



COLLEGE NEWSLETTER No. 11- November 28, 2017

Special focuses- Four minutes per application

And

When to use Test Optional policies

SCHOOL NEWS

Please contact Allison Price, Parent Coordinator for Pupil Path and Naviance log-in at APrice7@schools.nyc.gov.

LaGuardia Google Account, Naviance, and x2VOL

All students have their Google Apps for Education Account, also referred to as their LaGuardiaHS.org Google Account. This is a safe, closed network only for our students and staff. For GAFE, go to accounts.google.com. Your Username is also your LaGuardia-specific email account. All volunteer hours are recorded through x2VOL, a secure and accurate system that tracks and documents community service learning hours and is accessed through Naviance. Both Naviance (and x2VOL) and your LaGuardiaHS.org

Google account use the same log-in information. Here is how your Username and Password are designed: [first name] [last initial] [last 4 digits of OSIS] @ laguardiahs.org.g.marks1234@laguardiahs.orgPW: [9-digit OSIS]

PLEASE NOTE: On December 1st, you will be locked out of Naviance and will not be able to add colleges unless you see your guidance counselor. Please add all of your colleges to the "Colleges I am applying to" list by December 1st.

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

EARLY APPLICANTS: All of the early application deadline requests have been processed. If you have a November 15th – December 1st deadline, your counselor may still be working on those. Nevertheless, congratulations on all the hard work, and to those who have been accepted already!

REGULAR APPLICANTS: Your guidance counselor is now available to process college applications with rolling, 12/1 and beyond deadlines. Please set up a senior college meeting with your counselor if you have not already done so. Please ensure your "All About Me" survey and your raves are completed prior to meeting with your counselor. We would like to meet all of our students by Friday December 8th as this will give us two weeks to complete your letter before we break for the winter holiday, December 23rd.

COLLEGE INFORMATION- PROGRAMS AND DEGREES

CUNY's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) is likewise dedicated to supporting students from entry to college graduation. To that end, we want to make sure that you are aware of resources that will support your conversations with your students as they prepare to apply to college.

ASAP is expanding to support more students, and your graduates might be ideal candidates! Students may join after they have been fully admitted to one of the [nine CUNY colleges offering ASAP](#). To ensure your students are fully aware of ASAP and the many benefits offered, begin the conversation today. **Be sure to look for ASAP on the CUNY application** and [invite an ASAP Ambassador](#) to your school or organization to speak with students next spring. Our Ambassadors are great resources if you need support engaging and sharing ASAP information with students in classrooms, assemblies or at college fairs.

To learn more about ASAP and useful college planning resources, please visit www.cuny.edu/asap.

Roger William's University's Career Fair was sold out! More than 700 students, coming from 45 majors attended the event. Many of the company representatives from the 84 employers that attended were RWU alumni. Four of these employers also hosted on campus interviews with potential candidates for their open positions.

STANDARDIZED TESTS (Juniors)

Free YMCA SAT prep classes - sign up deadline Tuesday - **juniors only**

The West Side YMCA, 5 West 63rd St., will hold free afterschool SAT prep classes for high school juniors from December 2017 to March 2018. 12/2- 3/14 Information is available through Greg Mateo, College and Career advisor at gmateo@ymcanyc.org or call 212-912-2665. Please pass on the information to any students or parents who are interested in applying.

Here's a useful article from Will Dix. While the focus is on the need for colleges to provide greater clarity regarding when it makes sense to take advantage of test-optional admissions, we think the guidelines provided by Hofstra admissions will prove helpful if you're deciding whether to submit test scores for some of the schools on your list.

I recently wrote about how the word "optional" can strike fear into a college applicant's heart because it's so enigmatic. If you're playing the high-stakes game of college admission, do you take a college at its word that you don't have to do something if you don't want to, or do you do something you'd really rather not do because everyone else might do it? It's just one more bit of anxiety that isn't really necessary, leaving everything up to the hapless student.

Last week, while doing some college research on an unrelated matter, I came across a clear and humane way to address the "optional" issue. At Hofstra University it's up to applicants to decide whether to submit scores or not. But instead of leaving them hanging, Hofstra offers a helping hand. On its website, they provide several scenarios to assist potential applicants as they decide what to do :

Previous applicants have expressed the following concerns, and our counselors have offered advice, about their decision to submit test scores:

- *“My test scores are above average, but I didn’t do as well on the SAT/ACT as I personally would have liked. “This student **should** submit his/her test scores.*
- *“Standardized testing has been a weakness of mine throughout my high school career. My grades and curriculum are rigorous and competitive, but my SAT/ACT scores are below the school's mid-range.” This student **should not** submit his/her test scores.*
- *“I don’t want to pay or can’t afford to send my test scores.” Scores can be sent to us using a wide variety of free options. This student **should** submit his/her test scores.*
- *“Sending my test scores is an obstacle and will take way too long.” This student **should** submit his/her test scores.*
- *“I think that my academic profile is strong enough that I might be eligible for Hofstra’s prestigious and highly competitive [Trustee Scholarship Program](#).” This student **should** submit his/her test scores.*
- *“My best test scores are significantly below Hofstra’s published average and mid-range scores (mentioned above).” This student **should not** submit his/her test scores.*

