

# Post-Secondary Planning Guide

**Pomperaug Regional High School**  
Middlebury and Southbury, CT



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To our students:

The choice of a college is one of the most important and expensive decisions you will ever make. It deserves a real commitment of your time and energy to research the many options available to you. It requires initiative on your part to take an active role in the decision-making process.

Too many students approach the task with the question, “What colleges will accept me?” We can reassure each of you from the outset that there are many colleges that want you to join their student body. It is much more fruitful to start with the question, “What do I want from a college?” Then take the steps necessary to become a well-informed and discriminating consumer of educational services.

This Post-Secondary Planning Guide has been written to provide you with a comprehensive overview of factors to consider in choosing a college, steps to take in gaining admission, and ways to finance the ever-rising cost of higher education. It is intended to supplement your most important resources: your parents, your school counselors, and the wealth of information available to you in the Career Center.

Share this Guide with your parents. Read it carefully and review it often. We are confident that it will answer many of your questions and help you plan successfully for your future.

We are looking forward to working with you in this exciting and ultimately rewarding process.

Sincerely,

The Counseling Department  
(203) 262-3238  
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## WHAT ARE YOUR POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS?

In this guide, the word college will be used in a general way to describe a degree-granting, post-secondary institution, having either two or four-year programs, or both. The assumption is made that a college has been accredited by a regional association and meets at least minimal standards for educating students according to its stated purpose.

There are thousands of post-secondary schools of varying quality which educate for such a specific purpose that they cannot grant degrees. In this guide the terms used for those schools will refer to their specific purposes, such as business/secretarial schools or trade/technical schools. Most of the information given here for colleges will apply to these schools also. Schools which specialize in music, drama, modeling, nursing, art and beauty culture, among others, belong in this category. Normally such schools grant a certificate upon completion of a prescribed course, which may last from three months to three years.

### TYPES OF COLLEGES

**Junior or Two-year Colleges** – An Associate Degree is granted upon successful completion of prescribed courses. Junior colleges accept the vast majority of high school graduates, but the program to which the student is accepted depends on the courses taken in high school. Students may continue their education by transferring to the last two years of a four-year college provided they have the requisite courses and grades. In most cases, high school achievement will not be considered at the time of transfer.

If transfer is not the goal, junior colleges offer specific training for many careers in business, health, technology, and public service fields. They may very well suit the needs of students who wish specialized training in a college setting along with some general courses.

**Four-year Colleges and Universities** – these schools award a bachelor's degree or an advanced professional degree. Common categories are the following:

**Universities** are distinguished from colleges in that they are organized in a different manner, having divisions called colleges. Often they are larger than colleges. The University of Connecticut, for example,

has a College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and a College of Agriculture along with Schools of Business, Allied Health, Education, etc.

**Liberal Arts Colleges** offer majors in the fields which have led to the development of civilization, such as literature, history, mathematics, science, foreign language, fine arts, philosophy, etc. Since a “pure” liberal arts college offers no career training, many graduates continue their education on a graduate level.

**Technological schools** or institutes specialize in mathematics, computer science, the physical sciences, and specific programs of engineering. Many have recently added majors in business and some other liberal arts majors, as well.

**Fine Arts Colleges** offer degrees in a single art, such as music or graphic arts, dance or drama. There are a few colleges of “the arts” which award degrees in several disciplines.

**Theological Colleges or Seminaries** provide major programs for those intending to enter the clergy along with programs that are associated with religious settings, such as counseling and religious education.

**Business colleges** offer majors who train students to enter a specific area of business, such as administration, accounting or real estate.

**The United States of America operates five Academies:** the U. S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, the U. S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, MD, the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY, the U. S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, CO, and the U. S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, CT. All but the Coast Guard Academy require a nomination from a United States Representative or a United States Senator or the Vice President of the United States. The Coast Guard Academy uses a point system for admission.

Application to the Academies should be made **during the spring of your junior year** by contacting both your U. S. Senators and the District Representative. It is not necessary to know the official personally. The nominations are in addition to the scholastic requirements of the individual academies. More information about the academies may be obtained from your counselor.

## OTHER POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS

**Vocational/Technical Schools** – These schools focus on vocational technical education and training. Students receive a comprehensive, in-depth training by skilled craftspeople in each trade. Upon completion of one of these programs, students have the skills and hands-on experience to make them very employable. Employers generally respect the credentials of graduates from vo-tech schools. In addition, these schools usually have strong job placement services and close ties with employers. Students might prepare for a career as a Hairdresser, Electrician, Carpenter, Auto Body Technician, Aircraft Mechanic, etc. Graduates will have the option to start their career immediately or continue their education at a two or four year college or in a specialized training program.

**Apprenticeships** – Apprenticeship programs in the State of Connecticut are administered by the Department of Labor through Regional Apprenticeship Representatives located throughout the state. Apprenticeship is a program of "learning while earning" and is based on a solid employer-employee relationship. The apprentice employee has voluntarily entered into a mutual agreement with an employer regarding training. Apprenticeable areas are in occupations requiring a diverse range of skills and knowledge, as well as a high level of maturity, reliability, and judgment.

The total number of hours required to complete an apprenticeship varies by trade i.e. Electrician – 8,000 hours. In addition to the "on-the-job" training, the apprentice is required to take classes usually during the evening. For more information, visit the Career Center or the CT Department of Labor web site at [www.ctdol.state.ct.us](http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us)

**Military** – Representatives from the military come to PHS on a regular basis. Students who would like information may speak to the representatives during regularly scheduled visits or they may make appointments to meet with recruiters during a free period. Juniors and seniors may take the ASVAB test (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) at PHS in the spring. The ASVAB is the test that students must take prior to entering any of the services. Many PHS students, who have no interest in the military, will also take the test as a career counseling tool. Information on the military and ROTC is available in the Career Center.

**Gap Year** – This option is growing in popularity. Students use the year between high school and college to work, travel, do service, or a combination of any of these.

**Work-Options** – Some PHS students choose to go to work right after high school graduation. In some cases, students spend a year working and saving money for their future educational plans. Still others find a job with benefits that may include tuition reimbursement. Students should check the Job Listing in the Career Center or visit the local Department of Labor office or web site.

**Alternate Educational Experiences** –Some PHS students opt to travel or take part in a foreign exchange program following graduation. Information is available in the high school on various programs such as AFS, Outward Bound, NOLS, Sea Education Association, Americorps, etc.

## HOW DO YOU KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN?

**Self-Knowledge** – For your own benefit, you will be well advised to make a thorough self-examination before attempting to select a particular college. Some of the questions you should be able to answer include the following:

- What are your career goals, and how sure are you that these are proper for you?
- Do you want ethnic and cultural diversity? Do you have a liberal or conservative philosophy?
- How much intellectual challenge do you want? Are you more comfortable feeling smarter than those around you, or being in the company of people you perceive as more intelligent than you, or in a situation where you are about in the middle?
- What sort of a social situation suits you better? A close-knit community with a lot of sharing, or a more impersonal setting where you can be more private and “anonymous” if you choose?
- What are your most important values? For example, will you function well with an honor code, or with strictly imposed rules in a religiously oriented setting?
- How important is family contact? Will you be comfortable with long periods of separation from your family, or will you need to get home very often?
- Do you need a wide range of available cultural activities to find things you like to do, or will you be content with campus activities and an occasional touring group or troupe?
- Do you thrive in the hustle and bustle of a large city, or do you prefer a more rural setting, or do you want a setting like the suburban one you now have?
- Would you consider a same sex college where there are greater leadership opportunities?
- Do you wish an entirely academic setting, or would the practicality of a college with work-oriented programs such as co-operative education or internship suit you better? Co-operative education often extends the total time in college due to periods of time working in a field related

to your major. Job placement can be in thousands of locations in the U.S. as well as overseas. Practical experience is gained and many students are eventually offered positions by companies they worked for as students. Internship is usually less extensive, both in time and location, but also offers practical experience and usually carries course credit, thus fitting in to a regular 4-year program.

