



# College Counseling Handbook

# Table of Contents

## College Counseling at Wellington

|                                                       |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Mission Statement, Philosophy and Our Team.....       | 3-4  |
| Four-Year College Planning Calendar for Students..... | 5-11 |

## The College Search Process

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Campus Visits.....             | 12-13 |
| Remaining Organized.....       | 14    |
| Types of Colleges.....         | 15    |
| Exploring College Options..... | 16    |

## Defining Your High School Experience.....17-20

## Standardized Testing Information.....21-22

## The Application

|                                                                |       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| The College Application.....                                   | 23    |
| Types of Admission Review.....                                 | 24    |
| Specialized Applications: Fine/Performing Arts.....            | 25    |
| Specialized Applications: United States Service Academies..... | 26    |
| Specialized Applications: Collegiate Athletics.....            | 27-28 |

## The Resume

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| College Resume Guidelines..... | 29    |
| Resume Action Verbs.....       | 30-31 |
| Sample Resumes.....            | 32-34 |

## Interviews

|                                                      |       |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Preparing for the College/Scholarship Interview..... | 35-36 |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------|

## Financial Aid Overview.....37-38

## Appendix

|                                       |       |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| SCOIR Overview for Juniors.....       | 39-41 |
| Common Application Instructions.....  | 42-45 |
| Resources.....                        | 46-47 |
| My College Map.....                   | 49    |
| My College Application Tracker.....   | 50    |
| Additional Questions to Consider..... | 51    |



## College Counseling at Wellington

### **School Mission**

We help students find their purpose and realize their potential for tomorrow's world.

### **School Values**

#### **Be Curious**

We question, imagine, experiment, and discover.

#### **Be Yourself**

We value diversity and celebrate individual voices in a learning community committed to be inclusive, equitable, and socially just.

#### **Be Ambitious**

We embrace challenges and push ourselves and our community to do big things.

#### **Be Empathetic**

We listen to understand the experiences and perspectives of others as we learn to shape our own words and actions.

#### **Be Responsible**

We understand that autonomy in teaching and learning is as fundamental as being accountable for the outcomes of our actions.



## College Counseling at Wellington

### Meet Our Team

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### College Counseling Philosophy

We consciously strive to be an inclusive college counseling office by honoring each student's strengths, promise, backgrounds, cultures, and identities and recognizing the ways in which these aspects intersect and impact post-secondary planning.

We meet each student where they are in their unique journey and encourage equal access for all students by empowering them to be effective storytellers of their own narratives.



## College Counseling at Wellington

### Four-Year College Planning Calendar for Students

#### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Year

##### Academics

- Focus on academic adjustment to high school and developing a solid academic foundation for future years.
- Carefully select 10<sup>th</sup> grade course schedule, keeping in mind academic and post-secondary goals. Pay attention to curriculum suggestions outlined on pages 17-18 of this booklet as you look ahead to courses you will take during the next three years.

##### Extracurriculars

- Get involved at Wellington and in the community. What you do beyond the school day does matter. Work, volunteer, perform, compete, or create. Not only does extracurricular involvement help you to identify strengths and passions, but colleges seek to admit students who will be active contributors to their campus communities. Involvement in high school demonstrates a desire to do the same in college.
- Make the most of summer. For example, participate in programs, volunteer, or travel and journal, as a means to further develop personal interests.
- Track activities, leadership honors, service. See page 31 for more information.

##### Standardized Testing

- Take the PSAT 8/9 in October.

##### College Counseling Programming

- Students meet with college counseling each trimester in large and small group settings. Topics may include self-reflection exercises, pursuing academic and extracurricular interests, building a solid foundation, tracking involvement, understanding the holistic admissions review process, exploring post-secondary options.



## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Year

### **Academics**

- Continue to earn your best possible grades.
- Select a purposeful junior year schedule. Now that you have more access to elective courses, choose classes that both interest and challenge you.
- Students interested in college-level sports should pay specific attention to NCAA core course requirements and meet with their coach, Wellington athletics and college counseling to discuss academic eligibility standards.

### **Extracurriculars**

- Build upon your resume and pursue leadership positions.
- Plan another meaningful summer.

### **Standardized Testing**

- Take the PSAT in October. Respond to mailings from colleges of interest.

### **College Counseling Programming**

- Students meet with the college counseling team each trimester in small group settings. Topics may include self-reflection exercises, types of post-secondary institutions, resume development, introduction to SCOIR and PrinciplesYou, exploring college majors and careers, connecting with colleges, course selection.



## 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Year

- Commit to being an active learner. Your transcript at the end of junior year will be submitted with your application at most colleges.
- Continue to engage in your extracurricular activities. Take on leadership roles where you can.
- All juniors enroll in College Composition during which you will be given guidelines and feedback for writing college essays. Remember to save your essay drafts in an obvious place!

### First Trimester

- Meet with college admissions officers as they visit Wellington, virtually and in person. Attend virtual and in-person information sessions hosted by colleges/universities.
- Take the PSAT/NMSQT in October. During junior year, this serves as the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Program. The PSAT is also a practice for the SAT. Take time to prepare ahead of time and make the most of this opportunity to practice your test-taking skills.
- Attend your college counseling small group meeting. Learn more about the application process, SCOIR, standardized testing and related timelines. Reflect on components and characteristics of colleges/universities and what may match your academic and personal goals and needs.

### Second Trimester

- Attend the College Counseling Evening Program for Juniors and Families.
- Thoughtfully complete/return junior college counseling questionnaire prior to your first individual college counseling meeting.
- Schedule your individual meeting with college counseling. Continue conversations about your individual goals and interests as they relate to college. Begin to formulate your college list and discuss standardized testing plan. Families are welcome to attend these meetings.
- If you are interested in college athletics, be sure to discuss this during your individual meetings. Continue conversations with coaches and advisors.
- Independently research college/university options. Dive deeper into research of the schools discussed with college counseling by utilizing SCOIR, college websites, and online resources shared on page 48. Families also receive access to SCOIR.
- Develop a standardized testing plan. Students are encouraged to have two official standardized test scores (ACT and/or SAT) on file by the start of senior year. Register for/take the ACT (December/February) and/or SAT (March), if planned.



### Third Trimester

- Attend Pathways sessions with College Counseling. Learn more about the admissions review process, begin initial work on college applications, develop your resume, discuss senior course selection considerations, and hear from guest speakers regarding topics related to the college search and application process.
- Continue to meet individually with college counseling. Shape your college list, finalize your testing timeline, discuss potential majors/career paths and summer plans.
- Plan and make formal visits to campuses over Spring Break or at other times by permission. For trips involving missed class, submit approved college visit forms.
- Register for/take the ACT (April/June) and/or SAT (May/June), if planned.
- Carefully select your senior schedule. Use your advisor, current teachers, and college counselors to help you craft a schedule that will interest and challenge you while also preparing you for your college studies.
- If you plan to play varsity-level sports in college, complete your registration with the NCAA Eligibility Center ([www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)).
- Extend initial requests to teachers for letters of recommendation.

### Summer before Senior Year

- Find balance! Relax, recharge and enjoy time with your family and friends. Also seek out ways to explore your interests further. This could be through independent research, creative pursuits, employment, summer camps, courses, service, job shadows, informational interviews, and journaling.
- Take/retake the ACT (July) or SAT (August), if planned.
- Schedule and make visits to campuses throughout the summer. While student life may look different when classes are not in session, summer may offer you a more flexible schedule for travel to more distant campuses. It is better to visit during the summer than not see campus in person! Make subsequent adjustments to your college list as appropriate.
- Continue to draft your college essays. The summer months can be prime for self-reflection. Spend some time reflecting on your essays and the message you want to communicate in your applications. Consider stories you want to share.
- Update your resume and continue to work on the Activities section of the Common Application. The Common App will reboot August 1. Log in after this date to access updated college/university-specific information.
- Attend the Supplemental Essay and Virtual Essay Workshops in August. Meet with admissions officers from a wide range of colleges/universities to share your essay drafts and receive feedback from the experts. Registration opens in early August.



## Senior Year

### September

- Continue to focus on your studies. Colleges often request first trimester grades and always require a final transcript. Your schedule and grades should continue to demonstrate your abilities and potential.
- Review and approve your transcript with Mrs. Nally.
- Schedule your individual meeting with college counseling to discuss your personal application process, materials, and timeline. Begin to finalize your college list. Pay specific attention to balance in terms of selectivity and cost.
- Update your college list in SCOIR to reflect schools to which you plan to apply.
- Be aware of Early Decision, Early Action and scholarship priority deadlines, many of which fall on November 1 or November 15. There are a few deadlines as early as September 15! Early applicants should also pay attention to fall financial aid deadlines.
- Take the ACT, if planned.
- Send standardized test scores to your colleges/universities via each test agency's website: SAT ([www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)) and ACT ([www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) if "official" scores are required. **Note that it may take several weeks for the scores to be sent and subsequently processed by a college.** Plan accordingly.
- Attend Pathways sessions with College Counseling. Update and finalize your college applications and resumes. Outline supplemental essay prompts, if applicable. Organize application/scholarship deadlines, checklists and timelines. Hear from guest speakers regarding the college application and transition processes.
- Meet with a member of the faculty edit team or college counseling to review and begin to finalize your essay drafts.
- Check in with the teachers from whom you requested letters of recommendation. Provide them with deadlines and any additional information requested. Formally add your teachers as recommenders via your application platforms.
- Meet with admissions representatives when they visit Wellington. Visit/revisit campuses as needed.
- Begin submitting college applications.

### October

- Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and CSS Profile (if required for financial aid consideration), beginning October 1 of senior year. Pay attention to college/university deadlines and requirements for need-based aid consideration.
- Take the ACT or SAT, if planned.
- Schedule admissions interviews whenever possible. Note you may be interviewed by an admissions officer, alum or even a current student.



- Research outside scholarship opportunities. Using the resources listed on page 48, consider applying for outside scholarships.

### November

- Prepare for approaching scholarship deadlines. December 1 is another very common deadline for scholarship and admission applications.
- Wrap up any college visits you plan to make before applying. Remember that many schools will be closed to visitors during the week of Thanksgiving.

