going to the ACT ([www.act.org](http://www.act.org)) and the SAT ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) websites can provide you with good prep material. Free on-line test prep material is available at [www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com).

**Financial aid** and scholarship information abounds. One book I highly recommend is *Don't Miss Out* by Octameron. The following are also helpful:

*Paying Less for College* by Peterson  
*The A's and B's of Academic Scholarships* by Octameron  
*The Scholarship Book* by Daniel Cassidy  
*The Financial Aid Book* by Perpetual Press  
*The Complete Scholarship Book* by Student Services, Inc.  
*Money Book for Women and Minorities* by Young & Young

In this age of technology, **web sites** are terrific resources for all sorts of college and financial information. Try the ones with “org” domains first because they are non-profit organizations. These sites change all the time. I would love feedback about the sites you like and the sites you don’t. If you find a different one that is great, please pass that info my way!

Full Service: prep, college search, advice, financial aid, etc.

[www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)

[www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

Testing Sites: prep, registering, score reports, etc.

[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)

[www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com)

[www.number2.com](http://www.number2.com)

Financial Aid Sites

[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

[www.fastweb.monster.com](http://www.fastweb.monster.com)

[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

College Sites: comparisons, searches, advice, etc.

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)

[www.collegenet.com](http://www.collegenet.com)

[www.campusdirt.com](http://www.campusdirt.com)

Application Sites

[www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

[www.collegelink.com](http://www.collegelink.com)

# Appendix

The sheets in this appendix are intended to help you, your teachers, and me keep organized. They will only take moments to fill out, and you should always make a copy for yourself before you give these sheets to the appropriate person.

## To-Do List

This list is just a starting point. You need to add to it as your tasks amount. Each time you complete a task, simply check it off and give yourself a pat on the back!

### **Between now and spring break. . .**

Read through your college binder

- Make an appointment to meet with Mrs. Morse in February/March
- Attend college meetings
- Go to that appointment with:  
    questionnaire completed
- Research schools.
- Complete working list of colleges.

Everyone interested in competitive colleges, register for June SAT Subject Tests.

- Choose your tests
- Know where you are going to need to take the test. At home? Here?
- Skiers register for SAT's.

### **During intersession. . . (for skiers and boarders only)**

- Take May SAT
- Attend college meetings
- Research colleges and complete a working list

### **Before June. . .**

- Contact colleges and make appointments to visit
- Talk to coaches

### **During the summer. . .**

- Make any remaining appointments
- Visit colleges and take notes
- Talk to you parents about your options
- Write thank you notes to your interviewer and the coach (if you talked to one), thanking them for their time in meeting with you.

### **When you return to school and before December. . .**

- Meet with me in September with your college list

- Register for the October SAT and ACT tests
- Finalize your college list
- Ask teachers for recommendations at least a month in advance of any deadline
- Give me requests for transcripts and secondary school report forms
- Check all deadlines and **WRITE THEM DOWN!**
- Submit any early or rolling applications
- Take any ACT and SAT tests you believe will help you
- Organize financial aid materials and take them home over Thanksgiving and Christmas

**Notify Mrs. Morse of your early decision news! (970) 879 – 1350 ext. 23**

**January and February. . .**

- File financial aid forms: FAFSA and institutional forms
- Send in applications
- Last chance for SAT and ACT

Write thank-you notes to your teachers for taking the time to write your recommendations!

**April. . .**

- Consider your options once you have received acceptances from colleges

**May. . .**

- May 1 let you college of choice know you will be attending and send in deposit. For those people on **foreign trip**, you must be really organized to have this happen while you are gone or before you leave.
- Send letters to all schools that accepted you but that you are not attending  
Tell the teachers who wrote you recommendations about your acceptances and your decision.

Tell me about your college plans!

**June. . .**

- Graduate and smile for the pretty pictures!!



5. The most important thing I learned in your class was . . .

6. Extracurricular activities that are important to me are . . .

## Application Worksheet

Though applications may vary, most applications will ask the same general information. If you know the following information, you should be able to complete almost any college application.

Lowell Whiteman School  
42605 RCR 36  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487  
CEEB/High School Code: 061312

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_  
Complete Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ SS # \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Phone at school for boarding students \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's full name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Mother's College/Degree (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Father's full name \_\_\_\_\_  
Father's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
Father's College/Degree (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Are parents separated? Yes/No  
Divorced? Yes/No  
If not with both parents, with whom do you make your permanent home?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Bothers and Sisters (first names and ages/schools they attend)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Previous Schools You Attended Since 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

School Name	Location	Dates Attended
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Possible major or career plans \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Information:

Counselor's Name: Margaret Morse

Phone/ext. 970-879-1350 x-23

Grades: Whiteman GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Other GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

SAT: Date taken/planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: (V) \_\_\_\_\_ (M) \_\_\_\_\_

Date taken/planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Score: (V) \_\_\_\_\_ (M) \_\_\_\_\_

SAT II:Date taken/planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Subject \_\_\_\_\_

