POPE JOHN XXIII
REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

College Planning Guide
Class of 2023

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General Tips

- ☐ Sign up for standardized tests – all schools will accept either the SAT or ACT so you only need to take one, but see the tips below to help you figure out which one is best for you. Many colleges do not require the tests but we still encourage you to take them because a good test score is ALWAYS beneficial to your application.
- ☐ Review your transcript with your counselor at your next counselor meeting
- ☐ Continue to work hard to produce the best work possible – **grades matter**!
- ☐ Challenge yourself by scheduling rigorous courses for your senior year
- ☐ Get involved in extracurricular activities and community service that you enjoy – look for opportunities for leadership roles
- ☐ Connect with teachers so that you have resources for letters of recommendation

Tips for Choosing a College

- ☐ Make lists of your abilities, preferences, personal qualities, and what you may want to study or get involved with in college (study abroad, a club, etc.)
- ☐ Learn about colleges by looking at these websites:
  1. Naviance
  2. https://www.niche.com/
  3. https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search
- ☐ Compile a balanced list of schools you are interested in. Try to include schools that you might be qualified to attend as well as reach schools. Your college counselor can help you develop a list with 'target', 'reach', and 'likely' schools on the list
- ☐ Become familiar with each college's *Admissions* webpage. Some information to look for:
  1. What is the application deadline?
  2. Does this school accept the Common Application or Coalition Application? Or do they use a school specific application?
  3. What are the requirements for admission? *Do students need certain courses for my major? Is an interview required or recommended?*
  4. Does the school require an SAT or ACT test score? How do I have to send the scores if I am submitting them? Are there school specific essays?
- ☐ Have the $$$ talk with your family
  1. Financial fit is as important as academic and social fit
  2. Become familiar with each college's Financial Aid or Scholarship tab –
     - Use the *Net Price Calculator* to determine affordability for each college
  3. Do they have a financial aid deadline?
  4. Do they require the CSS profile or another application to be considered for scholarships?

Dates for your calendar

- **Parent Meeting – Junior College Planning –** March 16, 7:00pm in Media Center
- **College Fair at Pope John –** March 30, 2022 during the school day

NACAC In Person–College Fair
https://www.nacacfairs.org/attend/national-college-fairs/new-jersey/

- April 20 (Wed) NACAC Northern NJ College Fair 9-12 PM & 5-8 PM
  Meadowlands Expo Center at Harmon Meadows, Secaucus;
  Email: Collegefairs@nacacnet.org

NACAC Virtual College Fairs
https://www.nacacattend.org/fairs

- Jan. 30, 2022 (Sun) Virtual Fair 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM (EST)
- Feb. 8, 2022 (Tues) Performing and Visual Arts Virtual College Fair 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- Feb. 15, 2022 (Tues) Virtual Fair 9 AM-12 PM & 6-8 PM
- Feb. 24, 2022 (Thurs) STEM Virtual Fair 4-8 PM
- April 3, 2022 (Sun) Virtual Fair 1-6 PM
- April 12, 2022 (Tues) Student Pathways Virtual College Fair 9 AM-12 PM & 6-8 PM
- April 26, 2022 (Tues) Virtual College Fair 9AM-12 PM & 6-8 PM

January-March

- ☐ In Class Curriculum - A two part *College Process Workshop* will be held in small groups to introduce some of the college search features in Naviance and to discuss recommendation letters and essay writing
- ☐ College Lists - Starting in the second semester, our college counselor will meet individually with each junior student to review their high school transcript and develop a list of appropriate schools, this will continue throughout the spring
- ☐ Standardized Tests - Juniors should register to take the SAT (www.collegeboard.org) and/or the ACT (www.ACT.org). Students should target taking the SAT and/or ACT at least two times. Starting no later than spring of their junior year. A second test can be taken in the summer or early fall. See the section on SAT/ACT tests for all the available dates
  - Consider an SAT or ACT prep course to help you improve scores
- ☐ Researching Colleges - Students should begin researching colleges using Naviance (or other online tools) – What is important to you in a college? Location, size, majors offered, athletics, campus life, special programs, etc.
- ☐ College Fairs - Attend college fairs where you can meet with college representatives and get answers to questions. National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) has both online and in-person college fairs - visit the website for details: https://www.nacacfairs.org
- ☐ College Visits - Arrange college visits – see details in this booklet under College Visits; Virtual visits are another option available to students. It can be helpful to take a virtual tour of a college before deciding if it is worth traveling to the school in person. When scheduling in person tours: sign up early and take an official tour which is the best and quickest way to access school specific information