### December

- Say thanks! Your teachers have written thoughtful letters of recommendation on your behalf. A handwritten note of thanks speaks volumes. Remember to also share news of acceptances and college decisions with your teachers.
- Update SCOIR and college counseling. We also want to celebrate with you! Please remember to keep the office updated as you receive decisions from your colleges/universities and ultimately decide which school to attend.
- Prepare for and apply for Regular Decision and Early Decision 2 deadlines.

### January

- Mid-Year Reports are sent out to colleges/universities reflecting 1<sup>st</sup> trimester grades. See Mrs. Nally with any questions.
- Continue to research/apply for outside scholarships, as necessary.

### February/March/April

- If necessary, visit or re-visit any colleges to which you have been admitted.
- Consult with college counseling as a resource to help you sort through admission and scholarship offers.
- Keep your senior grades strong and ensure you are meeting all Wellington graduation requirements.

### May

- Make your final decision. May 1 is the National Candidate's Reply Date. All students must make their college commitments on or before this day, although occasionally a student may enroll after May 1 if offered admission from a waitlist.
- NCAA and NAIA student-athletes should finalize all requirements with the respective governing body, including amateurism certification.



## All Upper School Students

- Students from all grade levels can schedule individual appointments with college counselors throughout the year.
- College representatives from throughout the country and abroad visit Wellington during the fall, generally between September and November. Students are encouraged to explore a variety of institutions through these informational meetings.
- The College Counseling Workshop Series takes place during the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester. Topics include college research tools, important terms/definitions, specialized applications (i.e. college athletics and fine/performing arts), international colleges/universities, and affording college.
- Virtual and in-person college fairs, information sessions, and open houses sponsored by colleges and universities offer students the chance to learn more about specific institutions.
- Students are encouraged to visit as many of their campuses of interest as possible.

## Upper School Families

Upper School Parents' Night: Families of all grade levels are invited to meet the college counseling team during Upper School Parents' Night.

College Counseling Coffee for Senior Families: Updates, admissions trends, Q&A, and an overview of programming to support seniors and families throughout the college application cycle.

College Affordability and Financial Aid Overview: Each fall, college counseling invites a financial aid officer to present on the topic of affording college. Topics include the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, CSS Profile, merit scholarships, grants, and loans.

Parent Teacher Conferences: The college counseling team will be available to meet with students and families from all grade levels during fall and spring conferences.

College Counseling Coffee for Grades 9-11: In October, college counseling provides an introduction to programming at Wellington, a discussion of current admissions trends, and an opportunity for Q&A with our team.

College Counseling Coffee for Juniors and Families: Every December, college counseling offers an introduction to the college search, application and decision-making process, and an overview of Wellington's college counseling program. Other topics will include the holistic application review process and college research tools.

Individual appointments: Families are welcome partners throughout the college search and application process. We encourage you to reach out at any time with any questions you might have.



## The College Search Process

### College Counseling Suggestions for Campus Visits

**9th & 10th grade:** Carry out unofficial visits to campuses. Even if this is just a brief drive through a school community on your way through town, it will provide you with insight into the many different types of schools that exist. Attend area college fairs and other college programs and gather information on schools of interest.

**11th grade:** Meet with college representatives visiting Wellington. Attend college open houses targeting juniors, as well as evening information programs hosted in the Columbus area. Begin official campus visits. Sit in on classes. Carry out interviews with admissions. Meet with faculty and coaches. Begin to focus your college search on a final list of schools.

**12th grade:** Wrap up campus visits in the fall. Spring visits can help finalize your decisions. Meet with college representatives at Wellington and attend any area receptions. Make connections! These are the people who will be reviewing your application and advocating for you to their respective admission committees.

#### First Visit:

1. Schedule your visit at least two weeks in advance. See individual websites for details.
2. Attend an information session and go on a campus tour, at minimum.
3. Arrange to meet individually with a counselor, if possible, for a chat or an interview.
4. Take some photos and make a few notes, to help in comparing colleges.
5. Send thank you notes to admissions staff as a courtesy and to demonstrate interest.

*Some things to look for and ask yourself while on the campus:*

- What kind of Academic Support services are available?
- Are there Honors or Scholars programs? What does that application process look like?
- What student support services exist?
- What are some of the Career Development resources students have access to?
- Are there majors that interest you?
- Do they have Study Abroad programs available for students?
- What are the dining options available?
- What are the housing options available?
- Can you have a car on campus? Parking lot availability? University transportation?
- What is the campus dynamic?
- How do I feel about the overall physical environment?



- What can I observe about students' and professors' activities and interactions?
- Can I picture myself living on campus?
- What is the community like off campus?
- What do Wellington alums and others say about their experiences with the college?

### **Second Visit**

While it is not a necessity, it is common for students to make a second visit to a top choice campus. Note that many campuses have special programs for accepted students, or you can arrange your own experience. These visits might include the activities listed below. Thank you notes can be a nice courtesy and also demonstrate interest:

1. Attending a class or two
2. Having individual meetings with faculty members in departments of interest
3. Spending the night on campus with a student host if the school allows that option

**Special note: Many colleges offer group visit programs for sophomores and juniors. Check with individual admissions offices about these opportunities.**



## Remaining Organized

### College Marketing Materials

If you haven't already, you will soon be bombarded with emails, letters, and brochures from colleges that want you to consider them. So how do they know your name?

Colleges and universities are able to purchase lists of students from different sources including ACT and the College Board. Instead of automatically throwing away brochures or deleting emails, create files (either a physical file folder or an email folder) for each school that may be of any interest.

### Identify Important Information

Through this marketing material, and your own research, begin to record key information about schools you have researched. Reflect on what is important to you in a college. Track criteria in a spreadsheet, table, or any other method that works for you. Are you a visual person? Try using the map on page 50 to mark your schools, highlight locations of interest, or your preferred distance from home.

Here are a few examples of things to consider:

- Size of the institution (how many undergraduate students attend)
- Location (in-state/out-of-state, within driving distance/a non-stop flight away)
- Setting (city/small town/rural)
- Major (does the school offer multiple areas of study that are interesting to you?)
- Admission profile (average GPA, ACT, SAT)
- Student diversity
- Study abroad opportunities
- Tuition and fees
- Special programs (honors colleges, programs for students with learning differences)
- Athletics
- Student life (service organizations, clubs, Greek life)



## Types of Colleges

Over 4,000 colleges and universities exist in the United States. It is important to consider a variety of schools in your college search. Among highly selective colleges, a wide variety of factors can make a difference in the admissions process. Schools that utilize a comprehensive review process seek to fill their classes with students who have demonstrated the ability to be academically successful on their campus and contribute to the greater campus community. Consider a recent application pool for Vanderbilt. Vanderbilt admitted 2,662 students from a pool of over 45,000 applications (that's an admit rate of approximately 5%). Middle 50% SAT composites ranged from 1530-1600 and ACT composite scores ranged from 34-36. Always have back-up options.

### Does selectivity alone define a school?

*Here are some statistics gathered in recent years that reflect application cycle trends...*

**Stanford University**- Admit rate: 3.6%. 57,326 students applied for approximately 1,700 spots. 2,067 students admitted.

**Columbia University** – Admit rate: 3.8%. 60,247 students applied for approximately 1,500 spots. 2,325 students admitted.

**Pomona College** – Admit rate: 7%. 12,249 students applied for approximately 450 spots. 868 students admitted.

**Colgate University** – Admit rate: 13.9%. 20,682 students applied for 825 spots. 2871 students admitted.

**University of Michigan** – Admit rate: 16%. 98,310 students applied for approximately 7278 spots. 15,373 students admitted.

**Berea College** – Admit rate: 19%. 3,957 students applied for 401 spots. 746 students admitted.

**Case Western Reserve University** – Admit rate: 37%. 37,082 students applied for approximately 1,600 spots. 14,010 students admitted.

**The Ohio State University** – Admit rate: 60%. 72,829 students applied for approximately 9,600 spots. 44,116 students admitted.

**Southern Methodist University** – Admit rate: 63%. 15,245 students applied for approximately 1,716 spots. 9,657 students admitted.

**Miami University (OH)** – Admit rate: 75%. 39,580 students applied for approximately 4,192 spots. 29,843 students admitted.

**Loyola University in Chicago** – Admit rate: 81.5%. 39,316 students applied for approximately 2,763 spots. 32,081 students admitted.



## Exploring College Options

### What does liberal arts mean?

According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities, a liberal arts college is, “a particular type of institution - often small, often residential - that facilitates close interaction between faculty and students, and whose curriculum is grounded in the liberal arts disciplines.” Many of these colleges have general courses that all students must take, as well as required courses in a variety of specific disciplines such as the humanities, sciences, and social sciences. These institutions aim to prepare students to be critical thinkers, capable of utilizing their analytical skills across disciplines, and ultimately to be successful in a wide variety of career areas (<https://aacu.org/leap/what-is-a-liberal-education>). Admissions offices at these schools seek to admit students who have pursued interdisciplinary learning throughout high school by maintaining consistent enrollment in the core disciplines (English, history, science, math, and world language).

### What a liberal arts college is not...

Do not be fooled by the term “liberal arts.” This does not mean that the institution is focused solely on the fine and performing arts. In fact, many liberal arts schools (and institutions that utilize a liberal arts curriculum) offer some of the strongest STEM programs in the country!

### Examples of liberal arts institutions...

Swarthmore College, Claremont McKenna College, Smith College, University of Richmond, Amherst College, Grinnell College, Vassar College, Colgate University, Barnard College, Denison University, Bucknell University

### What is a polytechnic institute?

Students with a definite interest in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields might find their home at a polytechnic institute. These schools offer degree options that are heavily geared toward technical majors and research. Often, these schools are looking to admit students who have demonstrated a passion for STEM during high school by pursuing a curriculum rich in science and math. Polytechnic institutes offer four-year bachelor and graduate degrees.

### Examples of polytechnic institutes...

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Georgia Institute of Technology, Virginia Tech, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology



## Defining Your High School Experience

What you do throughout all four years of high school will impact your future successes and opportunities. It is important that you start preparing yourself during your freshman year.

### Learn

#### Course selection

Select classes each year with the future in mind. The more selective the colleges/universities, the more you will be expected to have enrolled in rigorous and advanced classes. Colleges and universities like to see that you are going above and beyond minimum requirements. Especially seek to challenge yourself within your areas of interest.