Score \_\_\_\_\_

ACT: Date taken/planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Composite \_\_\_\_\_

Date taken/planned: \_\_\_\_\_

Composite \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Year Courses:

1<sup>st</sup> Semester

2<sup>nd</sup> Semester

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

College Courses:(List any courses you have taken or are taking at a college or university)

Date Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Course Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Course Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Course Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Recommendations:

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date Requested \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date Requested \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Date Requested \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Verbs for Application

Accelerated	Originated
Accomplished	Organized
Achieved	Participated
Adapted	Performed
Administered	Planned
Affected	Pinpointed
Analyzed	Programmed
Approved	Proposed
Built	Proved
Coordinated	Provided
Conceived	Recommended
Conducted	Reduced
Completed	Reinforced
Controlled	Revamped
Created	Revised
Delegated	Reviewed
Developed	Scheduled
Demonstrated	Simplified
Designed	Set up
Directed	Solved
Effected	Structured
Eliminated	Supported
Evaluated	Taught
Expanded	Trained
Facilitated	Translated
Found	Utilized
Generated	Won
Guided	
Increased	
Influenced	
Implemented	
Initiated	
Instructed	
Interpreted	
Improved	
Launched	
Lectured	
Led	
Maintained	
Managed	
Mastered	
Motivated	
Operated	

## **Tips on the College Application**

The college application is the primary vehicle through which students are judged for admission. The importance of the application cannot be overestimated. The application for admission will receive much more favorable consideration if students take the following tips seriously.

1. **Plan Ahead** – Applications rushed through immediately preceding the deadline will reflect lack of care. You will feel more comfortable if you send off your applications a week in advance, rather than immediately before the deadline. Deadlines are set up to eliminate people.
  
2. **Neatness** – Applications that are difficult to read will not receive the same consideration. For that reason, I recommend applying on-line. It is efficient and neat. If you do so, always print out a hard copy of that application to send in to the college if they do not receive the electronic copy.
  
3. **Completeness** – An incomplete application tells a great deal about the applicant. (Rather than leave a question blank, indicate "not applicable" or N/A.)
  
4. **Honesty** – Don't pretend to be something you are not. You will be found out – sometimes with drastic consequences.
  
5. **Prepare Your Application Yourself** – Only the student can prepare it in the best and most authentic way.
  
6. **Recommendations** – Recommendations should come from those people who know you the best. Colleges generally require no more than two, plus a school recommendation (written by Mrs. Morse). Give your teachers the recommendation information early. Include a stamped envelope with your name in the bottom left corner on the front and the deadline in the bottom left corner on the back. Don't force teachers to resent you by asking them to write a recommendation at the last moment. Recommendations take a lot of time and effort. Respect the fact that your teachers have busy schedules and that they are doing you a favor. Additional recommendations should only be submitted if they emphasize an area of strength that will not be covered in the two academic recommendations (i.e. a coach, an employer, etc.) If not carefully chosen, the extra recommendations could lead to "the thicker the file, the thinner the case" syndrome.
  
7. **The College Essay** – The essay gives you the opportunity to influence the admissions committee's perception of you. In writing the essay, you should keep in mind:
  - a. Am I being honest and open?
  - b. Is the essay interesting to others?
  - c. Give the committee a reason to admit you.
  - d. Ask for input, but make sure that your voice remains authentic.
  - e. Follow directions carefully. Do what is asked – one (two) pages, handwritten

(typed), specific (general) topic.

**8. Supplementary Material** – Don't submit other material unless it is relevant to your application. Don't try to be too cute or gimmicky. Art and music projects are acceptable, especially if they apply to your intended major. An athletic resume can be helpful.

**9. Extra Curricular Activities** – These should be presented openly and honestly. Don't minimize or exaggerate.

**DO...**

Find a "handle" or something that sets you apart.

Find out all you can about the college to which you are applying.

Show interest in the college and emphasize your reasons for applying.

Provide your counselor with information about your reasons for applying.

Write your essays early.

Show your essay to your English teacher and Mrs. Morse.

Ask admissions people about specific programs and requirements.

Keep a copy of **everything** that you send.

**DO NOT...**

Ever get "boring". Don't repeat information already in your application.

Exaggerate or take credit for things that are not yours.

Be arrogant or pushy. Instead, be assertive, but not aggressive.

Overload your application.

Ask to have access to recommendations. Let your teachers be open and honest.

The admissions committee values recommendations that stress your strengths and weaknesses.

Call the admissions office unless you have a critical problem or concern.

Forget to write thank you notes. It helps to keep your name before the committee.

Pretend to be superhuman: you have individual feelings, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.

Assume all of the colleges are alike in their approach and admission standards.

They are different. Research them as best you can.

## **“College Right Away or a PG Year?: A coach suggests pursuit of international success doesn’t have to end with college.”**

By Bruce Lingelbach (the women’s alpine coach for the Dartmouth College Ski Team)

Ski Racing: Number 20

As the race season comes to a close a large group of this year’s high school seniors are in the process of making the “PG decision.” Should they go directly to college next fall or take a post-graduate year with a particular club or academy program?