- ☐ Summer Programs - Many universities have excellent summer programs.
    - Summer programs are a great way to explore new topics, meet people, get a taste of college life, and possibly earn credits that could be valuable later on
    - Some summer opportunities require applications (volunteer roles at local hospitals, summer college programs, leadership programs at US Service Academies) so plan ahead and start your research today
    - See the supplemental document on summer programs.
- ☐ Meetings - Parents are welcome to participate in the one-on-one meeting with the student and college counselor; please call the guidance office to arrange a time

April-June

- ☐ College List - Continue researching and visiting colleges to develop a preliminary list of colleges that you are considering for yourself – try to understand if the school is a good academic and social fit for you and your interests
- ☐ Research scholarships – Scholarships are a form of financial aid that provides money for college that doesn't need to be repaid
    - Learn more through College Board's scholarship search at https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/scholarship-search
    - See section on Scholarships and Financial Aid in this guide
- ☐ Summer Plans - Make of the most of your upcoming summer by pursuing meaningful summer activities:
    - Get a job or an internship
    - Take a class to enhance your credentials or to explore a major you are interested in – Many colleges offer summer enrichment programs (Wake Forest, Bucknell, Notre Dame, Boston University); *Free classes can be found via Coursera.org on a wide range of topics*
    - Volunteer or find a new way to challenge yourself
    - Add something meaningful to your resume during the summer
- ☐ Visit colleges - make plans to check out college campuses either virtually or in person
    - If visiting in person, use the **Campus Visit Checklist** from **https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide/campus-visit-checklist** to get the most out of these experiences.
- ☐ Teacher Recommendations - Request teacher recommendations from your classroom teachers
    - Request two letters of recommendation
    - Letters should be from teachers who taught you in two, different, core subject areas (Math, English, Science, World Language, Social Studies)
    - Junior year teachers are preferred – because teachers you have had more recently and who are teaching upper level classes are preferred
    - If possible, select a teacher that you have also had as an advisor or coach. To write a "teacher recommendation" they have to have taught YOU in a class. Just because they are a teacher and you know them as a coach does not qualify as a Teacher Recommendation

Summer before Senior Year

- ☐ College Applications - FILL OUT THE COMMON APPLICATION – at CommonApp.org – the application will be live on August 1 with all of the college specific information updated. You can fill out many sections of the application ahead of time
    - Once senior year starts you will be very busy and have less time – *trust me!*
- ☐ Make a preliminary list of schools where you plan to apply and make note of application **requirements** and **deadlines**
- ☐ Investigate whether there are **supplemental essays** required for some of your colleges
    - Start to work on additional essays DURING THE SUMMER
- ☐ Register for fall test dates of the SAT or ACT;
    - July ACT and August SAT test spots fill up quickly so sign up as early as possible so you get a spot at the testing site that is the most convenient for you
- ☐ Visit Colleges (see section on College Visits for details)
- ☐ **College Interviews** are offered at some schools and even highly recommended at certain colleges (ex. Wake Forest, Syracuse, College of the Holy Cross, are examples); find details on the college admissions sights and schedule interviews at colleges where interviews are offered
    - Look at admissions pages to see if interviews are offered and how to schedule one
    - See the list of questions in the back of this guide to prepare for an interview
    - *Interested in Wake Forest? Schedule a Skype interview or on-campus interview early in the summer because their slots fill up*
- ☐ Get an FSA ID: Before you can fill out your FAFSA (financial aide form), you need to get a username and password (also known as an FSA ID)
- ☐ **Optional**: Create a resume – this is a record of your academic accomplishments, extracurricular activities, and work experience since you started high school
    - This can be useful for interviews and to help fill out applications
    - Also helpful for teachers and counselors to write your recommendation letter
    - Some schools allow students to attach a resume to the application or scholarship

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Advanced Placement (AP) Classes or College Credit

- ☐ One of the main reasons for taking AP classes is because the rigor of the classes is a valuable addition to your high school transcript; the rigor of an AP class is important to many universities so taking these courses can be a key component in an application, especially at selective colleges.
- ☐ AP Classes can be worth college credit depending upon the score achieved on the AP Exam in May of the school year the student is taking the class. Use this link to review score requirements at colleges you might be interested in attending https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/creditandplacement/search-credit-policies
- ☐ Pope John students are required to take the AP exam for any AP class they take. Depending on your score you may want to report passing grades from your AP tests to your colleges.