Familiarize yourself with Wellington's graduation requirements:

- ☐ 4 years of English
- ☐ 3.33 years of history (inc. government, 20<sup>th</sup> century global history)
- ☐ 3 years of the same world language
- ☐ 4 years of mathematics (inc. financial literacy)
- ☐ 3 years of science
- ☐ .67 years of health
- ☐ .67 years of physical education
- ☐ 1 year of performing arts
- ☐ 1 year of visual arts

*\*College Counseling recommends that students take classes in all five core areas during each year of high school*

And then consider various types of admission requirements:

Highly Selective Colleges (those accepting fewer than 25% of applications) will expect applicants to challenge themselves academically by taking honors and/or advanced courses during high school, especially in your areas of interest/intended major. The most compelling applicants in the highly selective admissions process have enrolled in rigorous coursework across most, if not all, core disciplines. It is typical for highly selective colleges to look for:

- ☐ 4 years of English
- ☐ 4 years of mathematics (not including personal finance)
- ☐ 4 years of history
- ☐ 4 years of science, including biology, chemistry and physics
- ☐ 4 years of the same world language



Selective Colleges (schools admitting 25-50% of applicants) will also expect applicants to challenge themselves appropriately by taking the most rigorous curriculum suitable. This remains particularly true in classes related to a student's academic interest/intended major. It is typical for selective colleges to look for:

- ☐ **4 years of English**
- ☐ **4 years of mathematics**
- ☐ **3-4 years of history**
- ☐ **3-4 years of science**
- ☐ **3 or more years of the same world language**

Consider this general timeline as you progress through high school:

- **9th grade, 10th grade:** Enroll in honors classes when appropriate.
- **11th grade:** Consider adding in some advanced classes, especially in areas of interest. Continue to take classes in each of the five core academic areas.
- **12th grade:** Your senior schedule should be just as rigorous, if not more so, than other years. This is your last year to prepare for the challenging collegiate curriculum that awaits you. Continue to take classes in each of the five core academic areas.

### **Standardized testing**

As discussed on page 21, standardized tests continue to be a piece of the college admission puzzle. While schools considering test scores will accept either the ACT or the SAT, it may be in your best interest to try both. Take advantage of free practice tests and online prep opportunities outlined on page 49.

- **9th grade:** Take the PSAT 8/9 in October. Performance on the assessment during 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. This exam serves as preparation for future PSATs and the SAT.
- **10th grade:** Take the PSAT in October. Performance on the assessment during your sophomore year may serve as an indicator of your competitiveness for National Merit consideration. This also serves as preparation for the SAT.
- **11th grade:** Take the PSAT in October for National Merit consideration and for more SAT practice. Plan to take the ACT and/or SAT in the winter/early spring in order to have two scores on file by the start of senior year. If you are taking advanced or honors courses, you may take AP exams in May.
- **12th grade:** Retake SAT/ACT if necessary. Plan to finish with standardized tests early in the fall so that you do not miss any application deadlines.



## Explore

### **Career research**

Use the range of course options available at Wellington to explore potential career paths. Think beyond graduation requirements and take classes that sound interesting and might potentially connect to a future college major. Complete the PrinciplesYou activities on SCOIR during your sophomore and junior years to help guide you toward these potential career paths. Carry out job shadows, informational interviews, and internships outside of school to learn more about daily life in the jobs that sound most interesting. Use opportunities such as IHR and ISR.

### **Summer academic programs.**

Many colleges/universities sponsor summer camps focused within certain academic arenas. When possible, attend summer programs that allow you to explore your interests at a deeper level.

## Engage

### **Wellington community**

Pursue your interests beyond the classroom. Schools want to know what you do with your free time, and what you might be able to bring to their campus community as a student. Remember, more is not always better. Do not join clubs just to pump up your resume. Admissions officers can read between the lines. Instead, go above and beyond in the activities about which you are most excited. Take on leadership roles. If you see a need or have a novel idea, address the issue and be extraordinary.

- **9th grade:** Attend the activities fair at Wellington. Test out activities that speak to your interests.
- **10th grade:** Continue your active involvement in the organizations you have enjoyed. Check out any new activities you might have missed freshman year.
- **11th grade:** Start taking on leadership roles. Especially in the activities that you enjoy the most, be more than an active member. Become a leader in title and in action.
- **12th grade:** Continue to grow as a leader. Go above and beyond within your activities. Leave each group better than you found it. When you identify a need or room for improvement, take action.

### **Good attendance, grades, citizenship**

Through your transcripts and letters of recommendation, these qualities become clear to admissions officers. Carry yourself well and build strong relationships within the school community. Show up AND participate. Take your academic performance seriously and strive to do your best in every class.



## **Community service**

Many colleges like to see that you are spending some of your “spare” time giving back to the community. Beyond required service projects at Wellington, pursue your own service outlets. Volunteer at a summer camp, tutor, or even plant flowers at a retirement community. Service hours suggest that you will continue similar involvement at the college level. If these volunteer efforts connect with your interests, even better!

## **Build Your Own Narrative**

### **Build a portfolio of your accomplishments**

Starting your freshman year, collect your favorite papers, projects, etc. Track your awards and honors. This will save you time on your college applications.

### **Know yourself**

No one knows what will truly make you happy besides you. Listen to your own voice and set your goals appropriately.

### **Re-evaluate your goals/plan annually**

Keep your ultimate goals in sight. Are your grades and actions helping you progress toward these goals? Is the curriculum you have chosen leaving doors open to you and preparing you for the future you want?

### **Be independent in your thinking and demonstrate initiative**

Within a selective applicant pool, unique stands out. In fact, many colleges will ask you for examples of times when you went “above and beyond.” As mentioned before, this can be reflected in your extracurricular activities and leadership roles. It can also be illustrated academically. If something sparks your interest in the classroom, soak up as much knowledge as you can in school and in your free time. Admissions offices love to see independent research carried out at the high school level. This communicates a level of active participation that might carry over into the college classroom.

*\*\*A special thanks to Washington University in St. Louis and Northwestern University for their input!\*\**



## Standardized Testing Information

**Be aware that colleges have varying policies and practices as to testing requirements and uses of test results. Check with each school well in advance.**

1. The ACT is divided into three required sections (English, math, reading), and approximately 2 hours in length. The 40-minute science section is optional (as of April 2025), and the 40-minute writing section remains optional. Sub-scores range from 1 to 36. The writing section is scored on a 12-point scale. While some schools will take the highest subsection score across different test dates to recalculate a new composite (a “superscore”), some colleges will only consider the highest composite score. Be sure to check with individual colleges for their testing policy. Students should register online at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org). **The ACT is offered in February, April, June, July, September, October, and December of each year.**
2. The SAT is divided into two sections (evidence-based reading/writing and math). The exam is approximately two hours long. On the evidence-based reading and writing section, as well as the math section, students will receive scores ranging from 200 to 800. Depending on scoring policy, most colleges will take the highest evidence-based reading and writing and math scores into consideration for admission. Be sure to check with individual colleges for their policy on test scores consideration. Students should register online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). **The SAT is offered in March, May, June, August, September, October, November, and December of each year.**
3. Advanced Placement (AP) Exams are not required for most US college admission decisions. Students considering international colleges and universities should consult with college counseling. **Students may choose to take the exams at Wellington in May at the conclusion of related courses.** Scores range from one to five – with five being the highest score. Colleges may award credit toward college graduation or advanced course placement with qualifying scores of three or higher on the exams.

**Test-Optional/Test-Blind Schools:** Please note, there are many colleges and universities throughout the country that allow students to apply without standardized test scores. Some also use a test-blind policy, meaning scores are not considered even if submitted. Students should confirm testing policies directly through college/university websites. Fairtest ([www.fairtest.org](http://www.fairtest.org)) also serves as a tremendous resource.



### **Additional thoughts about standardized testing...**

- Arrange to have scores sent to colleges directly from the testing agencies unless your schools have self-reporting policies that can be verified. Be aware that some admissions offices publicize receipt deadlines for all materials, and it can take several weeks for test results to arrive from the test agencies. Plan to send test scores well in advance of deadlines.
- Register early to avoid late fees and increase chances of placement at your requested site.
- Learn more about how the tests are similar and different from one another in order to determine whether you will take both exams or focus on one.

[ACT and SAT Concordance Table](#)

[Comparing tests by College Board](#)

[Comparing tests by ACT](#)

*\*Note: National Merit Semifinalists may need to take the SAT or ACT at some point by the senior year.*

- Prior to senior year, you are strongly advised to test at least twice (the SAT and/or the ACT).
- Prepare for tests with online resources, in-person tutoring, or test preparation companies. A list of options that are free of charge is posted in the College Counseling section on Veracross and page 49 of this document.
- Take the optional ACT sciences and writing sections if your colleges require them, or if you choose to do so for other reasons.
- International students may be required to take the [TOEFL](#), the [IELTS](#) or [Duolingo](#).



## The Application

**The College Application** - There are several components that comprise a “college application”.

### What does the student submit?

1. **Application for Admission:** The application can vary in length and detail. It is usually submitted online, either directly through the college/university website, or through a shared application portal such as the Common Application. This document will ask you to answer questions related to:
  - Basic personal information: address, family, demographics
  - Academic Record: what school you attend, senior year class schedule
  - Personal Statement/Essay
  - Extracurricular Activities
2. **Standardized Test Scores:** This may include ACT, SAT, AP, TOEFL/IELTS/Duolingo scores
  - Schools have different policies related to the submission of test scores. It is important that you review this information with each school and submit as instructed. Any scores that must come directly from the testing agency must be sent through your ACT or College Board student account at least several weeks prior to the deadline.
  - See page 21 for information about “test-optional” schools.
3. **Application Fee**

### What does Wellington submit?

1. **Official High School Transcript:** This includes all classes completed at Wellington, grades earned and courses for the current school year.
2. **Secondary School Report:** Summarizes your academic record in light of opportunities available to you at Wellington.
3. **School Profile:** Explains the curriculum at Wellington, grading policy, average ACT and SAT scores, colleges at which previous Wellington graduates have enrolled, and additional information helpful to admissions officers.
4. **Teacher Recommendation(s):** We suggest you ask at least one teacher, if not two, from core academic subject areas (English, math, social studies, world language, or science) to write a recommendation. It is ideal, though not required, to have a teacher from junior year write the letter. If you are applying to a fine or performing arts program, you may want an additional recommendation from the appropriate teacher in this discipline. Please refer to the website for each college to which you are applying for the number of teacher recommendations required.
5. **Counselor Recommendation:** College counseling will also write an individualized letter on your behalf. This letter complements your teacher recommendation(s), application, and essay, by describing you holistically within the context of the Wellington community.



