College Planning

Handbook for Juniors
2019-2020

Wadsworth High School Guidance Department

Mrs. Rapp  A-D
Mrs. Freund  E-K
Mrs. MclInnes  L-Rh
Mrs. Ross  Ri-Z
Mrs. Adams  Guidance Secretary
Mrs. Weber  Records Clerk

High School Code—365-275
Grading Scale—4.0 Weighted
Class Rank—We do not rank; percentiles available senior year
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COLLEGE PLANNING HANDBOOK

Are you thinking about continuing your education at college? If so, you might be wondering where to start. Consider these topics when you explore your options.

WHY SHOULD I ATTEND COLLEGE?

- To train for a career
- To grow and challenge yourself
- To participate in athletics or extracurricular activities
- To connect with others with similar professional goals
- To fulfill a lifelong goal
- To earn a higher income

WHAT TYPE OF POST-SECONDARY SCHOOL SHOULD I ATTEND?

- COLLEGE -- offers courses leading to a four-year Bachelor’s degree
- UNIVERSITY -- usually has several colleges on one campus (College of Fine Arts, Medicine, Business, etc.)
- PUBLIC -- supported in part by state taxes; tuition is usually lower
- PRIVATE -- receives no state tax funding
- COMMUNITY -- offers courses leading to an Associate’s degree (two years), or you can transfer to a four-year college
- TECHNICAL -- offers job-related programs lasting from several months to two years

WHAT DO COLLEGES LOOK AT?

- Difficulty of high school courses taken
- Test scores (ACT/SAT)
- Grades and grade point average
- Letters of Recommendation
- Extracurricular activities
- Essays
- Interviews
- College courses taken while in high school
- Academic reputation of high school
WHAT CLASSES SHOULD I HAVE TAKEN IN HIGH SCHOOL?

The state-supported universities of Ohio have developed a 'Minimum Core' of classes for admission purposes. These include:

- ENGLISH 4 credits
- MATH 4 credits (Algebra 2 or higher level)
- SCIENCE 3 credits
- SOCIAL STUDIES 3 credits
- FOREIGN LANGUAGE 2 credits
- FINE ARTS 1 credit (Fine Arts accepted at most universities: Instrumental Music, Choir, Art, Music Theory and Appreciation, and Theater Arts.)

Please remember that these are MINIMUM requirements. Some schools/programs could require additional coursework.

WHAT FACTORS SHOULD I CONSIDER IN SELECTING A COLLEGE?

- Type of college (2 year, 4 year, technical, public, private, Christian, etc.)
- Size
- Location
- Housing
- Reputation
- Cost/Financial Aid
- Athletics/Extracurriculars
- Support services
- Campus Visit

HOW DO I KNOW WHICH COLLEGE TO SELECT?

Check multiple sources for information about colleges.

- Naviance- assessments to help identify possible majors based on your interests and skills; college search functions that highlight colleges that meet specific criteria
- College websites and social media pages
- Talk with college representatives
- Schedule a college visit and tour the campus
- Attend college fairs
- Talk with counselors, teachers, parents, alumni
- Make a College Now Appointment  see p. 8
WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK A COLLEGE REPRESENTATIVE?

- What are the strongest majors at your college?
- What types of internships/co-op experiences are available?
- How can I arrange a college visit?
- What are the application deadlines for admission and financial aid?
- What percentage of a typical freshman class will actually graduate from your college?
- What percentage of the freshman class earned a 2.0 GPA last year?
- How are roommates selected?
- How safe is your college?
- What additional academic services do you offer to students (tutoring, counseling, etc.)?
- GPA minimum? ACT or SAT minimum?
- Cost and financial aid?
- Student activities

HINTS FOR A COLLEGE VISIT

You may take two days ‘excused absence’ from school to visit colleges. This may be the most important aspect of your college search. If possible, visit on a weekday while college classes are in session.

- Call the Admission Office (in advance) to schedule a visit
- Pick up a College Visit form from the Attendance Office (at least 2 days before the visit)
- Meet with an admission officer
- Discuss admission requirements
- Obtain information about your intended major
- Obtain a school calendar and a catalog
- Attend a class
- Tour the campus
- Talk with students
- Visit a dorm room
- Eat at campus dining facilities
- Inquire about campus activities (clubs, organizations, sports, etc.)
- Meet with a financial aid officer to discuss costs and possible financial aid

HOW DO I APPLY TO A COLLEGE?