    Should I report my AP scores:
    - If you got all 5's – YES report them
    - If you got all 4's and 5's -- then you probably want to report those

        - If you got all passing scores (3's and above) -- it is worth talking about to your counselor; it might be advantageous for some schools but not others.
- If you obtain college credit from a summer course or through some other program you should report that course on your college application and send a copy of the transcript to the schools admissions office when you apply

College Visits

The importance of visiting college campuses cannot be over emphasized. Brochures, virtual tours, presentations by college representatives and guidance counselors can help you form an opinion of a school, but an in-person visit can be truly impactful. Students should try to evaluate the academics, housing, athletics, student body, and the social life of the school.

Showing interest - Schools want to know that you are interested in them so attending a virtual information session, an in-person tour, or meeting with an admissions counselor can be helpful when you are trying to prove your interest in a school. If you do visit the campus be sure to stop by the admissions office and sign in. If you apply, your visit may serve as support of your interest in the school.

Virtual Visits

- In the current environment with schools being remote at different times, many schools have added a wide variety of information sessions, admission counselor sessions, interviews, etc. to their virtual options. Take advantage of these opportunities as they can be very helpful and also take a lot less time than a trip out of state.

In Person Visits

- Campus tours are best made on a weekday during the academic year, because you can see the campus in action with students on campus in the midst of their weekly routines. However, any visit is helpful so visit when you can make the time to do so
- Visit colleges over spring break – it is a great time to see a school while it is in session; in the summer there are not as many students on campus
- When you visit, sign up for an official "information session" and "campus tour" – this is the most efficient way to get pertinent information and see the highlights of the campus
    - Most tours can be scheduled online – they do fill up at some schools, so plan ahead whenever possible.

Optional ideas for both virtual and in-person which some schools offer:

- Schedule a time to meet with an admissions counselor
- Schedule an interview (not all schools offer them, but if they do, this can be hlepful)
- Sit in on classes or stay overnight if possible
- Meet with a faculty member or coach
- Parents may want to schedule an appointment with a financial aid officer
- Use the **Campus Visit Checklist** (a printable copy can be downloaded) found in https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges/campus-visit-guide/campus-visit-checklist to learn how to get the most out of these experiences.

Course Selection – for Senior Year

This is an important component of the college application and one where we stress taking the ***most rigorous courses*** available to the student. "Strength of Schedule" refers to the difficulty level of the classes taken. If a student meets the prerequisites for an Honors or AP course, we strongly encourage the student to take the more advanced course and challenge himself/herself. However, students need to remember that all Pope John classes are yearlong classes so they need to make a commitment to the work through graduation! Please make sure you are not taking too many hard courses – *find a good balance*.

> *"The rigor of a student's high school curriculum is the strongest indicator of whether he or she will earn a college degree, regardless of major. The 'academic intensity' of students' high school courses played a larger role than did their grades and standardized test scores."* (from the Study of Predictors of Success In College, a report published by the US Department of Education)

"What classes should I take to help my college application?"

> *Regardless of what you intend to study in college you are encouraged to take **four years of the five core subject** areas in high school. The core subject areas are: English, Math, Science, Social studies/History, World language*

Portfolio Review

Art and Design students (Architecture majors too) are encouraged to participate in a National Portfolio Day. "National Portfolio Days are events specifically for visual artists, designers, and architects. They provide opportunities for those who wish to pursue an education in the visual arts and architecture to meet with representatives from colleges accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design" (https://samfoxschool.wustl.edu/npd). At a National Portfolio Day event, representatives from colleges are available to review a student's artwork, discuss the college's programs, and answer questions about careers in art and design. High school students and parents are encouraged to attend. Students interested in studying architecture are also welcome to attend (even if they do not have a portfolio to review). Sign up to attend an event at **www.NationalPortfolioDay.org**

2022 Event Dates for High School students:

- February 18, 8 pm -midnight
- March 12, 1-5 pm
- May 21, 11 am-5 pm
- Additional fall dates will also be announced by this organization

NCAA Athletics

- ☐ If you are interested in playing Division I or II sports you are required to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center
- ☐ Also for Division I or II athletes, please schedule an initial meeting with our NCAA Coordinator, Mrs. Ann Lopez (AnnLopez@popejohn.org). She can assist in calculating your student's NCAA Core GPA and providing the necessary information for prospective athletes.

- ☐ NCAA requires that all SAT and ACT scores be sent directly from the Testing Service online at www.collegeboard.org or http://www.actstudent.org. The 4 digit code for the NCAA is 9999.