## Types of Admission Review

**Holistic Review.** Colleges consider a variety of factors when reviewing applicants. This most often includes:

- **Academic Record** – Which courses have you selected in light of offerings at Wellington? Have you performed consistently well while challenging yourself academically? How many credits have you pursued in the core academic disciplines? In your area of expressed interest? Are you challenging yourself with honors or advanced courses? Do your grades reflect your academic abilities?
- **Standardized Test Scores** – Most colleges and universities utilize standardized test scores, usually the ACT or SAT, as a measure of college readiness. Other colleges view standardized test as an optional portion of the application. Still others are “test-blind” and will not consider test scores even if they are submitted.
- **Personal Statement/Essay** – There is no correct answer or magical essay topic. The essay is in your control; an opportunity for you to tell *your* story in *your* voice. It should communicate something central to your identity. You will draft college essays in College Composition junior year. In the fall of senior year, you can continue drafting your essays with the help of college counseling or the Faculty Edit Team.
- **Extracurricular Activities/Resume** – Schools want to admit students who will be active members of the campus community. The way you spend your time during high school is the best reflection of the role you might play on your future campus. Develop your resume early. This is the time to brag about your accomplishments!
- **Interview** – Some institutions require interviews. For others they are recommended optional. If given the chance to interview with a representative of a school (whether with an admissions officer, a current student, or an alum), do it!
- **Portfolio/Audition** – Students majoring in fine/performing arts may need to submit a portfolio/audition. Non-majors may choose to submit a portfolio of work to showcase a unique talent or help tell their story.
- **Teacher Recommendation(s) and Counselor Recommendation**
- **Expressed Interest** – This can include campus visits, attending a high school visit, participating in a webinar, emailing our admissions rep, and even opening emails from the school! Not all schools track this, but engagement never hurts!

**Formulaic Admission.** Some admissions offices, most commonly public universities, use a formula to determine automatic admission. For example, University of Iowa calculates a “Regent Admission Index” score based upon your ACT/SAT, GPA, and the number of core courses you have completed.



## Specialized Applications: Fine/Performing Arts

Students planning to pursue majors in the fine/performing arts may need to incorporate additional coursework within their discipline.

### Determine your level of involvement in college

- Do you want to major in the arts? If so, what degree is the best fit for you? (BA vs. BFA vs. BM)
  - Students planning to pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts/Bachelor of Music degree, or attend a conservatory or institute of art, focus the majority of their studies on their art and talent. Students earning a Bachelor of Arts will split their studies more evenly between their academic and artistic pursuits.
- Is it possible to double-major in another area?
- Can you be involved in the arts as a non-major? If so, are scholarships available?
- Is there a teacher education option in the arts?

### Understand the application process

- Do I need to audition? If so, what is the timeline to apply for admission and schedule my audition? Do I also need to submit a prescreen?
- Do I need to submit a portfolio? If so, what are the requirements, procedures and deadlines for submission?

### Other things to consider

- Is the fine/performing arts program focused on graduate or undergraduate students?
- How competitive is each program? Consider applying to a school that does not require auditions.

### Additional Visual and Performing Arts Resources

#### Identifying and researching schools/programs

Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design  
[www.aicad.org](http://www.aicad.org)

#### Obtain feedback on your portfolio

National Portfolio Day Association  
[www.nationalportfolioday.org](http://www.nationalportfolioday.org)

#### Audition Opportunities

Unified Auditions  
[www.unifiedauditions.com](http://www.unifiedauditions.com)

#### Scholarship and Educational Opportunities

National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. Arts Recognition and Talent Search (ARTS)  
[www.youngarts.org](http://www.youngarts.org)



## Specialized Applications: United States Service Academies

The United States has five service academies that provide undergraduate education and training of commissioned officers for the United States Armed Forces. These academies seek students who possess a drive towards academic excellence, physical fitness, and outstanding character and leadership skills. Service academy attendees pay no tuition or room and board expenses, and they must serve a minimum term of duty, typically five years, in the military after graduation.

**U.S. Air Force Academy (USAFA) in Colorado Springs, CO**  
**U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA) in New London, CT**  
**U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) in Kings Point, NY**  
**U.S. Military Academy (USMA) in West Point, NY**  
**U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) in Annapolis, MD**

### Summer Seminars & Pre-Candidate Application (December of the junior year)

Many of the service academies offer seminar programs during the summer before a student's senior year in high school. These seminars are typically one week in length and give the student a realistic view of life at a service academy. Students should submit the summer seminar application in December or January of their junior year. Even if the student is not admitted to a summer seminar, the student should complete the pre-candidate application in March of the junior year. In some cases, the summer seminar application serves as the pre-candidate application.

### Congressional Nominations (August of the senior year)

Applicants to all service academies, except the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, are required to obtain a congressional nomination. Nominations may be made by Congressional Representatives, Senators, the Vice President or the President. Students who are interested in seeking a congressional nomination must apply directly to their Senator's and Congressional Representative's office and should visit their websites for their nomination application process/deadlines. It is critically important to seek these nominations early in August or September of the student's senior year of high school.

### Application Process (September of the senior year)

Students must submit a candidate application on Academy website(s). An Academy Liaison must conduct an interview with the student and the student must also pass the Candidate Fitness Assessment. The student should contact the Academy Liaison in October to schedule the interview and also complete the fitness assessment in the fall.

*Given the highly selective nature of service academies, students should always consider alternatives to traditional Academy admission, including ROTC at a traditional college, Academy Prep and Foundation schools, and other Military Prep schools across the United States.*



## Specialized Applications: Collegiate Athletics

In college, there are three primary levels of athletics in which you can participate:

**Intramural:** Teams are comprised of friends, roommates, or classmates who compete against other groups of students. Competition can be recreational or competitive. Sports generally include basketball, softball, flag football, volleyball, etc.

**Club:** Teams usually include high school athletes who want to remain competitive in their sport of choice. Schools often sponsor multiple club teams in a sport, and tryouts are often required. Teams compete against other colleges or universities at the regional or national level but are not school funded.

**Varsity:** Teams are school-sponsored. If you are interested in participating in a varsity program, you should be in touch with the varsity coach at that institution. You may be a recruited athlete or intend to “walk on” to the team. Schools can be designated as NCAA Division 1, Division 2, or Division 3 institutions, as well as NAIA institutions.

**NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) Schools - [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org)**

**Division 1:** These institutions are generally the largest in size and have substantial athletics budgets. These schools can offer full or partial athletic scholarships. Student-athletics must be cleared academically through the NCAA Eligibility Center.

**Division 2:** These schools tend to be slightly smaller in size and can only offer partial athletic scholarships. The time commitment to most sports at the Division 2 level is slightly less, allowing students a bit more balance to their collegiate experience. Student-athletes must be cleared academically through the NCAA Eligibility Center.

**Division 3:** Academics are the primary focus at these schools, and competition tends to be more regional than national. Time commitment to the sport is more similar to a competitive high school program. Student-athletes can be recruited but cannot receive athletic scholarships. This category actually includes the largest number of institutions.

Prospective student-athletes should register with the **NCAA Eligibility Center** by the end of their junior year. You must also request that your high school transcripts be sent to NCAA.

In order to be eligible to compete in NCAA Division 1 athletics, a student must\*

- Complete 16 NCAA core courses. Ten of these courses (including seven in English, math, or science) must be completed before the start of senior year.
- Earn at least a 2.3 GPA in your core courses

Please note: Not all Wellington courses are NCAA-approved. Therefore, you should meet with College Counseling to discuss your core GPA and make sure you are on track early in your high school years.



**NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) Schools - [www.playnaia.org](http://www.playnaia.org)**

Approximately 250 colleges/universities throughout the country are members of the NAIA. These institutions generally claim athletics programs that are smaller in size and maintain a focus on “character-driven intercollegiate athletics.” Approximately 83,000 student-athletes are members of NAIA teams.

In order to be eligible to participate in NAIA athletics, a student must meet two of the follow three criteria:

1. Achieve a minimum of 18 on the ACT or 970 on the SAT
2. Achieve a minimum high school grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
3. Graduate in the top half of your high school class

**If you are interested in playing sports in college, take initiative and contact coaches.**

Remember that most collegiate student athletes have to market themselves to coaches, especially if you are seeking to play at a school that is farther away. Begin tracking statistics and highlights early so you can present this information to coaches upon request.

Always respond to coaches if you are interested. If coaches do not hear from you, they may interpret this as a lack of interest and focus their recruitment efforts elsewhere.

Remember that you should select to play at a school where you would be happy with or without sports. Athletics should be just one portion of your college experience.