A good rule of thumb is to apply to colleges by Thanksgiving of your senior year. However, keep in mind some colleges have even earlier financial aid deadlines.

- All college applications can be found online at each school’s website. Some schools will have you use The Common Application instead. Many colleges allow you to choose between their application and the Common Application— *Remember to indicate in Naviance which application you used for each college/university.*
- Print from Naviance a Transcript Request/Records Release form- or pick one up in the School Counseling Office
- Use the checklist on the Transcript Request Form and be certain that ALL necessary materials and steps are completed.
- Make sure you have signed the record release form (Parents must sign if you are not 18)
- **REMEMBER TO ALLOW TIME FOR DEADLINES!**
HINTS ON ESSAYS OR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

If your college requires an essay, they will usually list the topics from which to choose. Try to be creative and emphasize your best talents/qualities, but do NOT lie or exaggerate. Give a rough draft to your English teacher and ask him/her to review it for you.

If you need to have letters of recommendation, give some thought to who can do the best job for you. Select someone who knows you fairly well and can give specific examples of your work (or character).

Above all, give the person you ask plenty of ADVANCE NOTICE!! They can benefit you most if they are not rushed.

HOW DO I SELECT A MAJOR?

Examine your areas of interest, talents, values, goals, and ambitions. Review your assessment results in Naviance that point you to possible majors based on your interests and abilities. Job shadow and speak with people who work in careers that seem interesting to you. Refer to the college planning links listed on the Guidance webpage and in Family Connections.

If you cannot determine a major before applying to a college, you are not alone. Approximately 50% of all college freshmen are undecided on a major. Most colleges give you until the end of your second year to declare a major, and most offer a course to assist undecided freshmen with this decision.

Be aware, however, that if you delay choosing a major (or change majors), you may need to take additional coursework. This may mean extra time (to graduate) and extra money.

SHOULD I REGISTER WITH THE NCAA ELIGIBILITY CENTER?

If you plan to participate in college athletics during your freshman year, you should register with the NCAA Eligibility Center. You must register (and be approved) if you wish to receive an athletic scholarship for your first year of college.

The best time to register is at the beginning of your 11th grade year, or any time during the 12th grade. Register online at https://web3.ncaa.org/ecwr3/ See your counselor if you have any questions about the Clearinghouse.

HOW MUCH DOES COLLEGE COST?

Yearly tuition at state supported PUBLIC colleges in Ohio runs approximately $7,000-15,000. At a PRIVATE school, tuition can run between $8,000-$48,000 per year. Room and board costs can add another $8,000-15,000 each year. Other expenses include: books, supplies, travel, clothes, toiletries, entertainment, etc.
CAN I EXPECT TO RECEIVE ANY FINANCIAL AID?

The purpose of financial aid is to provide the resources to those students who, without that help, would be unable to attend the college of their choice. Always remember that the FAMILY is primarily responsible for financing a college education. Financial aid is designed to supplement (NOT REPLACE) the family contribution.

Plan to file the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) after October 1 of your senior year. We encourage all seniors who plan to attend college to fill out the FAFSA.

Create an FSA (Federal Student Aid) ID at https://fsaid.ed.gov You and at least one parent must create an FSA ID. This can be done prior to October 1st, and is often suggested to have it completed before starting your FAFSA. While you are not required to have an FSA ID to complete and submit a FAFSA on the Web application, it is the fastest way to sign your application and have it processed. It is also the only way to access or correct your information online, or to pre-fill a FAFSA on the Web application with information from your previous year's FAFSA.


Base your college choice on your educational, vocational, and personal objectives. Although a huge factor, cost should not be the SOLE determining factor.

Be aggressive! Money does not come automatically. You must search for it and apply.

No source of financial aid thinks that you should sell your family home or drain retirement accounts to pay for college. However, family budgets may have to be adjusted, sometimes uncomfortably.

Avoid scholarship search scams! A good rule to follow is: If you have to pay money to get money, it might be a scam. There are numerous scholarship search databases available for FREE on the Web.

WHAT TYPES OF FINANCIAL AID ARE AVAILABLE?

- FAMILY
  Think of organizations, clubs, churches, etc. that you belong to.

- GRANTS
  Funds given by the government or a college to assist families. Most grants are ‘need based’ and do not have to be repaid.