Instead of the usual official instructions that simply leave everything up to applicants, this set of possibilities reflects a genuine desire to communicate with them. It even takes into account some of the inertia that may overwhelm them, noting that you should send scores if you just think doing so "is an obstacle and will take way too long." More:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/willarddix/2017/11/06/hofstra-opts-for-application-clarity-over-obscurity-other-schools-should-too/#32d83ea32988>

SCHOLARSHIPS

Recommended favorite Scholarship Search websites for students and parents:

Fast web
Scholly-it's an app
Scholarships.com
Scholarshipexperts.com

Finaid.org
Zinch.com
Cappex

Also: collegexpress.com:

Upcoming scholarships

\$250-\$500

Scholarship: [Rubincam Youth Award](#)

Due Date: December 15

\$500

Scholarship: [AfterCollege Succurro Scholarship](#)

Due Date: December 31

\$1,000

Scholarship: [A Better America Scholarship Program 2017](#)

Due Date: December 31

\$500

Scholarship: [Express Medical Supply Scholarship Program](#)

Due Date: January 3

It Takes Four Minutes to Review What You've Done in Four Years

[Sara Harberson](#), Contributor/ Founder, SaraHarberson.com and AdmissionsRevolution.com

This post is hosted on the Huffington Post's Contributor platform.

Four minutes. Four years. Oh, the irony and the sobering reality of modern day elite college admissions.

There used to be so much secrecy surrounding how admissions officers read college applications and how much time they spent on each application. Not anymore. The University of Pennsylvania Undergraduate Admissions Office recently revealed in [an article](#) for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that it takes their staff a mere four minutes to read one application.

When I worked in that same office, it took me five or six times as long to initially read an application. That didn't include the unaccounted time I spent re-reading, preparing, and meticulously going over each application for the selection committee. Back then, the reading and selection process moved swiftly. Fast forward to today, and Penn's new reading and selection process moves at warp speed.

Penn officials say they needed to come up with a more sustainable model to handle the volume of applications they receive. Now, a team of two admissions officers reads a student's application side-by-side. One person reviews the academic criteria (transcript, test scores, and recommendations), while the other person "reads" through the rest of the application (extracurricular involvement, essays, and interview report).

Within the four-minute period of time allotted, the two staff members make a recommendation on the admissions decision: ADMIT, WAITLIST/DEFER, DENY. And, then they move on to the next application.

Penn is not the only college doing this. Swarthmore, Emory, The California Institute of Technology, and Pomona College have all streamlined their reading and selection processes. I predict there will be more colleges to follow. This needs to be viewed as the new “normal” **when applying to elite colleges.**

How has it gotten to this point? The answer lies in the economics. All colleges want more applications and the lowest admit rate possible. But they do not want to enlist more admissions officers—that would be very expensive. So, the only way a college can pull off reading tens of thousands of applications is to significantly reduce the amount of time they spend considering each student.

At least we know the truth. And knowledge is the ultimate power. Students should approach this process understanding that their very best self needs to be represented in the most succinct and powerful way in their application. Those four minutes should be the best four minutes of an admissions officers’ day.

Here are five ways to do that:

1. **Sync your objective measures to match the school you want to go to.** Make sure your curriculum, grades, and test scores measure up with the profile of the admitted pool of students at the college. The objective pieces of the application need to be competitive for everything else in the application to matter.
2. **Strike gold with your recommendation letters.** Every person writing a letter for you should know who you are, what you offer, and how the school community has been influenced by you. If the teacher or counselor writing for you sees you as a once-in-a-career student, the letter they write for you will reflect that.
3. **Optimize your extracurricular self.** Find something so important to you and devote every chance you get to developing the idea, passion, or ability to its highest possible level. Significant impact on one extracurricular activity is much more powerful than a long list of “involvement” with little or no impact.
4. **Soul search for your college essay.** This will lead you to choosing the best topic for your main college essay. If the things that you write down could be written by anyone, cross them off the list. Your essay should be one-of-a-kind.
5. **Crush the college supplement.** The supplement for elite colleges usually separates the “competitive students” from the “admitted students.” The essays on the supplement should have the same high-quality craftsmanship as everything else in the application.

Today’s admissions officers have extraordinarily less time to consider the nuances and details of a student’s college application. This new approach forces students to think more succinctly about who they are and how they want to present themselves in an application. The new mantra for the applying student needs to be *seize the moment*; that’s all the time you get.