# The Resume

## College Resume Guidelines

### Length

- Ideally one page
- One page, front and back, as an exception

### Text Visuals/Positioning

- Vary font and point size within document - 10-12 points
- Avoid use of color and unusual fonts
- Bold the category titles
- Include such highlights as underlines, bullets, borders. Minimize use of italics.
- Group all items in a category under category title on same page

### Content Order

- Group entries into categories by subject
- Arrange categories by relative importance, with most important listed first
- Organize entries by most to least recent or by most to least significant

### Content Ingredients

- Enter full name as it appears on applications (first, complete middle, last, suffix)
  - Center it at the top of the page
- List e-mail address and phone number used for communications with colleges
  - Add them under the full name with no spaces
- Include an Education section as the first category
- Identify activities and recognitions during grades 9-12 and summers
  - Indicate in each case the time period involved
  - Be consistent with the naming convention
- Utilize phrases rather than complete sentences with periods
- Use present tense for ongoing activities and past tense for completed/past activities
  - Begin lines with action words where appropriate
- Optional
  - Add information about significant hobbies, family commitments and other interests

### Proofing

- Have document proofed until “perfect”



## Resume Action Verbs

### Management/ Leadership Skills

administered  
analyzed  
appointed  
approved  
assigned  
attained  
authorized  
chaired  
considered  
consolidated  
contracted  
controlled  
converted  
coordinated  
decided  
delegated  
developed  
directed  
eliminated  
emphasized  
enforced  
enhanced  
established  
executed  
generated  
handled  
headed  
hired  
hosted  
improved  
incorporated  
increased  
initiated  
inspected  
instituted  
led  
managed  
merged  
motivated  
organized  
originated  
overhauled  
oversaw  
planned  
presided  
prioritized  
produced  
recommended  
reorganized

replaced  
restored  
reviewed  
scheduled  
streamlined  
strengthened  
supervised  
terminated

### Communication/ People Skills

addressed  
advertised  
arbitrated  
arranged  
articulated  
authored  
clarified  
collaborated  
communicated  
composed  
condensed  
conferred  
consulted  
contacted  
conveyed  
convinced  
corresponded  
debated  
defined  
described  
developed  
directed  
discussed  
drafted  
edited  
elicited  
enlisted  
explained  
expressed  
formulated  
furnished  
incorporated  
influenced  
interacted  
interpreted  
interviewed  
involved  
joined  
judged  
lectured

listened  
marketed  
mediated  
moderated  
negotiated  
observed  
outlined  
participated  
persuaded  
presented  
promoted  
proposed  
publicized  
reconciled  
recruited  
referred  
reinforced  
reported  
resolved  
responded  
solicited  
specified  
spoke  
suggested  
summarized  
synthesized  
translated  
wrote

### Research Skills

analyzed  
clarified  
collected  
compared  
conducted  
critiqued  
detected  
determined  
diagnosed  
evaluated  
examined  
experimented  
explored  
extracted  
formulated  
gathered  
identified  
inspected  
interpreted  
interviewed  
invented

investigated  
located  
measured  
organized  
researched  
searched  
solved  
summarized  
surveyed  
systematized  
tested

### Technical Skills

adapted  
assembled  
built  
calculated  
computed  
conserved  
constructed  
converted  
debugged  
designed  
determined  
developed  
engineered  
fabricated  
fortified  
installed  
maintained  
operated  
overhauled  
printed  
programmed  
rectified  
regulated  
remodeled  
repaired  
replaced  
restored  
solved  
specialized  
standardized  
studied  
upgraded  
utilized

### Teaching Skills

adapted  
advised  
clarified



coached  
communicated  
conducted  
coordinated  
critiqued  
developed  
enabled  
encouraged  
evaluated  
explained  
facilitated  
focused  
guided  
individualized  
informed  
instilled  
instructed  
motivated  
persuaded  
set goals  
simulated  
stimulated  
taught  
tested  
trained  
transmitted  
tutored

#### **Financial/ Data Skills**

administered  
adjusted  
allocated  
analyzed  
appraised  
assessed  
audited  
balanced  
calculated  
computed  
conserved  
corrected  
determined  
developed  
estimated  
forecasted  
managed  
marketed  
measured  
planned

programmed  
projected  
reconciled  
reduced  
researched  
retrieved

#### **Creative Skills**

acted  
adapted  
began  
combined  
conceptualized  
condensed  
created  
customized  
designed  
developed  
directed  
displayed  
drew  
entertained  
established  
fashioned  
formulated  
founded  
illustrated  
initiated  
instituted  
integrated  
introduced  
invented  
modeled  
modified  
originated  
performed  
photographed  
planned  
revised  
revitalized  
shaped  
solved

#### **Helping Skills**

adapted  
advocated  
aided  
answered  
arranged  
assessed

assisted  
cared for  
clarified  
coached  
collaborated  
contributed  
cooperated  
counseled  
demonstrated  
diagnosed  
educated  
encouraged  
ensured  
expedited  
facilitated  
familiarize  
furthered  
guided  
helped  
insured  
intervened  
motivated  
provided  
referred  
rehabilitated  
presented  
resolved  
simplified  
supplied  
supported  
volunteered

#### **Organization/ Detail Skills**

approved  
arranged  
cataloged  
categorized  
charted  
classified  
coded  
collected  
compiled  
corresponded  
distributed  
executed  
filed  
generated  
implemented  
incorporated

inspected  
logged  
maintained  
monitored  
obtained  
operated  
ordered  
organized  
prepared  
processed  
provided  
purchased  
recorded  
registered  
reserved  
responded  
reviewed  
routed  
scheduled  
screened  
set up  
submitted  
supplied  
standardized  
systematized  
updated  
validated  
verified

#### **More Verbs for Accomplishments**

achieved  
completed  
expanded  
exceeded  
improved  
pioneered  
reduced (losses)  
resolved (issues)  
restored  
spearheaded  
succeeded  
surpassed  
transformed  
won



## Sample Resumes

Jane Mitchell Smith  
[Jane.M.Smith@email.com](mailto:Jane.M.Smith@email.com)  
(123) 456-7890

### **Education**

The Wellington School (Columbus, Ohio)

Expected Graduation: May 2027

### **Academic Awards and Recognitions**

- Science Student of the Year (12)
- Mathematics Award (11)

### **Service Learning (750+ hours completed to present)**

- Activity Coordinator for Vacation Bible School at Southwest Presbyterian Church (9-11)
- Vocalist and saxophone player in Central Ohio Catholic Church band (9-12)
- Organizer of Haiti School Supplies drive (9-11)
- Assistant Coach for Dublin Soccer Club 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade level (10-11)
- Bible teacher at Young Life Capernaum (10-12)
- Tutor/mentor for Latino & Latin American Space for Enrichment and Research (11-12)

### **Scientific Research Experience**

- Student Researcher at The Ohio State University Lovett Racke Laboratory I (11-12)
  - Write article for the *Central Ohio Medical Journal* (12)
  - Investigate treatments, therapies for Multiple Sclerosis (11-12)

### **School Associated Extracurricular Activities**

- Wellington Mathematics Contests/Clubs
  - Math Club Co-Chair (9-11)
  - American Mathematics Competition (10-11)
- Varsity Softball (10-12)
  - Senior Salute Award Winner (11)
- Wellington Varsity Golf Team (11-12)
- Photography Club (9-12)
  - Club President (11-12)
- Wellington Theater
  - Actress: Our Town (9)
  - Stage Manager: The Musical (11)
  - Stage Manager: All Shook Up (10)

### **Academic Highlights**

- Independent Study Advanced Calculus
- Advanced Computer Science
- Advanced Psychology and Neuroscience
- Biography of Cancer



**John Michael Smith**  
[John.M.Smith@email.com](mailto:John.M.Smith@email.com)  
(123) 456-7890

### **Education**

The Wellington School (Columbus, OH)

Expected Graduation: May 2027

### **Academic Awards and Recognitions**

- Cum Laude Society (11)
- Drama Department Award (11)
- History Department Award (11)

### **Advanced Classes and Research Experience**

- Advanced Chemistry
- Advanced Physics
- Advanced American Studies
- Honors French IV
- Independent Science Research Project
  - Elucidating Therapeutic Target Genes for Treatment of Multiple Sclerosis

### **Extracurricular Activities & Clubs**

- Wellington Robotics (9-12)
- Wellington Varsity Lacrosse, Goalie (10-12)
  - Most Coachable Award (10-11)
- Wellington Varsity Swim Team (10-12)
  - Best Teammate Award (10)
- Wellington Strings Orchestra (9-12)
- Taekwondo (10-12)
  - Black Belt (11)
- Ohio Youth in Government (10-12)
- Latin Club, Secretary (9-10)

### **Service Learning and International Experiences**

- Lead monthly meetings and prepare agendas for Community Service Club (10-12)
- Cook two meals monthly for guests at Ronald McDonald House (10-12)
- Organize annual fundraiser for South Sudan Medical Clinic (10-12)
- Teach gymnastics to children with special needs, ages 2-12, at Kidnetics (10-12)
- Volunteer three hours weekly at National Church Residences (10-12)
  - Received National Volunteer of the Year Award in 2024
- Participated in the French Exchange Program (10-11)



## **Name**

Address

City, State Zip

Phone #

Email address used on college applications

## **Education**

**Wellington School**

**College Major/ Career Goal:**

(include this only if you have one)

**Expected Graduation:** May 2027

**ACT:** (include only if you plan to submit)

**SAT:** same

## **Honors and Awards**

- Wellington Parents Association Good Citizenship Award (10<sup>th</sup> grade recipient)
  - In recognition of courteous, honest and respectful behavior; service and positive attitude
- Voracious Learner Award (11<sup>th</sup> grade recipient)
  - Awarded for voracious learning, outstanding character, significant contribution to the school

## **High School Activities**

- The Pawprint (9, 10, 11, 12)
  - Editor in Chief (12)
  - Spend approximately 10 hours per week leading a staff of xx students.
- Varsity Lacrosse (9, 11, 12)
  - Team Captain (12)
- Blue Key (9, 10, 12)
  - Serve as tour guide and host for prospective Wellington students and families

## **Community Activities**

- Camp Independence Volunteer (12)
  - Completed 40 hours of service supporting campers with cerebral palsy during variety of physical activities
- Church Youth Group (9, 10, 11, 12)
  - Coordinated over 100 youth members for a 2-week mission trip to Tijuana
- Meals on Wheels Volunteer (Summers 2024, 2025)
  - Deliver 3-5 meals to senior citizens every Saturday throughout the year

## **Work Experience**

- Columbus Public Library (2025, 2026)
  - Approximately 10 hours per week during the school year
- YMCA Summer Gymnastics Camp Instructor (Summers 2025, 2026)
  - 45 hours per week in the summer
  - Promoted to lead instructor after only first summer of employment



## Interviews

### Preparing for the College or Scholarship Interview

Take advantage of any opportunity for on-/off-campus interviews. These may be with an admissions officer, a local alum, or even a current student. Check with each college for details about interview options, requirements, and deadlines.

#### Before the Interview

1. Thoroughly research the college/university beforehand. Do not ask questions clearly answered in marketing pieces.
2. Prepare to talk about talents/interests and how they relate to college/future goals.
3. Be ready for open-ended questions (e.g. "Tell me about yourself.")
4. Minimize your nerves! Remember- you are interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. The final decision college decision is yours.