Careful consideration of these questions and your answers to them will help your self-knowledge and greatly assist you in choosing some of the specifications for the colleges you will apply to. As you go through this process, you may well find that your answers change. You may be changing yourself, and you may be getting to know yourself much better.

**Myths and Realities About College** – In considering your post-secondary plans, it may be prudent to examine some prevailing ideas about a college education, not necessarily to change your mind about going, but to give greater reality to your expectations.

- “*Going to college will make you richer.*” Before World War II, generally only the wealthy sent their children to college, so this idea is firmly embedded in our culture. In addition, statistics indicate that the average college graduate makes a great deal more during a lifetime than a non-college graduate (without saying that it was the education that brought this about). But if making money is your primary goal you may be interested in some of the following:
- “*A college education will help you get a better job.*” Of course, this depends on your concept of what a “better” job is. A college education is required for entry into only a comparatively small number of jobs, mostly in the professions such as law, medicine, engineering or teaching. In most other careers, your college education may help you win out in the competition for an entry-level job. Promotion to the career you seek will most likely be based then on your performance and your ability to relate with fellow workers, hardly the main part of a college curriculum. Certain highly paid careers such as the skilled trades require only a specialized high school education followed by on-the-job training.
- “*Colleges are easy to rate – the more they cost and the more selective they are, the better they are.*” College cost is determined by the budgetary needs and philosophy of the institution. There is little or no relation to the quality of education received beyond a rough “what the traffic will bear” relationship. For example, some of the most prestigious universities in the country, like the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Michigan cost far less than private schools of comparable quality. And when looking at quality among schools with similar levels of selectivity, wide variations can be found in specific programs and sometimes in the overall rating of the college.

**What Does College Do For You?** Obviously, college is a very desirable choice for a large segment of the population. Some of the reasons for attending college are:

- The depth and breadth of learning that will come from college is usually impossible to foresee while in high school. You will study disciplines you may not yet have heard of. Going on in a “familiar” subject will bring the realization that, no matter how good your high school courses were, you only “scratched the surface” here.
- College provides a transitional separation from the family, to the extent you and your family wish, during which you will be largely on your own without having to take on the responsibility of supporting yourself or really taking an adult role in your community. In our society it is the principal growing-up time for large segments of our population.
- Contacts with people who are influential in your life, both professionally and socially, are frequently made in college. Many people meet their future spouses in college, as well as future business partners, or relatives of future employers.
- These are only some of the ways college can change your life. After graduation from college, you will definitely be quite different from the way you are today.

## ASSESSING YOUR CREDENTIALS

If you've really read through all that precedes this section, you're probably truly convinced you want to attend college. Let's see what you have to offer a college so that it will be interested in admitting you to study on its campus.

- **Course load** – Perhaps the most important factor is sometimes hard to measure, and always somewhat subjective. Have you challenged yourself during high school by taking appropriate courses and/or levels of work that made you think and work hard? Have you chosen a full schedule and gone as far as you can go in the five academic areas and other courses that interest you?
- **Grades** – What is your GPA? Review your transcript and calculate your three-year grade point average. This will be helpful information when researching colleges. You will receive an official weighted and unweighted GPA in your senior year. Some colleges will choose to recalculate your GPA based on their own criteria.
- **How well have you done in admissions testing?** The SAT I: Reasoning Test, or its “rival” test the ACT, is required for admission to most colleges. About one-fourth of the more selective colleges also require one or more SAT II: Subject Tests in specific subject areas. How have you done in relation to other students and to the average scores of students admitted to the colleges you like?
- **What have you done outside the classroom?** If your standard academic credentials don't quite measure up, a strong activity picture may help make up the difference. Also, if you aspire to go to a most competitive college, you are expected to have one long-term involvement in an extra-curricular activity. When evaluating activities, it is quality and depth of involvement that count, **not** quantity and variety.
- **Has a member of your family attended the college you are applying to?** This “legacy” status can tip the balance in your favor.
- **Work history.** Colleges view work experience similarly to extra curricular activities.

## INVESTIGATING THE COLLEGES

With over 3,400 colleges to choose from, many of them will satisfy your requirements. We recommend you begin by completing a college search in our Career Center. Some factors you may identify are as follows:

- **Majors** - programs of study, commonly called majors, are a way of insuring the college has courses in your intended area of concentration. In early planning, it is good to remember that you may be among the 50% of students who change majors and to ask for all of your possible areas of interest.
- **Location** - you and your family have probably decided how far you can go away from home without causing problems for them or for you; search within these bounds. Check, too, to see whether it is in a city or out in the country by itself, or in a small town.
- **Control** – basically there are two types of control, public and private. Publicly controlled colleges are largely dependent on legislatures for funding and their policies are frequently influenced by that fact, particularly in quotas for out-of-state students, but in other subtle ways, as well. Privately controlled colleges, while free of this restraint, are responsible to a board of directors, or trustees, and they usually charge more in order to protect their endowment.
- **Religious Affiliation** – some private colleges are religiously affiliated. As in the case of a publicly controlled college, the religious group both contributes financially and controls, to some extent. As in the case of publicly supported schools, religiously affiliated colleges are often less expensive than other “private” schools.
- **Costs** – for students living on campus, basic costs per year can vary from around \$20,000 to about \$45,000. Although it is not a good idea to eliminate colleges from your initial list based on cost, if it is very important, some parameters can be placed on cost.
- **Special programs or services** – listed within this category are specialized programs such as pre-medical or pre-law programs which are not majors. Also included are honors programs, cross-registration, co-operative education, programs for study abroad, ROTC and programs for specific handicaps, among others. Depending on your interests and special circumstances, these may be very important characteristics.

- **Admissions Information** – although the selectivity level is likely to be the most important bit of information on admissions, your own particular circumstances may require other options, such as credit for AP work in high school, admission in January, or consideration of ethnic and minority students.
- **Campus Life** - includes dormitory and eating facilities, regulations, fraternities, sororities and non-athletic activities available, including religious services.
- **Athletic Programs** - those who want to play intercollegiate sports will want to work closely with their coach as well as their counselor. It is important to understand the differences among NCAA Division I, II, and III institutions with regard to the levels of competition, program funding, and recruiting practice. The Athletic Department provides the NCAA application and clearinghouse information which is required of all Division I and II collegiate athletes.

Make an appointment with your counselor to review your search.

## TOOLS TO HELP NARROW YOUR CHOICE

In the early stages of college choice, most students have a large number of potential choices on their list and are somewhat confused about their priorities. Those who have worked hard on self-examination will find the narrowing process easier, but a decision this complex is never really easy. Some of the following suggestions may help, though each person will find his or her unique way to reach decisions.