Naviance – College Search Tips & Research

- ☐ Log into Naviance using your login credentials (see your counselor for assistance)
- ☐ Start with a basic search by going to **Colleges >Colleges I'm Thinking About >SuperMatch** *press the button* "Select Criteria to Start" and try some searches using your own criteria
- ☐ To save your choices click the heart under the college name to add it to your list

Standardized Testing – COVID-19 Impact

"Test Optional" means that the student can apply without sending a standardized test score. However, every student should take at least one standardized test to see if they might be in a position to submit their score.

One of the main impacts of COVID-19 on college applications has been the change in standardized testing requirements and the move toward more "test optional" schools. The majority of schools are currently test optional. Each school will list it requirements on its website and you need to know if the school, or program you want to apply to, requires a test score.

Juniors – The Guidance Department strongly recommends taking a standardized test during the spring semester (Jan-May). Students will then have time to take additional tests in the late spring, summer, or early fall, before applying to college. Even though many colleges are moving to a test optional policy, a competitive standardized test score can always support a student's college application.

- We encourage students to plan to take a test at least twice
- Students should NOT automatically send test scores to colleges using the free score reporting option. After the student reviews his/her results we can determine which scores should be sent to a school
- Taking a practice test of both the ACT and SAT can help the student determine which test he/she wants to focus on or the student can take an official test of either type. <u>All colleges accept both the ACT and SAT.</u>

Why you should try to attain a competitive score (even for Test Optional schools)?

If the student has a competitive score, it can help with admissions as one additional piece of supporting information about the student. So if your score is competitive for the school you are applying to you should send it. However, if a student does not have a competitive standardized test score then the student can apply "test optional"

Notes:

- Some schools require the student to complete an essay or some additional piece of information if applying test optional so it is important to make a note of those requirements
- Florida public state colleges/universities still require test scores to apply – this will likely continue for the Class of 2023 even when many schools are continuing with test optional policies

Registering to take the SAT or ACT

- Students need to register themselves for a testing date that fits their schedule (Pope John does not sign students up for tests). *See the schedule below*.
- To register for an SAT or ACT visit the test websites for SAT (www.collegeboard.org) or ACT (www.ACT.org)
- For the SAT you may already have set up a College Board account from your PSAT tests and you can use that existing account to register.
- Please be mindful that testing locations can fill up so **signing up early** is recommended
- In recent years the summer exam dates have become popular *but* are not offered by many local schools. As a result the actual available seats are limited and fill up early.
  **If you are thinking about taking a test in the summer, sign up VERY early – Numerous students have been forced to take the August SAT test at a PA test site because of limited seats in NJ; the drive early in the morning or paying for a hotel to stay over night can be a big inconvenience/expense*

Test Type	Test Date	Registration Deadline
ACT	Feb 12, 2022	*Late deadline Jan 21*
SAT	March 12, 2022	February 11 (Late March 1)
ACT	April 2, 2022	February 25 (Late March 11)
SAT	May 7, 2022	April 8 (Late April 26)
SAT	June 4, 2022	May 5 (Late May 25)
ACT	June 11, 2022	May 6 (Late May 20)
ACT	July 16, 2022	June 17 (Late June 24)

Anticipated SAT Dates for 2022

- August 27
- October 1
- November 5
- December 3

SAT/ACT Test Prep

Can test preparation help a student improve their score on the standardized test?

Our experience is that students that commit time and effort to test preparation do see a benefit in an improved score. There is varying research on this but PrepScholar.com recommends anywhere from 10-80 hours of preparation to see improvement. 30-40 hours being a more reasonable target to see a true improvement. Preparation can include tutoring and practice, practice tests, working on skills with a book, attending a class, etc.

Test Preparation can include a review of actual test content or skill development as well as gaining information about testing strategies, pacing for the test (so that the student completes every question), and becoming comfortable with the types of questions. There is no single solution to how this is accomplished but in general the hours put into test preparation are in proportion to the student's test improvement.

- There are free resources online at Khan Academy https://www.khanacademy.org/sat or on SAT and ACT websites

- Test books can be purchased which include review sections, practice tests, and test taking strategies
- Some test preparation agencies will offer free practice tests online or in person (Huntington Learning Center and Princeton Review are good places to start)
- There are also many groups that offer individual tutoring and prep courses
- See the list of tutors at the back of this program for additional resources or ask your student's counselor.