#### Sample Questions from College Admissions Interviewers

1. How do you like Wellington and what would you change? What has been your most positive/negative experience there?
2. What is your role in the school community? What is the most significant contribution you've made at your school?
3. Describe your ideal college/university. (Make sure you describe the school with which you are interviewing!)
4. What has been your favorite subject in high school? Why? What might you study in college?
5. What are some of your goals – personal and professional – for the future? How did you become interested in \_\_\_\_\_?
6. Tell me about a specific class or assignment that was especially meaningful to you.
7. How would your teachers describe you as a person and student?
8. What is your reason for participating in \_\_\_\_\_ (i.e. athletics, student government, arts, service)?
9. How do you plan to transfer your high school contributions, achievements/activities to the college level?
10. What books/authors have made lasting impressions on you? Have you read deeply into any one author or field?
11. What event(s) has been most critical in life thus far? Who has most influenced you?
12. What pressures do you feel operating on you to conform? Describe ways in which you "go your own way."
13. How have you spent your summers? Your free time?
14. What are your reactions to current events?
15. How would you describe yourself as a person?
16. Have you ever thought of not going to college? What would you do instead?
17. Why do you think you are a good match for this college?
18. Many qualified students apply to our school. What characteristics make you unique?
19. Are there any holes in your transcript?
20. Do you have any questions? (Have some in mind.)



### Questions to Ask the Interviewer

1. Who will teach me? (full-time faculty vs. graduate students)
2. How big are freshman classes? (not simply faculty-to-student ratio)
3. What type of first year programs are in place to help with the transition into college?
4. What is distinctive/unique about your school? (i.e. traditions, academic opportunities)
5. What is the retention rate/graduation rate? What percentage of graduates gain employment/admission to graduate school?
6. Would my application have been accepted last year? What is the profile of the freshman class? How do you choose students?
7. Can you tell me about your \_\_\_\_\_program? \_\_\_\_\_major? \_\_\_\_\_team?
8. What percentage of students live on campus? In what types of activities do most students get involved? (i.e. athletic events, visiting speakers/bands, study abroad, Greek life)
9. What scholarship opportunities are available? Do they have separate deadlines or application processes?
10. Tell me about the career services office and internship opportunities. What student support services are available?

### After the Interview

1. Remember to write a thank you note to your interviewer.
2. Take action immediately on any suggestions that came up during your interview.
3. Some quick notes following your conversation may be helpful in drafting future college-specific essays or revisiting your college options down the road.



## Financial Aid Overview

While cost of attendance is important to consider in the college search, it is also critical to remember that many schools discount their “sticker price” through merit and need-based aid.

### Types of Financial Assistance & Scholarships

There are four types of financial aid: scholarships (sometimes called merit aid), grants, loans, and work-study programs. Depending on financial need, students may be eligible for one or more types of aid. Most financial assistance packages contain a combination of types of aid to avoid excessive loans or student employment.

**Gift Aid** – Money that does *not* need to be repaid.

**Scholarships** are often awarded based upon a talent or attribute, such as academic performance, athletic ability, or musical talent. Financial need may be a consideration, but this is not always the case. This assistance can be awarded by colleges/universities as well as outside organizations such as Rotary Club, credit unions, and employer groups.

**Grants** are based on financial need. These can be awarded by the federal government (i.e. Pell Grant), the state in which a student resides and will attend college, or the college/university to which a student has been admitted.

**Non-Gift Aid** – Money that does need to be repaid.

**Loans** are a common form of student aid. Loans are most commonly awarded by the federal government but can also be obtained through credit unions and other financial institutions. Most loans are at low-interest or fixed rates, and usually do not require repayment until six months after finishing college. The grace period is extended if the student attends graduate school full time after college. It is important to review your financial aid package and assess how much debt will accumulate over four years, and, if applicable, include graduate school costs as you make your final decision.

**Work-study** involves a part-time job on campus while attending college. This aid is either federally or funded by the college/university.

### Application Procedures

Financial need is calculated using the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. This online document uses your family’s income tax information in order to determine your expected family contribution (EFC) toward college expenses. Many private universities will also require the **CSS PROFILE** form to award private grant and scholarship funds. The FAFSA is typically available beginning October 1 of a student’s senior year and requires financial information based upon taxes filed earlier that calendar year (i.e. if you will graduate in 2027, you can submit the FAFSA beginning October 1, 2026, using the 2025 tax documents filed in 2026). By submitting the FAFSA



as soon as possible, students have the opportunity to receive financial assistance packages from colleges earlier in the admissions process. Early action/decision deadlines usually require FAFSA/CSS submission within a couple of weeks.

While the FAFSA is free to submit, the CSS PROFILE costs \$25 for the first college, and \$16 for each additional submission. Some colleges offer an institutional version of the PROFILE, which is typically free.

**Review requirements at each institution to determine required forms and important deadlines.**

### **Estimating aid**

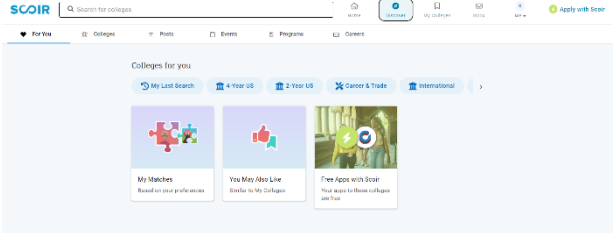
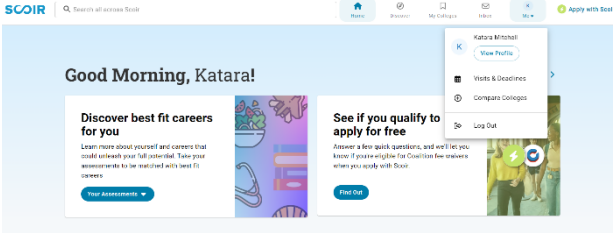
Every college is required to have a Net Price Calculator on its website. These net price calculators help families understand the estimated total cost of attendance. However, the estimates they provide are only as good as the information entered. Often these simple calculators may not include relevant details that can substantially change the aid awarded to families who qualify. We encourage families to communicate with each college's financial assistance office in addition to using the Net Price Calculator tool.



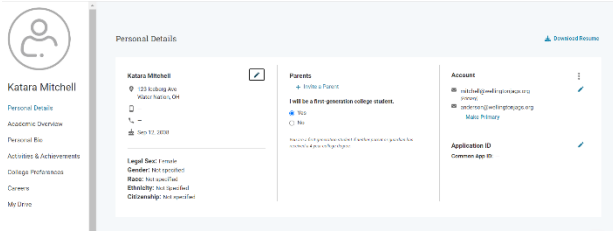
## Appendix

### SCOIR Overview for Juniors

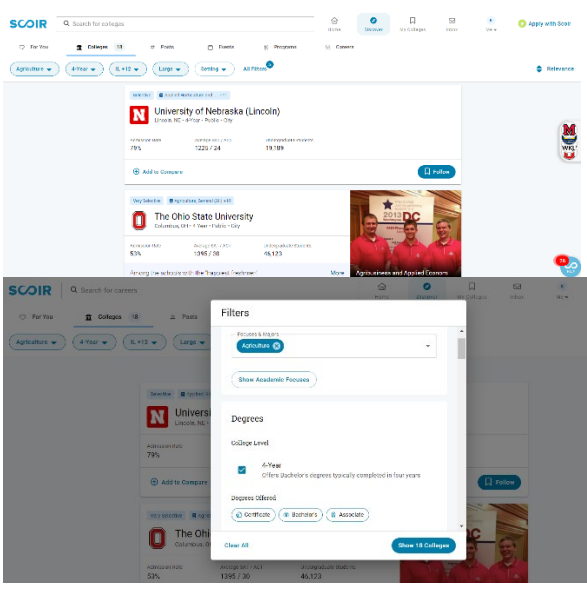
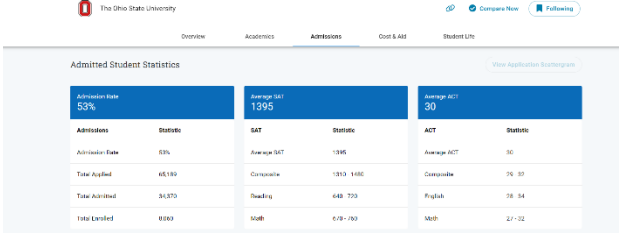
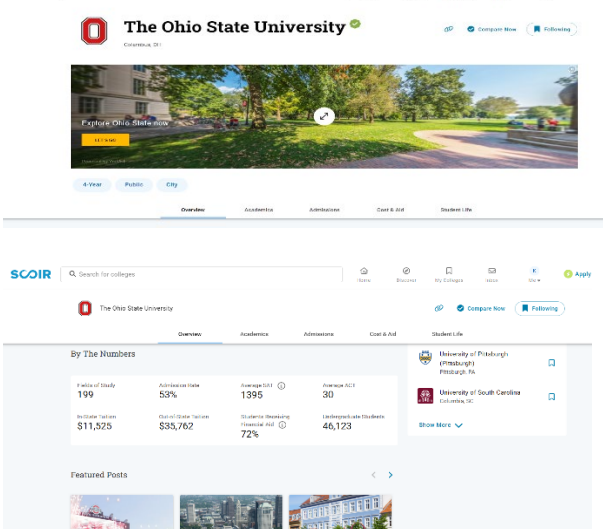
#### Review student view menu items

|                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>The student view has six menu items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home</li> <li>• Discover</li> <li>• My Colleges</li> <li>• Inbox</li> <li>• Me</li> <li>• “Apply with Scoir”</li> </ul> |
|  | <p>The menu items under the “Me” icon include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View Profile</li> <li>• Visits and Deadlines</li> <li>• Compare Colleges</li> </ul>                               |