**Your School Counselor.** On-going conversations with your counselor. He/she is your best resource for objectivity

**Internet Resources.** Naviance, College Board, Choices, etc.

**Career Center.** Visit the Career Center to take advantage of the resources available and to learn more about your choices. The Career Center staff will assist you in completing a college search.

**Review.** Look back over your credentials and your career-exploration results. A little perspective at this point will help you decide what factors are most important to you.

**Read.** A wealth of information is available on colleges: catalogs, guides, computerized data bases, and suggested internet sites are available in the Career Center along with help and advice on how to use them.

**Consult with others.** Sometimes you are the person least able to evaluate yourself. Talk to people who know you well: friends, parents, teachers, counselors, coaches, clergy and employers. Most people are eager to help others and are pleased when you ask their advice. Of course, you have to sort it out at the end.

**Visit schools.** The initial visit will probably include a campus tour and a chance to speak with either an admissions counselor or a student representative. If possible, ask to see areas of the college that you might frequent, such as classrooms in your major department and facilities for activities that interest you. Select questions from the following list to ask counselors or student guides, but avoid questions that can be easily answered by doing basic research in advance of your visit.

It is ideal to make a second visit to a college, which impressed you favorably in your initial visit. This may be combined with a formal interview after you have applied, where this is applicable, but if

possible should include an overnight stay in a dormitory, visit(s) to class (es) and experiencing at least part of a weekend.

**Trust Your Instincts and Feelings.** If you have strong feelings that something is right (or wrong) for you, go with those feelings. Chances are excellent that they will lead you in the best direction.

## COLLEGE VISITS

*A few hints that will make things go more smoothly for you:*

Be certain your parents notify the high school attendance office regarding your absence. The PHS Attendance Policy allows SENIORS to make four college visits which are considered excused absences.

- Telephone or email the office of admissions requesting an appointment to visit. The opportunity of talking to an admissions officer can be mutually helpful. You can ask questions that are not answered in the catalogue, and the admissions officer will get to know you as an individual. In some colleges, group interviews are conducted; these, too, can be helpful, since opportunities are provided to ask questions.
- Bring an unofficial transcript which you can present to the interviewer. Have a separate copy for each college you plan to visit. On the basis of this information, the interviewer can usually tell you whether an application to his/her institution is reasonable.
- In planning your trip, allow at least three hours for a campus tour and questions.
- Have background information about each school you plan to visit. Consult the catalogue for that college.
- Carry a small notebook in which you can list the questions you have and also record your own observations.
- In your class visits, observe the size of classes. Try to determine whether large lectures are later broken into discussion groups and whether teaching assistants or professors teach freshman courses.

- Talk with students on campus. What do they like about the college and what do they not like?
- Attempt to find out both from students and the admissions counselor what the academic pressures are on campus.
- Take a camera with you. A few pictures from each college will help you remember the visit.
- Your parents will probably accompany you on your initial visit to colleges, but you may talk to an admissions person alone at some point. In a follow-up visit, try to go alone or spend most of the time there without your parents.
- Dress appropriately. Do not wear jeans or sneakers.
- After your visit, write a brief thank you note to the admissions person you spoke to. Be sure to get his/her full name and title from someone in the admissions office. This note should be written promptly and neatly handwritten or typed on plain white or personal stationery.
- Your counselor will be glad to meet with you prior to any campus visits to help you prepare for your visit and perhaps conduct a rehearsal interview.
- Your first interview should not be at the college of your first choice. Select another of your choices as a warm-up to help you gain experience and confidence in the interviewing process. Perhaps it would be helpful to speak with a friend who has had an interview.
- When you return home, review your notes with your parents and make some judgments. It would be wise to discuss these with your counselor. Your parents and counselor can help you evaluate your observations and opinions so that you can make a good final decision.

***Questions to consider.....***

- What are the strongest departments at the college?
- What sizes are classes generally? For First Year Students? For Upperclass Students?
- How do I compare academically with students already attending this school?

- What do students do after they graduate? Do they go on to postgraduate studies? What percentage is employed upon graduation?
- What kinds of cultural, sports, literary activities are offered on campus?
- How important are fraternities and sororities on campus?
- What is the social life like here?
- What percentage of students remains on campus during weekends?
- What kinds of living accommodations are there? Dorms? Foreign language houses? Private apartments? What percentage of students lives in each?
- Are sports available for the average player? Ask about specific activities that interest you.
- What kind of student is generally the most successful/happy at this college?
- What percentage of the students receives financial aid?
- How much importance is placed on social activities and other extracurricular activities?
- How safe is the campus? How does the institution respond to security incidents?
- How large is the library? Is it open-stack to First Year Students? Is it open-stack to any undergraduates? What are its special features or resources?
- What support services are available to students? Post-graduate planning? Free health care? Tutoring if needed? Help finding off-campus employment during the school year and during the summer? Junior year abroad or at another U.S. institution?
- What is the institutional policy and commitment to ethnic/cultural diversity?

### **QUESTIONS THAT STUDENTS OFTEN ARE ASKED AT A COLLEGE INTERVIEW**

The following questions are a cross section of questions that are generally asked at college interviews:

1. How did you first hear about X college?
2. What are your career goals—long-range and short-range?

3. What are you interested in majoring in?
4. What kinds of things do you do outside of school?
5. What accomplishments have you achieved or activities have you achieved or activities have you participated in that have had a particular effect on your life.
6. What might you be interested in as a future profession?
7. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?
8. How familiar are you with this college and its programs?
9. Which one of your activities has given you the most satisfaction?
10. If you had high school to do over again, would you do anything differently?
11. What particular “life goals” are you seeking to achieve or pursue?
12. What are your priorities in selecting a college?
13. How would you describe your high school and how would you change it?
14. Where do you see yourself in four years?
15. Discuss your most stimulating intellectual experience.
16. Tell me about something you have really wanted which you had to go after on your own.
17. What is the most significant contribution you have made to your school?
18. What books or articles have made a lasting impression on your way of thinking? Have you read deeply into any one author or field?
19. Have you ever thought of not going to college? What would you do?

## APPLYING FOR ADMISSION

**Obtaining Applications** – This is your responsibility. **The majority of colleges and universities prefer on-line applications;** however, the Career Center has some paper applications on file, including our state universities and those of many neighboring states. If we don't have the application you are seeking, you may call the admissions office of the college, obtain one on the internet or email a request for an application and application information. (Naviance is particularly good at this.)

## PHS APPLICATION PROCEDURE

**Summer Packet:** You will receive information to be completed over the summer. This includes a parent brag sheet, a student questionnaire and information on how to complete an activities form. It is very important that this info be completed and returned to your school counselor by the date indicated.

**College Application Processing Form:** This is used to track all college/scholarship applications. **No application, including those completed on-line is complete without a processing form.** The processing form is used as our notification to forward all supporting materials, including your high school transcript to the college. (A sample is included on page 22.)

**Teacher Recommendations:** **Teacher recommendations are not required by all colleges.** Students should check carefully to determine which colleges require teacher recommendations. If a recommendation is needed, it is the responsibility of the student to contact their teacher(s) as early as possible. Students should complete the PHS "Teacher Recommendation Request Form" and follow the directions accordingly. (A sample is included on page 23.)