Scholarships and Financial Aid -

Steps to Take Regarding Financial Aid and College Costs –

It is very important to do your financial homework

- In the fall each year there is a Financial Aid workshop that we encourage all parents to attend (Junior and Senior parents are encouraged to attend). This session includes high level information about both financial aid and merit money
- Families can estimate their cost of attendance at a particular college by using the "Net Price Calculator" on each college's website
  - It is beneficial to understand the costs before you apply

Financial Aid

- On October 1 of senior year the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) becomes available and can be completed and submitted to each college the student applies to attend – this is the money that your student may qualify for based upon family income and other factors
- The CSS profile is another form used by many schools to assess financial need; applicants may need to complete this to be fully considered for aid and merit money at a college. There is a fee associated with using the CSS application.

Merit Money

- Grades and standardized test scores can earn a student money for college –students tend to be awarded the most money at a school where they are highly qualified to attend e.g. the student's GPA and test scores are well above the average for the school
- Families should become familiar with each college's Financial Aid or Scholarship tab on each college website - It is important to remember that *the college itself is often the single greatest source of merit money for a particular school* so learn what you need to do in order to be considered for scholarships and aide
  1. Does the college have a financial aid deadline? You need to make sure your documents or application are submitted by the required deadlines
  2. Does the college require the CSS profile or another application to be considered for financial aid?
  3. Does the student need to apply for merit money or is he/she automatically considered when applying?

Scholarships

- **Military Scholarships** - options such as US Service Academies, Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) scholarships, and National Guard are all ways to finance a college education while also obtaining a college degree;
    - See the Military Opportunities at the end of this packet for more information
    - Reach out to your college counselor to be added to the Schoology group for students interested in Military Opportunities so that you are included in any military related information being distributed
- Students who rank in the top 15% of their class at the end of their junior or senior year may be eligible for NJ STARS scholarship program
    - Students that qualify for NJ STARS Program can have the cost of tuition covered at New Jersey's 19 Community Colleges; See www.Njstars.net for details on this program or talk to your college counselor
- Naviance > Scholarships
    - Our guidance office updates local scholarships that are brought to our attention, in Naviance. Students should look at the scholarships in Naviance regularly for additional scholarship opportunities
    - Search under LOCAL scholarships first; this is the best place to start because our students have a better chance of being awarded these scholarships
- Parents should check with their employers to see if they offer opportunities for their students; students may also want to ask family members if their place of employment offers a scholarship to family members
- See these additional websites for more scholarships that can be applied to any college. The more scholarships you apply for the greater your chance of being awarded a scholarship:
    - FastWeb.com
    - BigFuture.org
    - Scholarships.com
    - Unigo.com
    - Scholarships360.org
    - Petersons.com
    - Cappex.com
    - Collegescholarships.com

Teacher Recommendations

- Decide which <u>two</u> academic teachers you would like to ask to write your letters of recommendation. Select from:
    - Core subject teachers, from two different subject areas (junior year teachers should be your first choice)
    - If a teacher knows you as a coach or advisor that is also a good choice for a teacher recommendation
- Ask the teacher in person if they will write your letter
- If the teacher agrees, add the Recommendation Letter Request to Naviance by going to:
    - *Colleges> Apply to College> Letters of Recommendation*
- Complete the Brag Sheet found in Naviance as a way to provide information to teachers and counselors – this can be updated at any time during junior/senior year
    - *About Me > My Surveys > Brag Sheet*

RESOURCES

ACT/SAT PREP Tutors & Classes

Name	Subject	Contact Info
ACT-SAT Prep w/ Christie Fenners	SAT/ACT Prep	973-513-0015
Academic Resources (Morris Plains)	SAT/ACT Prep	973-292-0505
Huntington Learning Center	SAT/ACT Prep	973-584-1397
Jarrell Education	SAT Prep	
Princeton Review	SAT/ACT Prep	800-273-8439
Robert A Giaquinta, MA (Sparta)	SAT/ACT Prep	973-886-2309
Joseph Giovannone* (Sparta)	SAT/ACT Math Prep	973-800-4392
Scott Meeker (Sparta)	SAT/ACT Prep	973-729-7165
Susan Occhicone* (Hackettstown)	English	908-628-7909
Lynn Scully (Hackettstown)	SAT/ACT Prep	908-813-1346

Military Opportunities

Over the years a number of Pope John students have pursued the educational opportunities afforded by the United States military. Scholarships amounts can vary. Service academies provide a full scholarship and a variety of other scholarship opportunities can be earned via Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC), National Guard, Military Colleges, and Maritime Academies. Opportunities fall into one or more of the following categories:

United States Service Academy* - *Full scholarship to all students; students are obligated to serve as military officer upon graduation*

- US Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, NY
- US Naval Academy (USNA) at Anapolis, MD
- US Air Force Academy (USAFA) at Colorado Springs, CO
- US Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) at Kings Point, NY
- US Coast Guard Academy (USCGA) at New London, CT

*the military academies, except for USCGA, require a Congressional Nomination to gain acceptance – this is another application process the student must complete.