Unfortunately, many skiers and families will make these decisions based on two prevailing misconceptions. The first misconception is that skiers cannot properly continue their development at college. The second is that the national team will not look at skiers once they go to college. In regards to the second issue, the national team looks at anyone who is skiing fast; they have in the past and will continue to do so in the future.

As to whether or not a skier can develop in college, it is clear they can. This past year, former college skiers Uros Pavlovic and Hedda Bernsten each won World Cup runs. Last year, Uros was skiing for Sierra Nevada College and Hedda was skiing for Middlebury. U.S. Ski Team member Thomas Vonn, arguably the fastest GS skier in the U.S., skied for St. Lawrence University two years ago. USST member Andy Martin went directly to college after high school and skied four years. Upon graduating from Dartmouth, Andy trained with the Lake Placid program and the U.S. Development Program for three years. This year he made his first World Cup start. Opportunities for collegiate skiers do exist.

Skiers can develop while going to school because colleges provide a balance of the three essential components to any athletic program. First, one needs quality, specific training for their sport. College ski teams can offer excellent on-snow training because they have good coaches and venues at which to train. A sensible race schedule allows for ample training time mid-season when training is the most valuable. No other programs train in season as much as colleges because other programs are busy traveling and racing.

The second necessary component is a reasonable number of high intensity competition experiences. Most collegiate skiers race between 25-35 starts a season. College races are the most competitive races in the nation short of the NorAms and U.S. Nationals.

Thirdly, developing athletes need a systematic strength and conditioning program and a solid block of time in which to accomplish it. College ski teams have access to the best training facilities and the best sport science departments available. Collegiate skiers also have a solid three month block in the fall before full-time on snow training begins to make significant strength gains.

Top college skiers must supplement their collegiate programs with extra training and racing projects if they’re looking to be successful later at the international level. The U.S. Development Program has offered such opportunities to top college skiers and would presumably do even more for the top skiers in the future. Opportunities always exist for athletes who are talented and motivated.

There are good reasons for high school seniors to take time off before heading to college. Taking a year to have new experiences, perhaps ski and race in a new and different setting, can be very positive. Taking a year to do exactly the same thing in the same old program can be negative. I cringe when I hear athletes talking about “giving the national team one more shot before coming to college.” There are so few new members named to the Development and the B and C Teams each year that it is unrealistic to expect one year is going to make the difference for 95 percent of these skiers. I asked Aldo Radamus, director of the U.S. Development Program, his view on that matter. “There are good reasons for taking time off before going to college,” he said, “but taking a year to develop skills in hopes of making that national team is not the best one. The numbers alone say this is a bad bet. There are dozens of skiers vying for only a handful of new slots each year.

“The majority of skiers would be better served skiing in college and continuing to mature and develop. If and when they raise their competitive level and receive a nomination to the Development Team or the national team, there will be a program available to them. If they are not able to do this they will have a college degree and career opportunities. In either case, the athlete will have completed college sooner and will be able to pursue either their athletic or career goals with their degree in hand.”

Racers need to look further into the future than just one year ahead. They also need to look beyond just “making the U.S. Ski Team.” Wearing the uniform is novel but the real goal is to score World Cup points and be a contender at the Olympic and World Championships. The age when the typical U.S. skier begins scoring consistently on the World Cup ranges from 21 to 25. Top 17- or 18-year olds may well have six seasons before they’re even close to the top level. It is not such a stretch to think that a skier could benefit from spending a year or two or four in college, maturing and developing, before they go on to race internationally. For the late-maturing athlete, and even some early-maturing athletes, who need a break from the traditional development route college skiing is a great answer.

Speed skiers may argue that quality experiences in downhill and super G do not exist in the collegiate ranks. However, if you look at the first seeds in men’s World Cup downhill and super G you’ll see that two thirds of those men made their breakthroughs in giant slalom, indicating that GS is their speed foundation. And it is possible for motivated speed skiers to supplement the extra speed opportunities necessary to be competitive.

For the high school senior trying to weigh the options, it can be hard. Coaches, parents and other athletes usually all have varying perspectives. Clearly, it is in the interest of the clubs and academies to have PG skiers around. PG skiers raise the level of their programs and generally help pay the bills. Collegiate programs sometimes benefit from skiers coming to school right away, but in general we know that most skiers will come to ski in college eventually. (New NCAA legislation shortening the time athletes are eligible to compete might change that.)

I encourage athletes to seek out new and unique experiences. Sometimes that means taking time off before starting college. I think most young people respond better to the structure and the mental stimulation of the college environment. The confidence gained from being academically productive definitely has a positive effect on performance level. There is security in knowing that while you’re developing as an athlete you’re also working toward other important pursuits. A content skier is a fast skier.

I don’t envy the tough decisions that seniors have to make about going on to college. However, they should be assured that going to college does not preclude the chance of being an international racing star.