**Counselor Recommendation Form:** **Counselor recommendations are not required by all colleges.** If the college(s) you are applying to require a counselor recommendation, this form must be completed and returned to your counselor before a recommendation is written. (A sample is included on page 24 and 25.)

COLLEGE APPLICATION PROCESSING FORM

School Counseling Office

(203) 262-3238

***This form must be handed to the secretary in the School Counseling Office as least 3 weeks prior to the application deadline***

College Application Deadline	Due in Counseling Office No Later Than
November 1	October 11
November 15	October 25
December 1	November 8
December 15	November 22
January 1	December 5

Date Submitted \_\_\_\_\_ Counselor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Cell Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Name of College \_\_\_\_\_ City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Application Deadline Date \_\_\_\_\_

Circle One:    Early Decision                  Early Action                  Regular Decision

In Family Connection, complete the FERPA waiver and enter Common Application user i.d. and password. Even if you are NOT using the Common Application, an account must be established through the Common Application website.

Please print your user name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please check all that apply:**

\_\_\_\_\_ a counselor recommendation is not required for this college.

\_\_\_\_\_ a counselor recommendation is required and:

\_\_\_\_\_ a Counselor Recommendation Form has been submitted to my counselor

\_\_\_\_\_ a Parent Brag Sheet has been submitted to my counselor

Are you using the Common Application?      Yes                  No

The following teacher(s) should have submitted letters on my behalf for this college:

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

IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO SUBMIT THE COMPLETED APPLICATION; ANY APPLICATION FEES AND TEST SCORE (IF REQUIRED) BY THE DEADLINE DATE. THE TRANSCRIPT, SCHOOL REPORT AND COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION (IF REQUESTED) WILL BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY INDICATED ON THIS FORM WITHIN 15 SCHOOL DAYS OF THE DATE IT IS RECEIVED.

I authorize the release of the PHS transcript.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent/Guardian Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Remember:**

- All SAT, AP or ACT scores must be released directly from College Board or ACT.
- The CEEB Code for Pomperaug High School is 070-685.

POMPERAUG HIGH SCHOOL

TEACHER RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION FORM

Directions for students: Complete this form and give it to your teacher when you ask him/her to write you a letter of recommendation. A teacher recommendation is specific about your performance in their class, be as detailed as possible. You must submit this to your teacher at least 4 weeks prior to your first submission date.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date Submitted to Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

List the colleges to which you have applied, their requested submission date and check if using the Common Application.

College	Requested Submission Date	Common Application

Class taken with this teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_ Final Grade \_\_\_\_\_

What about this class did you enjoy most?

What specific experience/project/discussion/concept did you find most stimulating and you felt brought out the best in you?

What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?

What challenge, if any did you encounter in the class and how did you handle it?

**COUNSELOR RECOMMENDATION FORM**

**Submit it with or prior to first application**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

1. **Your Colleges/Major:** Please list the schools you are applying to and your intended major or area(s) of interest.

2. **Academic History:** Provide any academic situation that may need an explanation- Ex. I was not able to take Spanish IV due to a schedule conflict.

3. **World of Work:** Describe any work experiences you have had.

4. **Personal History:** Tell me anything about you or your family or a personal situation that has helped you become the person you are. You can also write about something that has impacted you greatly or was a major obstacle.

5. Is there anything else that you feel would be helpful for me to include in your letter of recommendation?

6. **Extracurricular/Community Service/Travel Activities:** Please list notable achievements you have made both in and out of school and provide any interesting summer/travel experiences you have had. Explain your involvement and include stories, proud moments, feelings, etc.

7. Please complete the activity sheet attached.

## Writing the Essay

Trying to define and describe a good essay is a self-defeating act. Good writers and readers know when they have one, but they cannot tell you exactly how to write one. A few suggestions may help.

- Write about something meaningful to you, that you are personally and emotionally involved in, something you know well.
- Use language that is natural to you, unless you customarily have a lot of problems with usage and grammar. Always have someone else check your essay.
- Do not reject an idea because it does not seem important enough. Wonderful essays have been written using such mundane objects as sneakers and couches as focal points.
- Give yourself enough time. An essay suitable for several colleges can be written and refined in junior year with the help of your English teacher. Sometimes colleges assign a specific topic. In this case, get right to the task and submit your writing for criticism to your English teacher or another respected critic. Do not wait until the last minute and risk sending a weak essay or going beyond the deadline to revise it. Maybe you'll be lucky and not have to write one – not all colleges require essays – but they are a chance for you to express yourself freely. Make the most of it.
- Self-expression need not always be limited to the essay format. Art portfolios, in the original or photographed; audio or video tapes of theatrical or musical performances; copies of newspaper articles about you; even consumable items like baked goods have been presented to admissions officers to demonstrate unusual talent and interest. Be careful, though, there is a fine line between a good strong statement and overkill (or apparent bribery). Check with your counselor before submitting materials or items the college does not request.

## SAMPLE ESSAY QUESTIONS

- Evaluate a significant experience or achievement that has special meaning to you.
- Discuss some issue of personal, local, national, or international concern and its importance to you.
- Indicate a person who has had a significant influence on you, and describe that influence.
- Please describe in detail a special interest, experience, or accomplishment that you consider significant. If you prefer, you may submit an essay on some topic of local or national importance about which you have a strong conviction.
- Please describe what makes you a unique individual and how these qualities can benefit the University of Connecticut community.
- Discuss what books you have read for enjoyment.
- In the past, candidates have used this space in a great variety of ways. They have written about family situations, school, or community events to which they have had strong reactions, people who have influenced them, significant experiences, intellectual interests, personal aspirations, or – more generally – topics that spring from the life of the imagination. There is no “correct” way to respond to this essay request. In writing about something that matters to you, you will convey to us a sense of yourself.

## APPLICATIONS AND ESSAYS – DO’S

**DO** keep a hard copy of any application submitted online. Provide your counselor with copies of essays.

**DO** complete a cover sheet for every application/scholarship submitted.

**DO** fill out the application neatly in a non-smudged pen or on a computer– collect all information and practice ahead of time if necessary.

**DO BE SELECTIVE WITH INFORMATION** – don't include everything about yourself. Send only relevant data that will enhance your candidacy – when in doubt, check with your counselor.

**DO** be honest about activities, employment, etc.

**DO** remember to contact the College Board to forward your SAT I and SAT II scores to every college to which you have applied. Your SAT scores **will not** appear on your high school transcript.

