

Community Agreements:

- ▶ Be present - turn off notifications, put your phone away or whatever DND function works for you
- ▶ Respect each other
- ▶ Be open minded and help create a safe space
- ▶ What happens here stays here; take memories, not names
- ▶ Believe that this process will be tough but we will do it together
- ▶ Show up as you are (only turn on your camera if you feel comfortable)
- ▶ Take a break if you need it.

College Prep Schedule

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
12-1245 pm	Icebreakers	Financial Aid Process in Detail	The art of talking about yourself	How to research colleges	Alumni panel
1-145pm	Basics of College Admissions slideshow	Financial Aid cont.	How to do interviews	MIT Admissions Session	Alumni panel cont.
145-215 pm	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
215-3pm	Common misconceptions	Financial Aid Discussion	Emails and other communication	Debrief Common App	Timeline creation & Goals for 12 th grade
315-4pm	Essay Writing	HEOP. special scholarships	Free work	Free work	FAQ

The Basics of College Admissions

Why does your
college matter?

Why colleges matter

- ▶ Take more advanced or specialized coursework
- ▶ Graduation rate
- ▶ Access to: research, internships, study abroad
- ▶ Culture
- ▶ Future job prospects
- ▶ Who you meet
- ▶ How good your four years are

BEAM's goal for you

- ▶ Go to a school that pushes you but supports you academically, emotionally, and financially.
- ▶ BEAM's definition of a strong fit college is that:
 - ▶ It has your desired major OR a variety of STEM majors if you don't know yet.
 - ▶ You are able to attend without taking out more than \$3k/year in non-govt loans.
 - ▶ Has at least 60%+ graduation rate for Pell grant recipients.

You choose
colleges



Colleges
choose you

If you were in charge of a college admissions office, what do you look for when thinking about who should be a student at your school?

- ▶ Can you handle the classes?
- ▶ Are you a devoted student?
- ▶ Will you add to the community?
- ▶ Will you accomplish things?
- ▶ Are you a good “fit”?

For each of the last questions, brainstorm your ideas for how a college could answer the below questions they ask themselves about an applicant.

Parts of a College Application

- ▶ Transcript
- ▶ Test scores (SAT/ACT)*
- ▶ Activities, etc.
- ▶ Essay
- ▶ Recommendation letters
- ▶ Interviews
- ▶ Audition or Portfolio
- ▶ Mid-year report

*Due to the pandemic, most colleges are test optional this year and are planning to less focus on scores and more on other parts of the application. However, this is on an individual basis, so make sure you know if schools you're applying for require your scores.

What are colleges looking for?

- ▶ Can you handle the classes?
 - ▶ Classwork taken (have you challenged yourself?)
 - ▶ Work outside of school
 - ▶ Grades
 - ▶ SAT/ACT scores, SAT Subject Tests (not really in 2020)
 - ▶ Recommendation letters (What kind of student are you? What do you bring to the classroom?)
 - ▶ Counselor Recommendation (What kind of community member are you? How do you shape the school?)

What are colleges looking for?

- ▶ Are you a devoted student?
 - ▶ Recommendation letters
 - ▶ Work outside of school
 - ▶ Independent reading/study
 - ▶ Upward trajectory – Grades going UP
 - ▶ Added rigor as you grow into older grade level
 - ▶ Interview

What are colleges looking for?

- ▶ Will you add to the community?
 - ▶ Activities, volunteering
 - ▶ Counselor Recommendation letters
 - ▶ Personal essay
 - ▶ Interview

What are colleges looking for?

- ▶ Will you accomplish things?
 - ▶ What have you done? (For example, leadership roles, research projects, etc.)
 - ▶ Personal essay
 - ▶ Recommendation letters
 - ▶ Interviews

What are colleges looking for?

- ▶ Are you a good “fit”?
 - ▶ Personal essay
 - ▶ Interview
 - ▶ Activities, etc.

Colleges also look at your personal story and circumstances

The parts of a college application

Sent by you

Basic info

Activities, volunteering,
jobs, leadership roles

Personal essay(s)

You ask others to send

Transcript/grades [school]

Recommendation letters
[teachers, other adults]

SAT/ACT test scores [**only if
you'd like to send**]

Financial Aid applications (more on this later)

Finances of the family you live with

Often, also the finances of parents *even if you
don't live with them!*

Common mistake alert!

- ▶ Meet deadlines!
 - ▶ While sometimes colleges may be forgiving, you can't rely on that --- sometimes all the spots in a program or the money for financial aid are gone by the time you submit.
 - ▶ Rolling deadlines are first come, first serve.

Common mistake alert!

- ▶ YOU MUST CHECK E-MAIL!
 - ▶ Most colleges will send important information by email
 - ▶ For example:
 - ▶ “One part of your application is missing.”
 - ▶ “We want to consider you for a special scholarship.”
 - ▶ “We can’t give you a financial aid offer until we have all of your information.”

Deadlines

Ask for
recommendations



Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
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Most applications
due



Decisions come
out



Financial aid apps
should be done



Your decision is
due

Testing this year

- ▶ Due to the pandemic, most colleges are going test optional.
 - ▶ Here is a list of all the schools going test optional for 2021-2022:
 - ▶ <https://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>
- ▶ If you have a test score, talk to us about which schools you would submit it to.
- ▶ BEAM's recommendation is you don't apply to schools that are asking for test scores this year.
 - ▶ It is likely that different SAT/ACT dates will get canceled as time goes on.
 - ▶ It's very telling of a school's priorities if they are requiring test scores.

Financial Aid Quick Summary

- ▶ Need-based vs. merit-based
- ▶ Different colleges have *really different* financial aid profiles – what approach they take to giving scholarships and other help to students
- ▶ Need-blind admissions

Applying for Financial Aid

- ▶ Fill out the FAFSA (Federal)
- ▶ Fill out the TAP (New York State)
- ▶ Maybe also fill out the CSS Profile (only some colleges require it)

You will then get a financial aid award letter (package) from each school, which will tell you how much free money you were awarded, how much you may need to borrow, and how much you may need to work.

Common mistake alert!

- ▶ Apply to colleges that will give you good financial aid.
- ▶ Some colleges commit to always giving someone the financial aid they need. This is called *100% need met schools*.
 - ▶ Some schools aren't 100% need met but close. Ex: Carnegie Mellon is 99% need met.
- ▶ Check this for every single school you apply to!!!

Questions?