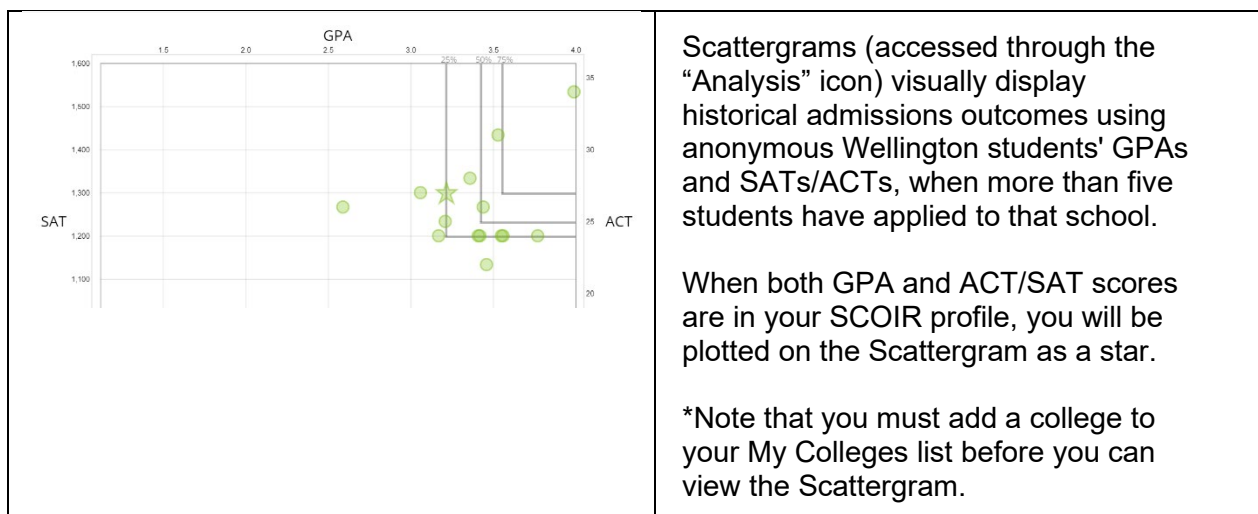
#### Update My Profile

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click on <b>Me</b> at the top of the page and select <b>View Profile</b> from the dropdown menu.</li> <li>2. Explore and add data to the editable fields in <u>Personal Details</u> to populate data about yourself.</li> <li>3. Make special note of your email address. Make sure this email address matches the email address in Veracross.</li> </ol> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

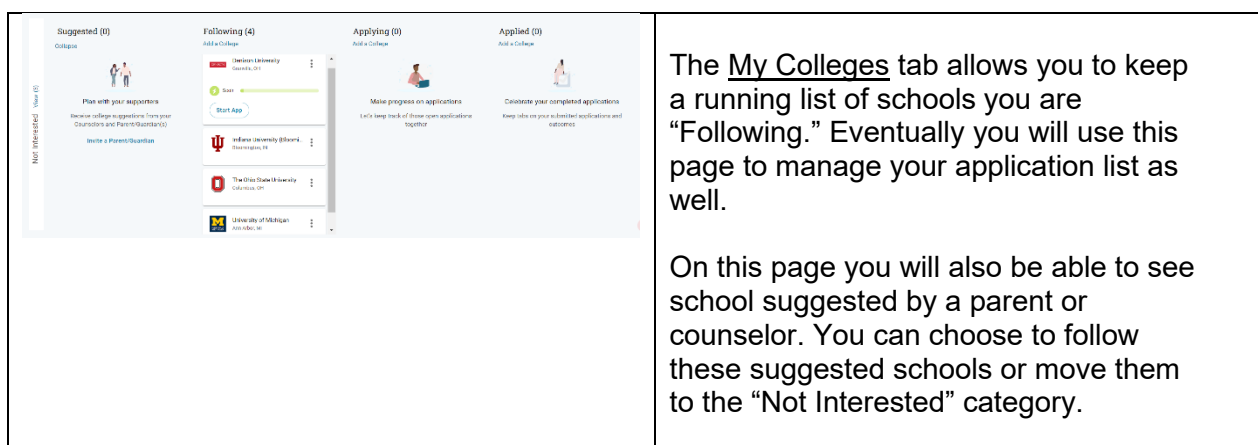
## Perform a College Search & Compare

|                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|    | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Click <b>Discover</b> at the top of the page.</li> <li>2. Select “Colleges” for the most complete list.</li> <li>3. Select “All Filters”. Use categories to set parameters for your search. (Make sure you select your major under “Academic Focus” if you are explicitly looking for that major!)</li> <li>4. These results will remain as your last search the next time you come to <b>Discover</b>, and until under “All Filters” until you <b>Clear All</b>.</li> <li>5. Click <b>Follow</b> to add colleges to a target list of saved colleges.</li> </ol> <p>Filtering works best if you pick the criteria most important to you.</p> |
|   | <p>From your results list on <b>Discover</b>, click a college name to learn more about the college:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admissions statistics/deadlines</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Demographic statistics</li> <li>• Academics/majors</li> <li>• Cost/financial aid</li> </ul> <p>College data is pulled from Wintergreen Orchard House &amp; IPEDS and is updated biannually.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|  | <p>Review the <b>Overview</b> tab of a college. There are several actions you can take:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add to My Colleges</li> <li>• Look at general stats related to admission rate, tuition, average test scores, etc.</li> <li>• Explore the Featured Posts and Upcoming Events (discover colleges with similar activities)</li> <li>• Access a virtual tour of campus</li> <li>• View a map of the area and the nearest transportation available</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                          |

## Analyze Scattergrams



## Access and manage colleges from your My Colleges tab.



## Common Application Instructions

### Creating your account

1. Go to [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).
2. Select "Apply Now"
3. Click on "Create an account." **Use your Wellington email address for your username.** For future reference, be sure to record your password somewhere you will remember!
4. Provide your basic information. Check and double check to make sure you type this information correctly. Everything here must match the information on your record at Wellington, with ACT/SAT, and with the federal government for the purposes of financial aid.

### Navigating the Common Application website

#### The "College Search" Tab - *Creating your college list*

1. In the search box, type in a portion of your school's name (i.e. Northwestern or Bowling Green). You do not need to provide all of the information requested to run this search. From your results list, click on the + to the left of the school you want to add to your list.
  - If you cannot find a certain school on the Common App site, they might not utilize this application. Instead, you may have to go to the college/university website and apply for admission using their school-specific application, or the Coalition Application. Be sure to also double check your spelling.
2. Type in the name of your next school in the search box. Continue this process until you have added all of your schools, then select the "Dashboard" option.

#### The "Dashboard" Tab - *Staying organized*

The Dashboard tab is your quick reference page. You can come back to this tab to check deadlines and to quickly access your progress through each school's application.

#### The "Common App" Tab - *Completing your application*

This tab gives you access to the application itself. Select "Continue" at the bottom of each section to move forward. As you complete a section, a green check mark will display for each subcategory, and eventually in the menu on the left.

### Profile Section

Some information under this section will be populated for you based upon the information you provided at registration.

- Under "**Citizenship**", you have the option of entering your Social Security Number. This is required *only* if you intend to apply for financial aid. If you are not sure, leave it blank for now and return to this section later.
- **Common App Fee Waiver** – Generally speaking, students who mark "yes" here qualify for financial assistance at Wellington, as well as a fee waiver for the ACT or SAT. If you think this might apply to you, feel free to ask us before providing your answer.



## Family Section

Provide as much information as you can about parents and their educational history. If you don't know the dates or exact degrees, you can complete this section later.

## Education Section

- **Date of Entry** – List the date you started in the upper school at Wellington. For many of you, this will be August of your 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. If you transferred in, change the date accordingly.
- **Other Schools** – If you have attended another high school, search for this school here. Make sure your dates of attendance match up.
- **Colleges and Universities** – If you have completed any dual credit or any online college courses, please report the name of the college/university here. This does *not* include AP credit.
  - “College credit awarded” should be checked.
  - If you have already completed a course, mark “Transcript available” as well. If you will take your first class this year, do not mark this box.
  - Do not select any degree.
- **Grades**
  - Class rank reporting: none
  - GPA scale reporting: 4.0
  - Cumulative GPA: If you choose to report your GPA, you can use the GPA listed in SCOIR as the most recent calculation of coursework completed at Wellington.
  - GPA weight: unweighted
- **Current or Most Recent Year Courses**
  - You must list every course individually (up to 15 classes).
  - We follow a trimester schedule.
  - We offer Advanced and Honors courses. You do not need to indicate a “level” for classes that are not Advanced or Honors.
- **Honors**
  - Report any school recognitions (i.e. honors convocation), regional/local, or national/international recognitions that are academic in nature. This is where you want to brag!
- **Community-Based Organizations** – If you work with an additional college planning program that offers free assistance, list that information here.



## Testing Section

- In this section, you have the option to self-report scores. Remember, unless the college accepts self-reported scores as official, you must also have your official scores sent directly from the testing agency to your schools. However, if you wish to highlight certain subscores, this is an opportunity. Here, you report only the highest subscores across all test dates. Please make sure you forward all matching official scores to your schools (i.e. if you provide subscores from April and June, but your highest composite was in June, you must still send official score reports from April and June).
- Know each school's testing policy.
  - Are they test optional?
  - Do they participate in Score Choice?
  - Do they super score?
- If you plan to apply test-optional, do not provide your testing information here!

## Activities Section

- You may add up to 10 activities in this section.
- Provide information regarding any activities you do outside of class, including outside of school. This would include clubs, service, sports, fine/performing arts, family commitments, and paid employment. You should list these activities in reverse chronological order. The activities in which you are currently involved should be listed first, with previous activities listed last.
- Be sure to explain any Wellington-specific organization whose purpose might not be obvious (i.e. Green Club, Jag Ambassadors).

## Personal Essay Section

- Select the topic to which you will respond. Once you have drafted and finalized your essay, you can simply copy and paste it to the text box at the bottom of this page. Remember, your essay should be 300-650 words in length.
- This essay will be available to all colleges/universities to which you apply. Therefore, we recommend you not use specific school names in your essay.
- **Additional Information** – Utilize this section if you have specific circumstances you wish to explain (i.e. qualification/context that does not fit into your application elsewhere)

## The “My Colleges” Tab – *View and complete school-specific requirements*

Select a school from your list on the left side of the page.

- The main portion of the page highlights deadlines for each admissions option (Regular Decision, Early Decision, Early Action, etc.) as well as recommendation requirements. Use the **My Application Tracker** to track these requirements for each of your schools and keep yourself organized.



Under the institution name on the left, you can complete the following:

- **Application Questions:** These are school-specific questions, such as enrollment term, housing information, intended major, contact with the institution, legacy connection, and sometimes an additional personal statement.
- **Recommenders and FERPA:** You must invite your counselor and selected teachers to your Common App account in order for letters of recommendation to be uploaded. If you are applying to a school under an Early Decision deadline, you must also invite a parent to your account.
  1. Click on “release authorization” under FERPA Release Authorization.
  2. Read through the information provided about FERPA, check the box at the bottom, and select “Continue.”
  3. Check the release and then select whether or not you waive your right to view your letters.