**DO** be **realistic** and **confident**.

## **REMEMBER**

**BE HONEST**, don't write what you don't believe.

**CHOOSE YOUR ESSAY TOPICS CAREFULLY**, it isn't easy to write about yourself in a sincere and personal way.

**BE SPECIFIC**, use concrete language and examples.

**BE CAREFUL**, proofread your essays and ask for help, make your final product your best effort.

## APPLICATION OPTIONS

There are four major plans used by colleges:

1. **“Standard” procedure.** Colleges receive applications and records by a prescribed deadline date (usually between January 1 and March 15). All applicants are notified at approximately the same time (traditionally April 1). Accepted applicants must reply by May 1, usually with a deposit if they accept the offer of admission. Deposit refund policies vary widely.
2. **Rolling admission.** Colleges using this plan usually notify applicants within four weeks of receiving all information. According to one plan, a deposit is expected from accepted students shortly after notification of acceptance. Other colleges subscribe to the traditional candidates’ reply date of May 1, no matter how early they were accepted. It is important to note that though deadlines may be later – colleges will fill their incoming class on a "first come, first served" basis. Applying early is to your advantage.
3. **Early decision** is an alternate plan for a college using either of the plans above, but most commonly the traditional one. The applicant must have all information in early (the most frequently used deadline is November 1) and will be notified usually within four weeks. Early decision applicants are almost always asked to agree in writing to withdraw other applications if accepted at the early decision college. The agreement also usually stipulates that no other early decision applications may be made. It’s clear that students should apply only to a definite first-choice college on this plan. Please also note that all admissions testing must be completed earlier.
4. **Early action** is much like early decision but without the commitment. Application and notification dates are similar, but students need not sign agreements to withdraw other applications. Typically, only colleges very sure of their desirability, such as “Ivy League” colleges, offer this plan.

## PROS AND CONS OF EARLY DECISION

### Before Applying

- Know difference between Early Decision and Early Action
- Consider deadlines
- Understand decisions rendered – accept, defer, deny
- **Be aware of binding nature of Early Decision acceptance**

### Pros

- If college is definitely first choice (would attend even if accepted at other school), might be a good option
- Obvious advantages:
  - **Less time spent preparing applications**
  - **Less money spent in application fees**
  - **If accepted, less stress. Students may spend senior year focusing on other things**
- Depending on the college and the strength of the Early Decision pool, student **may** stand a better chance of admission (Not a sure thing, however)
- If student is deferred, that student will get a “second chance” when read again in the context of the Regular Decision pool

### Cons

- Decision to apply may be made in haste before a thorough college search has been conducted
- College search should be completed before beginning of senior year
- If accepted, other applications must be withdrawn
- Application may be considered primarily on three years of work, possibly without senior grades, most recent standardized test scores, honors or awards received. May not be as strong as an application submitted later in senior year
- If financial aid is going to be a consideration, do not apply early. (i.e. if a student will be comparing financial aid packages and attending the school which awards the most aid)
- If denied, other applications need to be submitted, sometimes quickly

### Remember

- Be thorough!
- Be cautious!
- Respect the binding nature of the Early Decision agreement!

## CRITERIA FOR THE COLLEGE'S SELECTION

There are many variations in priority among colleges, depending largely on the ratio of acceptances to applications, i.e. selectivity. Those colleges who have the luxury of choosing only a portion of a large applicant pool generally rate factors in the following order:

**Strength of the high school academic record** - The strength of the academic program and your achievement in relation to that is the most important factor in admissions.

**Admissions testing** - The SAT I: Reasoning Test or ACT, its counterpart are often the secondary factor in the admissions decision. Good test scores can sometimes compensate partially for some weakness in the academic record (and vice versa). SAT II: Subject Tests (formerly called Achievement Tests) are often considered in the admissions process at competitive colleges. They may also be used for academic placement after students enroll. A few colleges have dropped requirements for testing altogether, but the number is too small to constitute a trend.

**Essay** - Like other secondary factors in the admissions process, an essay can tip the scale in your favor by exhibiting an interesting facet of your personality or a “gift” for using words well. If an essay is optional, include one. Even when the option is not offered, admissions people often consider essays and other presentations submitted by the applicant.

**Extra-curricular activities** – If your activity record is spectacular – showing a high level of success in one area or more – it may well boost your chances of being admitted to college. A weak record will not be a handicap usually unless there are other glaring weaknesses in your record or you aspire to a most selective college.

**Recommendations** – Colleges may use strong and specific support from the school as expressed in the letter(s) written by the counselor and teachers to make their decisions.

### Possible Outcomes

Colleges may offer one of several responses to your application as a result of their review of your credentials.

- **Admission – obviously the best alternative.** Choose the one you want, comply with their

directions and timetable, and notify other colleges offering admission of your decision.

- **Admission to a branch campus**, not your first choice of campus. Some large colleges such as the University of Connecticut and Penn State will give you this alternative, rather than a clear acceptance or rejection. You will be on the main campus normally within two years. You must decide whether you want to “stick it out” at the branch for that time. If you have not done so, and it is possible, visit the branch(es) if this school is high on your list.
- **Deferred.** With early decision or early action, this means you will not know until the usual notification date. While it is not the best thing to have happen, many students on the deferred list are later accepted – don’t be discouraged. Be sure to have another option.
- **Wait list.** In effect the college is telling you it feels you can handle the work there, but the competition level for admission was a little above you. If the letter seems to invite questions, call to find out where you are on the list (if it is ranked) and how many others share your situation. You may well hear words of encouragement. At this point it is probably best to accept another offer of admission. Most people would rather lose a \$200 deposit than wind up with no college to attend in September.
- **Rejection** -If you have done a thorough job of choosing and sought advice, you most likely have a good “safety” to fall back on.
- **Transfers.** If you find that you have chosen a college that turns out to be different from your initial impression, or if you or your intended major have changed so much it cannot accommodate you, or even if you just do not like it, you may be able to transfer to another college. Depending on the number of college credits you have earned, your high school credentials may no longer be considered. Transfer applications are similar to freshman applications, though deadlines and standards may differ. So, too, may the consideration of the credits and grades from your original college. Be sure you know how they will be treated so you will be prepared in case you have to face probation or make up credits.

## PAYING FOR COLLEGE

### *PHS offers a Financial Aid Night for seniors and their parents each fall.*

**Before.** Knowing college is coming, as much money as practical is placed in some sort of a fund for college. There is a misconception that people who save for their child's education are unduly penalized in the financial aid process, but that is not true. The college's financial aid office will be looking at a family's long-term ability to finance education, not cash available. In fact, about 6% of parents' savings are what colleges will expect you to contribute annually. On the other hand, about 35% of the student's savings are expected to go toward college, so beware of putting your money in the student's account.

**During.** Some families are fortunate enough to be able to pay for college without financial assistance. Those families may want to consider the pre-payment tuition plan offered by many colleges. Typically the college will allow parents to pre-pay all four years' tuition at the level it is upon the student's entry to college. Depending on the family's financial situation, this can have some advantages and avoids cost increases, which often average about 6% per year.

**After.** In spite of prior planning and saving, most families are forced to borrow money to pay college expenses.

**How about financial aid?** Financial aid falls into two main categories: need-based and merit. Over 85% of all financial aid are need-based and are distributed through the college's financial aid office. It is important to carefully follow the instructions of each college the student has applied to because the procedures and required forms will vary.

There are two standard financial aid applications used nationwide, the FAFSA and the CSS Profile. Both attempt to use a uniform methodology to analyze a family's relative financial strength. Both provide the college's financial aid office with an estimate of the "expected family contribution" so that the financial aid officer can allocate grant money in the most equitable way possible. Often colleges will supplement information from the FAFSA or the CSS Profile with their own applications, the previous year's tax return, and/or a non-custodial parent supplement.

**The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** is required by virtually all colleges. It is available on line at [www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/), and should be filed between January 1 and February 15. The FAFSA asks you to name up to six schools to receive your application data. After your FAFSA is processed, you will receive a Student Aid Report (SAR) which will tell you your Expected Family Contribution (EFC). Colleges and local scholarships will be using this information to determine their financial aid package.