Reserve Officers Training Corp (ROTC*) - Academic Scholarships at many colleges; students serve as a military officer after graduation*

- Army
- Air Force
- Navy, can choose a Marine option in the Navy ROTC

National Guard or Reserves – *Scholarships are for mostly state schools*

Senior Military College – *May use ROTC scholarship toward education*

- Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Tech, The Citadel, Texas A&M

Maritime Academies -

- New York, Massachusetts, and Maine

Some summer programs that can support a student's application to the programs above are:

- American Legion Jersey Boys State http://www.aljbs.org/
- *See your counselor for* details on boys state and also Jersey Girls State
- Norwich University - Leadership Programs for High School students https://www.norwich.edu/admissions/leadership-programs

USNA Summer Seminar (Naval Academy)
Application Due March 31
https://www.usna.edu/Admissions/Programs/NASS.php#fndtn-panel1-Steps-For

USMA Summer Leadership Experience (West Point)
Application Open from January 15-March 15,
https://www.usma.edu/admissions/summer-program

US Air Force Academy
Application Opens December 1 and closes January 15
https://www.academyadmissions.com/admissions/outreach-programs/summer-seminar/

United States Coast Guard - AIM Summer Program
Applications Open from February – April 1
https://www.uscga.edu/aim/

You Have a College Interview!

One of the best ways to prepare for a college interview is to spend some time developing answers to commonly asked questions. Here are some tips to follow:

1. Take time to formulate an answer to the questions below
    - Write your answers down so you can review them before your interview
    - If you have an answer to these questions you will probably be able to answer almost any question the interviewer asks because these questions cover many general topics and having some prepared answers makes it easier for you to think quickly to address and remember the details of your life.
2. Bring along a copy of your resume with you; you can give it to the interviewer but it is also helpful to review before your interview so the details of your accomplishments are fresh in your mind

Common Interview Questions:

1. Tell me about yourself.
This question seems easier than it is. How do you reduce your whole life to a few sentences? And it's hard to avoid commonplace answers like "I'm friendly" or "I'm a good student." Of course you want to demonstrate that you're friendly and studious, but try also to say something memorable here that really makes you different from other college applicants. You can include some information that has a fun and memorable element to it.

2. Why are you interested in our college?
Be specific when answering this, and show that you've done your research. Also, avoid answers like "I want to make a lot of money" or "Graduates of your college get good job placement." You want to highlight your intellectual interests, not your materialistic desires. What specifically about the college distinguishes it from other schools you're considering?

3. What can I tell you about our college?
You can almost guarantee that your interviewer will provide an opportunity for you to ask questions. Make sure you have some, and make sure your questions are thoughtful and specific to the particular college. Avoid questions like "when is the application deadline?" or "how many majors do you have?" This information is both uninteresting and readily available on the school's webpage. Come up with some probing and focused questions: "What would graduates of your college say was the most valuable thing about their four years here?" "I read that you offer a major in interdisciplinary studies. Could you tell me more about that?"

4. Who in your life has most influenced you?
There are other variations of this question: Who's your hero? What historical or fictional character would you most like to be like? This can be an awkward question if you haven't thought about it, so spend a few minutes considering how you would answer. Identify a few real, historical, and fictional characters you admire, and be prepared to articulate WHY you admire them.

5. Why do you want to major in _____?
Realize that you don't need to have decided upon a major when you apply to college, and your interviewer will not be disappointed if you say you have many interests and you need to take more classes before choosing a major. However, if you have identified a potential major, be prepared to explain why. Avoid saying that you want to major in something because you'll make a lot of money -- your passion for a subject will make you a good college student, not your greed.

6. What will you contribute to our campus community?
You'll want to be specific when answering this question. An answer like "I'm hard-working" is rather bland and generic. Think about what it is that makes you uniquely you. What exactly will you bring to diversify the college's community?

7. Tell me about a challenge that you overcame.
This question is designed to see what kind of problem solver you are. When confronted with a challenge, how do you handle the situation? College will be full of challenges, so the college wants to make sure they enroll students who can handle them.

8. What do you do for fun in your free time?
"Hangin' out and chillin'" is a weak answer for this question. College life obviously isn't all work, so the admissions folks want students who will do interesting and productive things even when they aren't studying. Do you write? hike? play tennis? Use a question such as this one to show that you are well-rounded with a variety of interests.

