

College Planning Reference Guide for Juniors

Class of 2017

OH THE PLACES YOU COULD GO: THE COLLEGE SEARCH

Life beyond Green Hope High School is on the horizon. With over 4,100 college and universities in the United States, the options are limitless. Everything from a small liberal arts college to a large urban university with big-time athletics, there is a

in mind that there are 3 major areas of fit that ALL need to be aligned in order to find a college that is the best fit for you. These would include academics, personal/social interests, and financial. You want to find a college that will be

There is an App for That: Free College/Test Prep Applications



school for everyone. There are several things to consider during the search to find the school that is the best for you. When searching for colleges, there are a lot of factors that you will want to ask yourself about the colleges that you are considering to help you determine if the school will be the best fit. When considering fit, keep

academically challenging for you, but also one where you can be successful. You want to find a college which will offer the activities you want to participate in and that has people you can imagine being friends with in the future. And you want to find a college that will be financially affordable

Preparing to Soar Beyond Green Hope



One of the most important decisions in the lives of teenagers is what post-secondary option they will choose. This is a decision that will greatly impact many areas of their lives. Therefore, this decision is of paramount importance and one that should be made with much thought and preparation. It is hoped that this resource will be used as a tool to help you begin exploring different colleges, universities, and other post-secondary options with less anxiety. Use this resource, the advice of your counselor as well as other outside resources to make an informed, well-directed decision. This time can be stressful, but it can also be very exciting, too. Always remember, we welcome you to make an appointment at any time to meet or talk over any questions or concerns with your counselor. We're here to help. Sincerely, Your GHHS Counselors

Things to Consider In the College Search Process

Academic Environment

- Admissions requirements and standards
- Standards appropriate for your abilities and interests
- Required courses
- Teaching Assistants vs. Professors
- Class sizes
- Counseling or tutoring
- Graduate school
- Professions of graduates

Majors

- Strength of the program in which you are interested
- Movement within the programs after acceptance and enrollment

Geographic location

- Distance from home
- Weather
- School setting and surrounding area (small town, big city, rural, etc.)

Campus size

- Large campus (15,000-50,000+)
- Medium sized campus (5,000-15,000)
- Small campus (5,000 or less)

Affordability

- Tuition, fees, books, room & board

- Cost of travel to and from home
- Scholarships, loans or other financial assistance

Health and other services

- Medical and psychological services
- Tutorial services
- Services for students with disabilities

Student life

- Liberal, conservative, homogeneous, diverse
- Faculty/Student relationship
- Recreational activities, sororities/fraternities, other activities to become involved in campus life
- Special interest groups
- Religious affiliatio

College Search Resources

College Navigator: This federal website contains more data on the nation's colleges and universities than any place else on the Internet. Using the College Navigator's school search engine, you can look for schools based on your criteria, which is helpful if you aren't sure where to hunt for schools beyond the obvious name brands and your own state institutions. You can find graduation rates, retention rates, and financial aid stats.

<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

College Results Online: Families assume that their children will graduate from college in four years, but that's sadly not true for most. This great website provides four, five, and six-year graduation rates of schools across the country. <http://www.collegeresults.org/>

Zinch and Cappex: These websites are online matchmakers that have borrowed features from Facebook that appeals to teens. On both sites, a student can create a profile that goes well beyond test scores and grade-point averages that they can share with schools. Using these sites is a great way to discover intriguing schools that you didn't know exist. Through Cappex, you can access Meritaid.com, which provides a valuable directory of scholarships that thousands of schools offer. <http://www.zinch.com> and www.cappex.com

College Board: You can easily retrieve the academic profile of a college's freshman class, financial aid and merit aid stats, available majors, and much more. Also site of the SATs. www.collegeboard.org **Unigo:** This site, which has teamed up with the Wall Street Journal, gives school perspective from the students themselves. Unigo urges college students to share their take on their own schools through comments, photos, and videos.