**The PROFILE Application** produced by the College Scholarship Service (CSS); the Profile is used by some colleges that want more detailed and customized information than the FAFSA provides. For instance, **it takes home equity into consideration, while the FAFSA does not.** From the students' point of view, the Profile has an advantage in that it can be filed in the fall of the senior year, so financial aid will be determined several months earlier. This is a special advantage to students who are applying to college under an early decision plan. **PROFILE** applications are available in the Career Center in early fall.

### **The Number One Rule of Financial Aid: Get Your Forms in on Time!**

During the admissions process, students are notified of the colleges' award of financial aid.

Normally, this aid is allocated in three ways:

- **Grant** – money applied directly to college expenses which do not have to be repaid – in essence, a gift. Grant money comes from both the federal government and from the college's private sources.
- **Loan** – as part of a “financial aid package”, a loan may be offered to pay part of college expenses. Loan provisions vary in interest rates, repayment schedules and forgiveness clauses, depending on their sources.
- **Work-study** – often the financial aid package involves a student job, usually on campus, to help defray expenses.

Some families choose not to accept loans or work study provisions of the financial aid package when they feel they can find better terms somewhere else. For example, interest on a home equity loan may be fully deductible from taxes, while other loans are not. Students may be able to find off-

campus employment that provides more revenue than the campus job, especially in heavily populated areas.

**Importance of Filing the FAFSA.** Many families have heard that their circumstances will most likely preclude their receiving any need-based financial aid. Therefore, they see no point in completing the FAFSA. However, this is an uncertain world. Sudden loss of income, due to lay-off, illness, or death can literally change circumstances drastically overnight. A FAFSA already filed can be quickly amended, even after usual deadlines, but colleges will not accept a **new** FAFSA report past their deadline. In addition, even though a family's application for aid in a previous year has been refused, an additional student in college will halve their expected per pupil contribution, and may nudge them over the line of eligibility. Filing the FAFSA may not yield results, but the potential rewards far outweigh the relatively small amount of time spent.

**Merit scholarships** (non-need-based), are usually granted on one of the following bases:

- Some outstanding performance such as a high score on the PSAT/NMSQT taken junior year, the winning of an essay or oratorical contest, or a superb talent. The sources for such scholarships may be campus-based, national, state, or local. Amounts and conditions vary widely.
- The armed forces offer ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) scholarships which pay for tuition, books and fees for all four years at participating institutions. Admission is very competitive and recipients must serve as military officers on active duty, then on reserve for several years, depending on the service chosen and policies in effect at the time.
- Some colleges offer incentive scholarships to attract students of a higher caliber than they usually do. These are often called presidential scholarships.

**Athletic scholarships** are granted to outstanding athletes by colleges in Division I and Division II of the NCAA. Students need not excel scholastically, but recent stringent regulations require a relatively strong college preparatory course load in high school. Also, scholarships usually don't continue if the student becomes unable to compete due to scholastic deficiencies or injury.

**Non-local Scholarships** - There is a large body of other scholarships, loan and fellowship funds available to students willing to do a fair amount of research and application. Some are tied to an intended major, others have to do with racial or ethnic origin, fraternal organizations, unions or employers of parents or students, veterans groups, religious affiliation, and handicaps or other unique

applicant characteristics. Students should check the PHS website ([www.pomperaug.com](http://www.pomperaug.com)) for a listing of non-local scholarships. The list is updated frequently from September through May. Information and applications are available in the Career Center.

**Local Scholarships** - Local organizations give scholarships to our graduates. Need is not necessary in all cases, though each donor has a unique set of requirements, some of which are set by the terms of wills. Application packets will be issued in the early spring to each student. (Check your Regional Calendar for dates.)

Local Scholarships –

- Every senior receives application packet in Senior English Class, check Region calendar for date.
- Money donated by organizations in the community
- Most recipients are chosen by the organizations
- Most scholarships given in June at the Awards Night Program

**Tuition Savings – The New England Regional Student Program (RSP)** enables residents of the New England States (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont) to pay significantly reduced tuition at out-of-state public colleges and universities within New England if they pursue certain academic programs not offered by their home state’s public institutions.

All 80 public colleges and universities in New England participate voluntarily in the RSP. Together, these two-year and four-year institutions of higher education offer hundreds of academic programs and majors at reduced tuition to New England residents. In addition, RSP undergraduate applicants receive admissions preference over other out-of-state applicants at the participating colleges and universities. Interested students can determine which reduced tuition programs are available in a particular academic year by checking the current APPLE BOOK, which is available in the Career Center.

## FINANCIAL AID TERMINOLOGY

**Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** – The application required to determine eligibility for Federal Student Aid, you can get from your high school, college or university. A federal toll-free number can provide you with more information (800) 4-Fed AID (800-433-3243). A FAFSA needs to be completed each year the student is enrolled in school. [www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/)

**Award Letter** – The letter sent to a student from college or university's Office of Student Financial Assistance indicating how much financial aid and the types of financial aid the student qualifies for during an academic year.

**Campus Based Financial Aid** – Federal funds that are controlled by the college or university and are distributed to those students who qualify for financial assistance. The campus based programs include: Perkins Loan, College Work-Study and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant.

**Grant** – A sum of money given to a student based on financial need rather than academic or other achievement.

**Loan** - Money available for students to borrow. Typically, loans must be paid back with interest. Usually, student loans do not require repayment until the student has graduated or left school.

**Need Analysis** – The evaluation of a family's financial strength. The result of need analysis is an indication of the amount the family can contribute toward a college education.

**Federal Parent Plus Loan for Undergraduate Student (PLUS)** – A loan for parents who have dependent students in school. Parents can borrow a sum of money equal to the cost of education less financial aid received. Parents begin making payments 30-60 days after they receive the loan and must make payments of at least \$50 per month. Parents may also take up to 10 years to pay back the loan.

**Federal PELL Grant** – A grant program from the Federal Government. The program dictates that if a student demonstrates financial need then that student is entitled as a United States citizen to some financial assistance in meeting the cost of a college education. (See also: Student Aid Report)

**Federal Perkins** – A low interest loan that students may borrow to assist in meeting the cost of receiving a college education.

**Capitol Scholarship Program** – A state supported program of aid for academically qualified students. State scholar status is determined by SAT scores (1200) or a place in the top fifth of the high school class. Eligibility for a grant depends on financial need as shown on the FAFSA. **The application is due before February 15 of the senior year.**

**Cost of Education** – Those costs both direct and indirect, associated with attendance at a college or university. Valid costs include: tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies and a moderate amount for miscellaneous expenses (clothing, transportation, etc.).

**Family Contribution** – The amount of money that is expected from the family (via need analysis) to be contributed toward the cost of education. The family contribution consists of a contribution from the parents and a contribution from the student.

**Family Education Load Program (FELP)** - Students who are Connecticut residents or attending Connecticut colleges can borrow up to \$20,000 per academic year. Applicant (student) and co-applicant must be credit worthy, and must have a minimum annual income of \$20,000. Only interest is paid while the student is in school.

**Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)** - A grant for students who demonstrate a high financial need.

**Financial Aid** – The moneys (either a grant, scholarship, loan or work opportunity) made available from a variety of sources (federal, state, institutional or private), to supplement the family’s ability to meet the cost of education.

