

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS 101



I. Types of Colleges and Degrees

1. 4-year college (**Undergraduate**) – Bachelor's Degree
2. 2-year college (**Community College**) - Associate's Degree
3. Trade/Vocational Schools – Certificate/Associate's Degree
BEWARE: Many are **Proprietary Schools** (DevRy, ITT, Colorado Technical University, National American University) – Main goal is to make money. Be a little Skeptical! Many times you can go to the Community College for the same program and pay **THOUSANDS of dollars less.**
Graduate and Post-Graduate Studies (to name a few)
4. Master's Degree – 1-3 years, available in many fields
5. Ph.D. – 4-7 years, available in many fields, most professors have
6. Law Degree (Juris Doctor, J.D.) – 3 years plus Bar Exam
7. Medical Degree (M.D.) – 4 years plus 3-4 year residency (internship)

II. How are colleges going to decide if they are going to accept me?

1. Grades/Course Selection (Colleges really want to see challenging courses)
2. Test Scores – ACT/ACT Plus Writing/SAT/SAT Subject Tests
3. Extra-curricular Activities (Leadership, Commitment, Involvement)
4. Letters of Recommendation (Teachers, Counselor, Advisors, Coaches, Supervisors, Other)
5. Essay (*Be sure to read instructions for topic requirements and word limits!*)

III. How do I choose where to apply to college?

- Type (2-year, 4-year, private, public)
- Location, size, student body
- Do they have your possible major?
- Sports/Activities
- Reputation – Many times it goes along with selectivity
- Will I be a proud graduate?
- Academic Support/Disability Services
- Selectivity – How hard is it to get accepted? (Open, Selective, Highly Selective)
- Money – Can you afford to go there? (Remember, you can apply for financial aid and possibly scholarships!)

IV. To How many colleges should I apply to? 3-5

1. Range of selectivity: **1-2 in each group; Safety, On-Target, Reach**
 - i. **Safety:** your grades and test scores well above college's average;
 - ii. **On-Target:** your grades and test scores are about college's average scores;
 - iii. **Reach:** your grades and test scores are below college's average scores.
2. All must have all the other things you are looking for; size, location, major, etc...
3. **Do NOT let the cost prevent you from applying where you want to go;** Many students get financial aid that makes a school less expensive that you think!! But, in case you don't get much aid, it's a good idea to have at least one school on your list that is more affordable, even if it is an in-state school and you really want to go out-of-state.
4. Don't be afraid of Private Schools; they have more financial aid money to give
5. **Early Decision** – An option for some highly selective schools, where you can apply early, find out the admissions decision early, but if you are accepted, you **MUST** go to that school. If you are thinking of this, definitely consult your advisor.