*We encourage students to waive their right, as this communicates to colleges/universities that all of the positive things stated in your recommendations are unbiased and genuine, not influenced by the fact that you have access to them. Please note, your teachers will see whether or not you waive your right to see the letters they write.*

**Writing Supplement Questions:** Some schools may list their supplemental essays under this tab instead. Be sure you check both places. This section can also populate as you work through your school-specific questions. Do not wait until the last minute!

**Review and Submit:** You will submit each school’s application and supplement separately. Carefully review a pdf of each application and writing supplement (if applicable) before you click submit. If there is an application fee, have a credit card handy.



# College Counseling Resources

## College Research Tools

- Big Future - <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- Campus Reel - <https://www.campusreel.org/>
- Campus Tours Online - <https://campustours.com/>
- College Data - <https://www.collegedata.com/>
- Council of International Schools - <https://www.cois.org/membership-directory>
- Niche - <https://www.niche.com/>
- Peterson's - <https://www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx>
- SCOIR - <https://www.scoir.com/>
- US Dept of Education
  - College Navigator - <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>
  - Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System - <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>

## Scholarship/Financial Aid Resources

- Appily - <https://www.appily.com/>
- CSS Profile - <https://cssprofile.collegeboard.org/>
- Columbus Foundation Scholarships - <https://columbusfoundation.org/students/scholarships>
- Fast Web - <https://www.fastweb.com/>
- FinAid: The Smart Guide to Financial Aid - <https://finaid.org/>
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) - <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>
- LendEDU - <https://lendedu.com/>
- Peterson's - <https://www.petersons.com/scholarship-search.aspx>
- Raise.Me: Microscholarships - <https://www.raise.me/>
- Sallie Mae - <https://www.salliemae.com/>
- Scholarships.com - <https://www.scholarships.com/>
- Unigo - <https://www.unigo.com/>

## Personality Inventories & Self-Assessment

- Disc Assessment - <https://discpersonalitytesting.com/>
- VIA Character - <https://www.viacharacter.org/>

## Resources for Parents

- Jennifer Miller Consulting L.L.C. - <https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/>



## Application Platforms

- Common Application - <https://www.commonapp.org/>
- SCOIR - <https://www.scoir.com/>
- University of California - <https://apply.universityofcalifornia.edu/my-application/login>
- Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UK) - <https://www.ucas.com/>
- Institution-Specific Applications - see college/university websites

## Standardized Test Information

- ACT - <https://www.act.org/>
- SAT - <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat>
- FairTest: National Center for Fair & Open Testing - <http://www.fairtest.org/>
- Duolingo English Test – <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/>
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) - <https://www.ielts.org/>
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) - <https://www.ets.org/toefl>

## Cost-Free Standardized Test Preparation

- ACT - <https://www.act.org/content/act/en/products-and-services/learning-resources.html>
- College Board - <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/sat/whats-on-the-test>
- Khan Academy Test Prep - <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

## Researching Majors and Careers

- My Majors - <https://www.mymajors.com/>
- Occupational Outlook Handbook - <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

## Summer Programs/Gap Year Resources

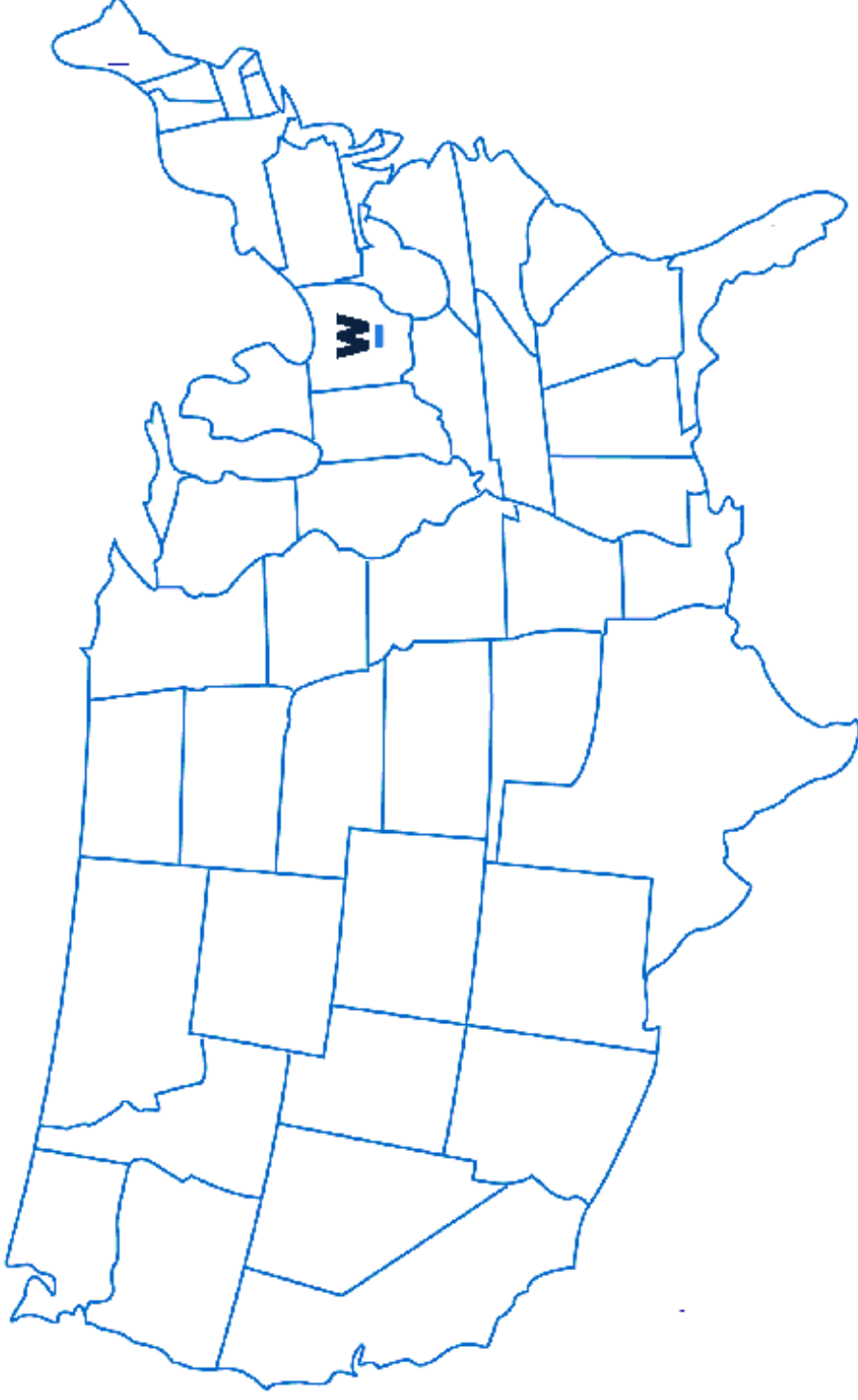
- TeenLife Summer Programs - <https://www.teenlife.com/category/summer/>
- Rustic Pathways - <https://rusticpathways.com/>
- TeenLife Gap Year Programs - <https://www.teenlife.com/category/gap-year/>
- Where There be Dragons - <https://www.wheretherebedragons.com/>
- Gap Year Association – <https://www.gapyearassociation.org>

## Hard Copy Books

- Fiske Guide to Colleges - Edward B. Fiske
- Colleges that Change Lives - Loren Pope
- The Best 384 Colleges – The Princeton Review
- Real College Essays that Work - Edward B. Fiske
- Dream School – Jeff Selinger







Use this map to assist in your college search. Mark your radius from Columbus, your geographic areas of interest, your top choice schools, or all of the above!

## My College Map



## My College Application Tracker

|                                         | <b>College/University</b> | <b>Example College/University</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>School Name</b>                      |                           | <i>Washington University in St. Louis</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Representative Name, Contact</b>     |                           | <i>Abbey Thompson</i><br><a href="mailto:Abigail.t@wustl.edu">Abigail.t@wustl.edu</a>                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Application Deadline</b>             |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nov 2 (EA, ED)</i></li> <li>• <i>Jan 4 (ED2, RD)</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Scholarship Deadline</b>             |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Dec 16 (priority)</i></li> <li>• <i>Jan 4 (Academic School Scholarships)</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Application(s) Accepted</b>          |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Common Application</i></li> <li>• <i>Coalition/SCOIR Application</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Supplemental Essays</b>              |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Admission: 1 required (250)</i></li> <li>• <i>Signature Scholarships: 1 per program (250)</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Testing Policy</b>                   |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Test-optional</i></li> <li>• <i>Writing – not req</i></li> <li>• <i>Science – not req</i></li> <li>• <i>Oct (EA/ED), Dec (RD/ED2) – last test date accepted</i></li> <li>• <i>Self-reported scores are accepted</i></li> </ul> |
| <b>Teacher Recommendations</b>          |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>1 required</i></li> <li>• <i>1 optional</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Counselor Report/ Recommendation</b> |                           | <i>Required</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Mid-Year Report</b>                  |                           | <i>Required</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Financial Aid Deadline</b>           |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Nov 17 (EA/ED)</i></li> <li>• <i>Jan 11 (ED2)</i></li> <li>• <i>Feb 1 (RD)</i></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>CSS Profile Required</b>             |                           | <i>Yes</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Additional materials</b>             |                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>90-second video (encouraged)</i></li> <li>• <i>Art portfolio (required for College of Art; encouraged for College of Architecture)</i></li> </ul>                                                                              |
| <b>Demonstrated Interest</b>            |                           | <i>Important</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |



## Additional questions for each college/university you are considering:

### Forms and deadlines

1. If fee waivers are provided, how does that system work?
2. Are there different requirements/deadlines for scholarships, special programs or housing?

### Questions if you have specialized application processes to consider (collegiate athlete, visual or performing artist, military academy candidate, international student)

1. What special deadlines exist?
2. Are there additional/different materials required (audition, portfolio, etc.)? What steps/deadlines are associated with these requirements?
3. What are the rules/timetables for recruited athletes? Is an academic pre-read required?

### Test scores and dates

1. By what date must I send test scores from the test agencies?
2. Are self-reported scores accepted? If so, how do I provide this information?
3. Do I need to submit all standardized test results?
4. Is there a super score policy?

### Additional considerations

1. Is demonstrated interest considered in the review process?
2. Is my major/college within the university more selective for admission than others?
3. What are the options if my application isn't accepted into a given program?