**Financial Aid Formula** – The formula the student Financial Assistance Office uses to determine student’s financial need:

$$\begin{aligned} & \textit{Cost of Education} \\ & \underline{-\textit{Family Contribution}} \\ & =\textit{Financial Need} \end{aligned}$$

**Financial Need** – The estimated amount of money a student needs in order to meet the cost of attending college determined through the need analysis process.

**Scholarship** – A sum of money given to a student for some special skill, talent or academic achievement.

**Pomperaug Local Scholarship Application** – Many local organizations give scholarships to local students. Each organization has its own criteria for selection. They may take into account high achievement, intended major, financial need, extracurricular activities, or membership in their organization.

**Self Help** - Those things a student does personally to assist in meeting the cost of education such as working part-time or borrowing money.

**Stafford Loan – Subsidized** – Federally subsidized low interest loan made by a bank or credit union or savings and loan association, maximum of \$5500 first year, \$6,500 for the second year, and up to \$7,500 for each remaining year. Borrowers must show need through the FAFSA and/or the Profile. Repayment starts six months after graduation or leaving college.

**Stafford Loan – Unsubsidized** – Unsubsidized loan available to all students regardless of need. Interest on the loan is payable while student is attending college. All other features of the program are the same as the subsidized Stafford Loan.

**Student Aid Report** – The paper students receive from the Department of Education indicating their Federal Family Contribution and eligibility for a Pell Grant.

## USE THE INTERNET FOR INFORMATION

For students who are starting their college searches, be sure to visit the Pomperaug High School web site at [www.pomperaug.com](http://www.pomperaug.com). Under the Guidance/Career tab, scroll down to Resources. We have listed links to many good web sites as well as providing links to career and scholarship information. In addition, the following web sites offer one-stop shops that include searchable databases of college information, test preparation aids, virtual tours and online applications. Here are some of the leading sites and some of the additional features they contain.

**THE COLLEGE BOARD ONLINE:** [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) Register for SAT I's and SAT II's Register for CSS Profile/Scholarship Search. Online Applications for hundreds of colleges

**PETERSON'S EDUCATION CENTER:** [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com) A wide range of overall information

**PRINCETON REVIEW:** [www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com) Offers information on colleges, careers, SAT practice, and financial aid.

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS – U.S. DEPT. OF EDUCATION:** [www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool](http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool) A database of 9,000 colleges. Students can search for colleges based on a profile of the types of schools they are interested in.

**US NEWS& WORLD REPORT:** <http://colleges.usnews.rankingsandreviews.com/college>  
Annual rankings of colleges according to U.S. News & World Report.

**THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (N.C.A.A.):** <http://ncaa.org>

### **FINANCIAL AID WEB SITES:**

**FAFSA ONLINE:** [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov) An online version of the FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID

**FASTWEB:** [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) A database of scholarships and grants.

**FINAID:** [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org) Calculators and resources to help demystify the financial –aid process.

**EXPECTED FAMILY CONTRIBUTION (EFC) ESTIMATION FORM:**  
<http://www.finaid.org/calculators/finaidestimate.phtml>

## A NEW BEGINNING

Attending college is one of the biggest transitions of your life. Academic expectations, time management, new interpersonal relations, financial management, and relocation are among the many issues you will face as you begin this exciting new phase. Many students and their families feel the need to prepare formally for the experience. There are several things you can do:

**Read.** Several publications, from brochures to small books, have been written on this topic. Samples are available in the Career Center.

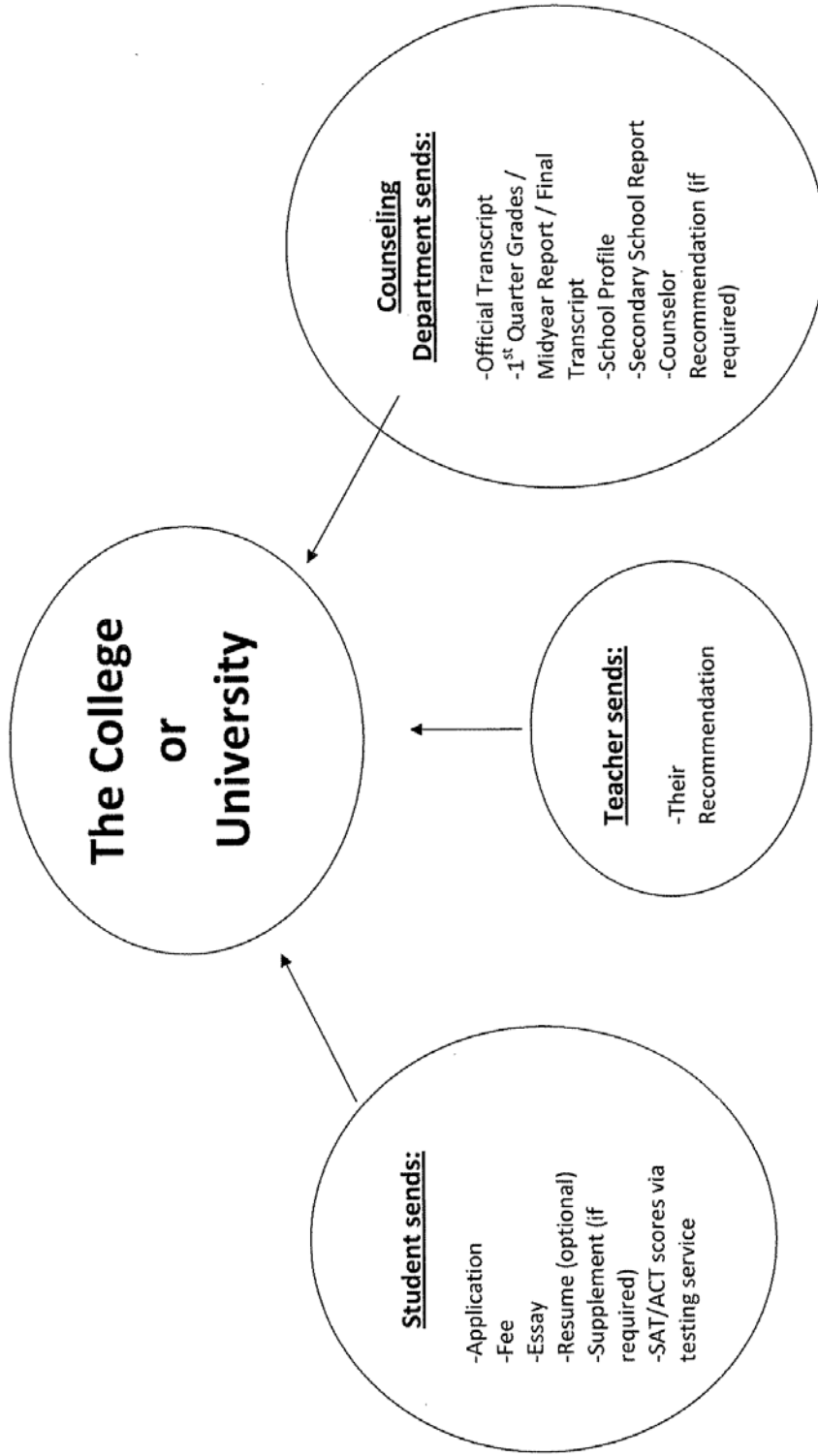
**Communicate.** Your parents and older siblings are often good sources of information on this transition. Many of our graduates are available to talk with you privately about their experiences with your college – ask in the Career Center.