<http://www.unigo.com>

ACT
www.act.org

Designed to measure academic achievement in the areas of English, Mathematics, Reading and Science

Four/Five Sections
English (75 items, 45 minutes)
Math--calculator(60 items, 60 minutes)
Reading (40 items, 35 minutes)
Science (40 items, 35 minutes)
Writing (40 minutes—optional, but recommended)

Scoring is based on the number of right answers. No penalty for guessing

1-36 ACT Composite Score
(average of four sub-area scores-does not include writing*)
English:1-36
Reading:1-36
Math:1-36
Science:1-36

Students can register online at
www.act.org

The ACT is offered six times a year:

The “Redesigned” SAT
www.collegeboard.org

Designed to measure college readiness—the knowledge and skills required to succeed in college

Four/Five Sections
Reading (65 minutes)
Writing and Language (35 minutes)
Math—no calculator (25 minutes)
Math-calculator allowed (55 minutes)
Essay (50 minutes)—optional, but recommended

No more penalty for incorrect answers—scoring is based on correct answers.

400-1600 SAT Total Score
Evidence-based Reading and Writing:
200-800
Math: 200-800
Optional Essay Scores:
Reading: 2-8
Analysis: 2-8
Writing: 2-8

Students can register online at
www.collegeboard.org

The SAT is offered seven times a year:

College Comparison Worksheet

College Name			
Location: Distance from Home			
Size: Enrollment Physical size of campus			
Environment: School Setting (urban/rural) Location, size of nearest city Co-ed or all male/female Religious affiliation			
Admission Requirements: Deadlines Tests Required Average GPA/Test Scores Special requirements			
Academics: Your major offered Special requirements Accreditation Student/faculty ration Typical Class Size			
College Expenses: Tuition, room and board, application fees, deposits			
Financial Aid: % receiving aid Scholarships Required forms			
Housing: Residence halls Types and sizes Food plans			
Activities: Clubs and organizations Greek life Athletics and intramurals			
Experiential Learning: Internships Study Abroad Community Service Research			
The "Eighth" Factor Must-haves/deal-breakers			
Campus Visit: When Special opportunities			

College Visits:

Academic Questions:

Faculty:

Student Life:

Miscellaneous:

College Visit Questions

Here are other questions you should ask yourself when considering colleges:

1. Can I get in? Compare your grade point average and test scores to what the college wants or to the median test scores of entering freshmen. This is not always a complete picture, but it can serve as a guide in allowing you to project how you compare to others who have previously been admitted.
2. Have I taken the proper courses at WKHS to make me competitive? Have you met the requirements in math, science and foreign language? Some highly selective institutions indicate that greater than 80% of the academically qualified applicants are rejected so remember that there are factors other than scholastic achievement that are considered.
3. Does the college have majors that interest me for a career? If you do not know of your intended major(s), are there a wide range of options to select from? What resources and programs does the school offer to students who are undecided about their intended major? What is the job placement rate for students graduating from this college in your particular major of interest?
4. How much does it cost and can I pay for it? Consider tuition, room and board, travel, and personal expenses. Do they provide automatic scholarships and other need based aid? Use the net price calculator on the college's website to get a better idea of the expected cost for that particular school.
5. What is the academic experience of students who attend? Look at the number of freshmen entering the school and the number of students who not only finish the year, but also move on to their sophomore year at the same college. A high dropout rate may indicate too rigorous academic standards or too low entrance requirements.
6. What is the faculty like? Look beyond just the "average teacher: student ratio" that many colleges publicize and identify the average ratio of introductory freshman classes. What percentage of the faculty holds doctorate degrees? Are they primarily a research oriented faculty or a teaching faculty? How available to students are the faculty members?
7. What is the campus life like? What do students do on weekends? Do many of them go home? Is the campus empty? What's the situation regarding drinking and drugs? Are there good places to eat, aside from the dining halls? If the school is not co-ed, what kinds of social arrangements are made? How important are sororities and fraternities in campus life? Does most social life depend on them? What about cultural opportunities? Do theatrical companies, orchestras and other musical groups, outside lecturers come to the campus? If not, are such activities available in town? Are groups in the college community involved in what's going on in the outside world - politics, international relations, war and peace? Or is the atmosphere mostly of aloofness from such matters?
8. When is the application due and when do I have to take my standardized tests to meet the deadlines? Remember, timing is everything!

Junior Year Checklist