9. What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now?
You don't need to pretend that you have your life figured out if you get a question like this. Very few students entering college could accurately predict their future professions. However, your interviewer does want to see that you think ahead. If you can see yourself doing three different things, say so -- honesty and open-mindedness will play in your favor.

10. Does your high school record accurately reflect your effort and ability?
In the interview or on your application, you often have an opportunity to explain a bad grade or a bad semester. Be careful with this issue -- you don't want to come across as a whiner or as someone who blames others for a low grade. However, if you really did have extenuating circumstances, let the college know

11. Recommend a good book to me.
The interviewer is trying to accomplish a few things with this question. First, the question asks whether or not you've actually read much. Second, it asks you to apply some critical skills as you articulate *why* a book is worth reading. And finally, your interviewer might get a good book recommendation! .

12. If you could do one thing in high school differently, what would it be?
A question like this can turn sour if you make the mistake of dwelling on things you regret. Try to put a positive spin on it. Perhaps you've always wondered if you would have enjoyed acting or music. Maybe you would have liked to give the student newspaper a try. Maybe, in retrospect, studying Chinese might have been more in line with your career goals than Spanish. A good answer shows that you didn't have the time in high school to explore everything that is of interest to you

Additional Questions:

A. What do you do best?
There are lots of ways to ask this question, but the bottom line is that the interviewer wants you to identify what you see as your greatest talent. There's nothing wrong with identifying something that isn't central to your college application. Even if you were first violin in the all-state orchestra or the starting quarterback, you can identify your best talent as making a mean cherry pie or carving animal figurines out of soap. The interview can be an opportunity to show a side of you that isn't obvious.

B. Tell me about your family.
When you interview for college, an easy question like this can help get the conversation rolling. Try to be specific in your description of your family. Identify some of their funny quirks or obsessions. In general, however, keep the representation positive -- you want to present yourself as a generous person, not someone who is hyper-critical.

C. What makes you special?
Or the interview might ask, "What makes you unique?" It's a more difficult question than it might at first appear. Playing a sport or getting good grades is something that many students do, so such accomplishments aren't necessarily "special" or "unique." Try to get beyond your accomplishments and think about what really makes you *you*.

D. What can our college offer you that another college can't?
This question is a little different than one asking why you want to go to a specific college. It also shows if you have done your research. Look for the truly unique features of the college for which you are interviewing. Does it have unusual academic offerings? Does it have a distinctive first-year program? Are there co-curricular or internship opportunities that can't be found at other schools?

E. What three adjectives best describe you?
Avoid bland and predictable words like "intelligent," "creative" and "studious." The interviewer is more likely to remember a student who is "clumsy," "obsessive" and "metaphysical." Be honest with your word choices, but try to find words that thousands of other applicants won't choose and reflect your positive characteristics

F. What do you think about the latest news headline?
With this question the interviewer is seeing if you are aware of major events going on in the world, and if you have thought about those events. What your exact position is on an issue isn't as important as the fact that you know the issues and have an opinion.

H. Tell me about your community service.
Many strong college applicants have done some form of community service. Many, however, simply do it so that they can list it on their college applications. If the interviewer asks you about your community service, it's to see why you served and what the service means to you. Think about how your service benefited your community, and also what you learned from your community service and how it helped you grow as a person.

I. What subject in high school did you find the most challenging? Or **What is your best subject? Describe.**

J. Is there anything else we should know about you?
Yes! There is always something else they should know about you. You have lived nearly 18 years so have a few things in mind that you can tell someone: an interesting hobby, a passion, a goal, details about you or your upbringing, even family pets. Make sure you have an answer to this one.

College Admission Glossary: Copied from https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-in/applying-101/college-admission-glossary

Wha's a transcript? What's the difference between early action and early decision? When applying to college, you are bound to come across unfamiliar terms. This glossary can help you make sense of all the information you are sorting through.

ACT
A standardized college admission test. It features four main sections: English, math, reading and science — and an optional essay section.

Admission Tests
Also known as college entrance exams, these are tests designed to measure students' skills and help colleges evaluate how ready students are for college-level work. The ACT and the College Board's SAT are two standardized admission tests used in the United States. The word "standardized" means that the test measures the same thing in the same way for everyone who takes it. Read more about admission tests.

Articulation Agreement
An agreement between two-year and four-year colleges that makes it easier to transfer credits between them. It spells out which courses count for degree credit and the grades you need to earn to get credit.

Candidates Reply Date Agreement (CRDA)
An agreement many colleges follow that gives applicants until May 1 to accept or decline offers of admission. This agreement gives students time to get responses from most of the colleges they have applied to before deciding on one.