**Colleges will help.** Most colleges have an early registration session for incoming freshmen to help you adjust before the other students arrive on campus. Here you will be assisted in choosing courses, finding your way around campus and getting settled before the pressure of the beginning of the term. Colleges use these sessions sometimes to give placement tests or physical exams and hold orientation sessions dealing with all phases of campus life.

### **A FINAL COMMENT**

College planning is a complex and lengthy process. If you find you have initially taken the wrong direction, take heart. At least one-half of all students make some important change between leaving high school and graduating from college. It is a time of change. Help yourself by being aware, by questioning and by accepting inevitable changes without excessive regret. Advisors at colleges and counselors at high school are available to help you explore alternatives, give advice, and answer questions. In the end, you will make the decisions and take responsibility for the results, growing and learning in the process. It is a wonderful time of your life – be deeply involved and enjoy it.

# Who Sends What?



## JUNIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR

<u>August/September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Think about career plans</li> <li>❑ Register in the Career Center for PSAT/NMSQT</li> <li>❑ Obtain dates/places of College Fairs</li> <li>❑ Be sure to have your Social Security Number</li> <li>❑ Attend Junior Parent Meeting</li> <li>❑ Utilize Naviance to explore college options</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Read PSAT/NMSQT Bulletin</li> <li>❑ Take PSAT</li> <li>❑ Develop list of interests</li> <li>❑ Study hard!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Talk to counselor about college interests</li> <li>❑ Put forth best academic effort in these last years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Using PSAT/NMSQT results and materials begin to develop range of colleges</li> <li>❑ Talk with graduates who are home from college</li> <li>❑ Develop a preliminary list of colleges which interest you. Write or e-mail them for information</li> <li>❑ Utilize software programs which will develop a list of colleges for you.(Naviance, Choices, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Continue career exploration</li> <li>❑ Prepare for mid-term exams- colleges look at junior year grades</li> <li>❑ Register for Spring SAT I or SAT II</li> <li>❑ Attend small group meetings with your counselor to plan senior classes and discuss colleges</li> </ul>

**JUNIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR**  
(Continued)

<b><u>February</u></b>	<b><u>March</u></b>	<b><u>April</u></b>	<b><u>May</u></b>	<b><u>June</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Research interesting and challenging summer courses, jobs or activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Consider taking SAT II in courses you are finishing this year</li> <li>❑ Apply for proposed summer activities</li> <li>❑ Sign up for Advanced Placement (AP) tests (if appropriate)</li> <li>❑ <b>Attend College Fair at PHS</b></li> <li>❑ Register for May SAT's</li> <li>❑ Plan college visits to colleges which interest you</li> <li>❑ Attend individual appointments with counselors to plan schedule and discuss post high school plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Request applications for Military Academies and ROTC Scholarships</li> <li>❑ Begin college visits</li> <li>❑ Explore Early Decision/Early Action options</li> <li>❑ Check Career Center for summer enrichment programs</li> <li>❑ Register for the SAT I or II/ACT</li> <li>❑ Individual appointments to continue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Identify teachers whom you may ask for college recommendations</li> <li>❑ AP Exams</li> <li>❑ Take SAT I or SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ File NCAA Eligibility Form (if appropriate)</li> <li>❑ Make a profile of colleges that interest you.</li> <li>❑ Write for Service Academy nominations and ROTC Scholarship Application, if applicable.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Take SAT I or SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ Continue college search</li> <li>❑ Arrange college visits and or interviews for summer!</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Summer</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Do something extraordinary!</li> <li>❑ Rev up for college!</li> <li>❑ Review for SAT I</li> <li>❑ Keep extracurricular and community service going</li> <li>❑ Review transcript sent to you by the counseling office, be sure there are no errors.</li> <li>❑ Visit college campuses</li> </ul>

## SENIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR

<u>August/September</u>	<u>October</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Make appointment with counselor</li> <li>❑ Register early for SAT I/SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ Finalize college list</li> <li>❑ Reduce preliminary list of colleges to a manageable number</li> <li>❑ Sign up for college representative visits at PHS.</li> <li>❑ Carefully consider your responsibilities if applying for Early Decision or Early Action</li> <li>❑ Begin drafts of essays</li> <li>❑ Get off to a good start academically</li> <li>❑ Complete college visits/interviews</li> <li>❑ Ask teachers for recommendations</li> <li>❑ Complete Common App registration and Ferpa waiver</li> <li>❑ Begin filling out applications</li> <li>❑ If you apply Early Decision, be aware of deadlines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Take SAT I/ SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ Work on college essays</li> <li>❑ Review transcript with counselor</li> <li>❑ Complete college visits and interviews (remember thank you letters)</li> <li>❑ Check for local College Fairs and visits</li> <li>❑ Start completing college applications</li> <li>❑ Check for scholarships on the board in the Career Center, or on the PHS web site at <a href="http://www.pomperaug.com">www.pomperaug.com</a> under the Guidance/Career Tab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ <b>Check all application deadlines</b></li> <li>❑ Take SAT I/ SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ Make sure that your test scores have been sent by SAT or ACT to the colleges that you are applying to. PHS cannot report test scores to colleges!</li> <li>❑ Keep organized and up to date!</li> <li>❑ Research sources of private outside scholarships throughout the year</li> <li>❑ Submit CSS profile</li> <li>❑ Attend Financial Aid Meeting with parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Take SAT I/ SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ <b>Check all application deadlines</b></li> <li>❑ Talk with graduates who are home from college</li> <li>❑ Complete FAFSA application on line at <a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/">www.fafsa.ed.gov/</a> and submit after January 1</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Take SAT I/ SAT II/ACT</li> <li>❑ File FAFSA forms on line after January 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>❑ Finish college application and submit to guidance</li> <li>❑ Continue checking for scholarships in the Career Center and online. Be sure to watch deadlines</li> </ul>

**SENIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR**  
(Continued)

<b><u>February</u></b>	<b><u>March</u></b>	<b><u>April</u></b>	<b><u>May</u></b>	<b><u>June</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Check/apply for private outside scholarships</li> <li>❑ Have you sent all necessary forms and applications for financial aid?</li> <li>❑ Check deadlines for AP Tests</li> <li>❑ Local scholarship packets will be given to all seniors</li> <li>❑ Apply for local scholarships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Explore the colleges to which you have applied as thoroughly as possible</li> <li>❑ Register for AP exam</li> <li>❑ Hand in local scholarship applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Review college responses and aid offer with parents and counselor</li> <li>❑ Make a final decision-send deposit by May 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>❑ You should have received your FAFSA acknowledgment/ Student Aid Report (SAR)</li> <li>❑ Notify references of your choice and thank them for their efforts</li> <li>❑ Inform your counselor of college replies.</li> <li>❑ Visit college of your choice before final decision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ AP Exams</li> <li>❑ Fill out dorm forms</li> <li>❑ Check for arrangements for Stafford Loan</li> <li>❑ Send original and signed SAR to your chosen college</li> <li>❑ Notify colleges that you have decided not to attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Complete the senior survey</li> <li>❑ Graduation!</li> <li>❑ Have a great summer</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Summer</u></b></p> <p>Enjoy yourself, you deserve it!</p>

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