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PIECES OF THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS PUZZLE



Pieces of the College Admissions Puzzle

1 INTEREST PROFILE ASSESSMENT AND EXPLORATION OF POSSIBLE MAJORS

Getting to know you and your interests are an important step of the process. This allows us to guide you effectively in the direction that will guide you to make the right match where you can find a place to call home and be happy. Finding the right match for YOU is essential in helping you achieve academically at an institution that is able to provide you with the strongest course work in the areas that you want to explore and learn more about. Though a university may not rank in the top 50, individual departments may rank very highly. For example:

- The University of Arizona's Information Technology program is ranked #3, right behind MIT and Carnegie Mellon.
- Iowa State's Biological Engineering program is ranked #3, following Purdue and Illinois.

2 EDUCATION AND/OR CAREER PATH OBJECTIVES

To effectively guide students to their intended path of education and career goals, course sequencing, selection and rigor are an imperative piece to optimizing the college application process. The most considerable factor in admission decisions after GPA is the strength of a students curriculum.

Admissions: Executive Summary

PERCENTAGE COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2016

FACTOR	N	CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE	MODERATE IMPORTANCE	LIMITED IMPORTANCE	No. IMPORTANCE
Grades in College Prep Courses	216	76.9%	12.5%	9.3%	1.4%
Grades in All Courses	218	77.1	13.8	6.4	2.8
Strength of Curriculum	218	51.8	35.3	7.3	5.5
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	219	54.3	27.9	13.7	4.1
Essay or Writing Sample	217	18.9	35.9	22.1	23.0
Counselor Recommendation	213	14.6	46.0	25.8	13.6
Student's Demonstrated Interest	212	13.7	25.5	32.1	28.8
Teacher Recommendation	211	10.9	46.4	28.0	14.7
Class Rank	217	9.2	24.0	34.6	32.3
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	216	6.9	30.6	30.6	31.9
Portfolio	210	6.2	5.7	27.6	60.5
Extracurricular Activities	214	7.9	36.0	36.9	19.2
SAT II Scores	212	2.4	6.1	21.2	70.3
Interview	213	4.7	17.4	31.9	46.0
State Graduation Exam Scores	210	1.9	7.6	21.9	68.6
Work	211	2.8	15.6	47.4	34.1

The factors that admission officers use to evaluate applications from first-time freshmen have remained largely consistent over the past 20 years. Admission offices identify grades, high school curriculum, and test scores as top factors for first-time freshmen: The top factors in the admission decision for the Fall 2016 admission cycle were: grades in college preparatory courses, overall high school GPA, admission test scores, and strength of curriculum. Among the next most important factors were the essay, a student's demonstrated interest, counselor and teacher recommendations, extracurricular activities, and class rank. (NACAC 2017 State of College Admissions report.)

3 EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND PLANNED SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities are an important piece of the college admissions puzzle. Most college applications ask about your activities - that's because what you do in your free time reveals a lot about you; in ways that grades and test scores can not. What you accomplish outside of the classroom demonstrates your passions and highlights the qualities valued by colleges. Here are a few examples:

- Serving and holding office in student government demonstrates that you have leadership skills.
- Being on a sports team through high school (and before) demonstrates that you are able to make a long-term commitment.
- Giving of your time volunteering at a hospital or local community center demonstrates you are dedicated to helping others.
- Working a part-time job while sustaining good grades demonstrates that you are responsible and are able to manage your time effectively and efficiently.

Colleges want to know who you are and what you are capable of doing. Your extracurricular activities and interests are able to demonstrate those to an admissions representative... so get out there and show them what you got!

4 ACADEMIC RESUME

A great way to ensure that you have consistent information across all elements of your application. It will include the same information that will be requested on most

Admissions: Executive Summary

PERCENTAGE COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING "CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE" TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2006 TO FALL 2016

FACTOR	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Grades in College Prep Courses	76%	80%	75%	87%	83%	84%	82%	82%	79%	—	77%
Strength of Curriculum	62	64	62	71	66	68	65	64	60	—	52
Admission Test Scores	60	59	54	58	59	59	56	58	56	—	54
Grades in All Courses	51	52	52	46	46	52	50	52	60	—	77
Essay or Writing Sample	28	26	27	26	27	25	20	22	22	—	19
Class Rank	23	23	19	16	22	19	13	15	14	—	9
Counselor Recommendation	21	21	20	17	19	19	16	16	17	—	15
Demonstrated Interest	21	22	21	21	23	21	18	20	17	—	14
Teacher Recommendation	20	21	21	17	19	17	15	14	15	—	11
Interview	10	11	11	7	9	6	7	8	4	—	5
Extracurricular Activities	8	7	7	9	7	5	7	10	6	—	8

college applications. So you ask... Is it truly necessary? Taking the time to create an academic resume has many benefits:

- Having all the information in one place makes the college and scholarship applications easier to complete.
- Allows you to decide which accomplishments to highlight
- Having the academic resume with you during a college interview can be helpful to the person conducting the interview; especially alumni interviews.

Ultimately an academic resume is not required or necessary but it is a tool that make the process easier for you. It's also a great skill to learn for actually resume writing for jobs and graduate school!

5 STANDARDIZED TESTS

ACT or SAT? That is the question... The first step in successful standardized testing is creating a plan of which test to take and when. By identifying this path early you can avoid wasting time and money moving in the wrong direction. Knowledge Worx will help identify test strategies that are real and help improve overall scores on proven standardized test taking methodologies based in practice.



6 COLLEGE ESSAY

Finding your voice is the crucial element in the college essay/personal statement. We will help you find that voice and it will be a genuine personal statement about the real you... and that's who they want to attend their college; the real you... not the list of accomplishments. The college essay is your chance to reveal the person behind the GPA and test scores. You want to tell a compelling story that reveals something about your character.

7 LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

As college applicant pools grow larger and deeper and the more we hear about under-resourced and under-staffed admissions offices trying to manage those numbers, it is natural to wonder if letters of recommendation ultimately even matter. If an admission officer is moving through applications at 8 minutes each, how much air time will a letter of recommendation really receive? The answer, as is the case with most complex enterprises like college admissions, is "It depends". Some colleges and universities do not require recommendations at all, others make recommendations optional and use them only to determine the fates of the most marginal of

applicants; but a considerable number of colleges and universities still view the recommendation as an integral and vital part of the application. Knowledge Worx will assist students in understanding who to ask for a letter, what should be in the letter and where the letters will make the most impact in the admissions puzzle.

8 FINANCIAL PLANNING

Confused between a grant, scholarship and loan? Unclear about merit aid, need-based aid, institutional aid and outside scholarships? Many terms such as Cost of Attendance (COA), Direct PLUS Loan (PLUS), Direct Subsidized Loan (Subsidized Loan), Direct Unsubsidized Loan (Unsubsidized Loan), Expected Family Contribution (EFC) Federal Perkins Loan (Perkins Loan), Federal Work Study (FWS), Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), Merit-Based Aid, and Need-Based Aid are just a few of the terms we will assist you in navigating as the admissions puzzle comes to life.

Contact KnowledgeWorx today