Class Rank
A measurement of how your academic achievement compares with that of other students in your grade. This number is usually determined by using a weighted GPA that takes into account both your grades and the difficulty of the courses you've taken.

Coalition Application
A standard application form accepted by members of the Coalition for Access, Affordability, and Success. You can use this application to apply to any of the colleges and universities that are members of the Coalition.

College Application Essay
An essay that a college requires students to write and submit as part of their application. Some colleges offer applicants specific questions to answer, while others simply ask applicants to write about themselves. Colleges may refer to this as a "personal statement." Learn more about college application essays.

College Credit
What you get when you successfully complete a college-level course. You need a certain number of credits to graduate with a degree. Colleges may also grant credit for scores on exams, such as those offered by the College Board's AP Program®.

Common Application
A standard application form accepted by all colleges that are members of the Common Application association. You can fill out this application once and submit it to any one — or several — of the nearly 700 colleges that accept it. Go to the Common Application.

Deferred Admission
Permission from a college that has accepted you to postpone enrolling in the college. The postponement is usually for up to one year.

Early Action (EA)
An option to submit your applications before the regular deadlines. When you apply early action, you get admission decisions from colleges earlier than usual. Early action plans are not binding, which means that you do not have to enroll in a college if you are accepted early action. Some colleges have an early action option called EA II, which has a later application deadline than their regular EA plan. Learn more about applying early.

Early Decision (ED)
An option to submit an application to your first-choice college before the regular deadline. When you apply early decision, you get an admission decision earlier than usual. Early decision plans are binding. You agree to enroll in the college immediately if admitted and offered a financial aid package that meets your needs. Some colleges have an early decision option called ED II, which has a later application deadline than their regular ED plan. Learn more about applying early.

Financial Aid
Money given or loaned to you to help pay for college. Financial aid can come from federal and state governments, colleges, and private organizations. Learn more about financial aid.

Grade Point Average (GPA)
A number that shows overall academic performance. It's computed by assigning a point value to each grade you earn. See also Weighted Grade Point Average.

Legacy Applicant
A college applicant with a relative (usually a parent or grandparent) who graduated from that college. Some colleges give preference to legacy applicants (also called "legacies").

Need-Blind Admission
A policy of making admission decisions without considering the financial circumstances of applicants. Colleges that use this policy may not offer enough financial aid to meet a student's full need.

Open Admission
A policy of accepting any high school graduate, no matter what his or her grades are, until all spaces in the incoming class are filled. Almost all two-year community colleges have an open-admission policy. However, a college with a general open-admission policy may have admission requirements for certain programs.

Placement Tests
Tests that measure the academic skills needed for college-level work. They cover reading, writing, math and sometimes other subjects. Placement test results help determine what courses you are ready for and whether you would benefit from remedial classes. Read more about placement tests.

Priority Date or Deadline
The date by which your application — whether it's for college admission, student housing or financial aid — must be received to be given the strongest consideration.

Registrar
The college official who registers students. The registrar may also be responsible for keeping permanent records and maintaining your student file.

Rolling Admission
An admission policy of considering each application as soon as all required information (such as high school records and test scores) has been received, rather than setting an application deadline and reviewing applications in a batch. Colleges that use a rolling admission policy usually notify applicants of admission decisions quickly.

SAT
The College Board's standardized college admission test. It features three main sections: math, reading and writing, which includes a written essay. Learn more about the SAT.

Sophomore Standing
The status of a second-year student. A college may grant sophomore standing to an incoming freshman if he or she has earned college credits through courses, exams or other programs.

Transcript
The official record of your course work at a school or college. Your high school transcript is usually required for college admission and for some financial aid packages.

Transfer Student
A student who enrolls in a college after having attended another college.

Undergraduate
A college student who is working toward an associate or a bachelor's degree.

Universal College Application
A standard application form accepted by all colleges that are Universal College Application members. You can fill out this application once and submit it to any one — or several — of the more than 3,044 colleges that accept it. Go to the Universal College Application.

Waiting List
The list of applicants who may be admitted to a college if space becomes available. Colleges wait to hear if all the students they accepted decide to attend. If students don't enroll and there are empty spots, a college may fill them with students who are on the waiting list. Learn more about waiting lists.

Weighted Grade Point Average (GPA)
A grade point average that's calculated using a system that assigns a higher point value to grades in more-difficult classes. For example, some high schools assign the value of 5.0 for an A earned in an AP class. See convert your GPA to a 4.0 scale.