- SCHOLARSHIPS
  “Gift money” based on a student’s merits (academic, athletic, music, etc.).

- WORK STUDY
  Many colleges offer on-campus jobs. Students work their hours around classes.

- LOANS
  This should be your last consideration. Take a loan only when you cannot find funds from other sources.
HOW DO I APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS?

A vast majority of scholarship applications come directly from the college or organization making the offer. Do your research (books, Internet, word of mouth, etc.) and then apply well before the deadline.

A limited number of scholarships are sent to the high schools. These scholarships make up a very small percentage of the total number available to high school students. When we receive these applications, they are posted in Naviance. Click on Colleges, drop down to Scholarships & Money, and then click on Scholarship List. Copies of any paper application will be placed into folders and are available in the Guidance Office. PLEASE CHECK THESE SCHOLARSHIP NOTICES ON A REGULAR BASIS!!

Local scholarships (Wadsworth area) are awarded based on one SINGLE application. Every Senior will be given access to both the WHS Local Application and the Scholarship Foundation of Wadsworth's application in January. The links to these applications will be emailed to students through their school email account.

There are numerous scholarship searches on the Internet. The U.S. Department of Education recommends www.studentaid.ed.gov for information. Naviance (located on the WHS homepage under Quick Links) also has a scholarship search.

Completing the FAFSA accesses the federal government financial aid program. This form is available online at https://fafsa.ed.gov/ The FAFSA opens October 1 of your senior year. Please watch each college's individual financial aid deadlines.

ALL SENIORS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING COLLEGE SHOULD COMPLETE THE FAFSA!! Even if your family's financial situation will not allow you to qualify for a federal Pell Grant, some aid at specific colleges is based on data from this form. If you do not complete the form, you might lose a possible source of money.
How College Now Can Help

If your family qualifies, based on family income, College Now can:

- Waive ACT and SAT test fees
- Waive college application fees
- Help waive college deposits for eligible students

Additional Services Available to All Students and Their Parents

- Help you complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or CSS Profile
- Assist with all aspects of the financial aid process
- Explain how to do local and national scholarship searches
- Explore financial aid resources and compare financial aid award letters from different colleges
- Provide career and college information

College Now Scholarship Qualification Criteria

- Cumulative GPA of at least 2.5 by the seventh semester of high school
- Minimum ACT score of 18 or SAT combined verbal and math score of 860 by February of the student’s senior year
- Students must be Pell eligible
- Acceptance at a 2- or 4-year college/university
- Filing of the FAFSA form no later than February of the student’s senior year
- Have unmet financial need
- Cooperate with College Now Advisor in providing all necessary documentation
- Nomination by your College Now Advisor

Advisor Contact Information

To meet with Wadsworth’s College Now Advisor, Ms. Marie Agosto, find the CollegeNow link on the Guidance Webpage or in Naviance. She will be at Wadsworth High School on the following days:

Jan. 28
Feb. 18
March 10, 24
April 21

Ms. Agosto can be reached at MAgosto@collegenowgc.org
ACT AND SAT DATES (2019)

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<tr>
<th>TEST</th>
<th>TEST DATE</th>
<th>Registration DEADLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>February 8, 2020</td>
<td>January 10, 2020</td>
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<td><strong>February 25</strong></td>
<td><strong>WHS TESTING DAY</strong></td>
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<td>April 4, 2020</td>
<td>February 28, 2020</td>
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<td>June 13, 2020</td>
<td>May 8, 2020</td>
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<td></td>
<td>July 18, 2020</td>
<td>June 19, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>March 14, 2020</td>
<td>February 14, 2020</td>
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<td></td>
<td>May 2, 2020</td>
<td>April 3, 2020</td>
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<td></td>
<td>June 6, 2020</td>
<td>May 8, 2020</td>
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Very few Ohio colleges and universities require a writing test score from the ACT or SAT. Check the college website to see if writing is mandatory.

TEST PREP RESOURCES

ACT Online Prep   On-line Electronic Guide to the ACT Assessment (with a Writing Test). Includes practice tests. $40.00 for one year use.  
                   www.actstudent.org

SAT Preparation Center Free full-length practice test with a practice test score.  
                           www.collegeboard.com

ACT/SAT Prep courses Local schools often offer test prep courses. Information is available through the School Counseling office and website.
WEB SITES/COMPUTER INFORMATION

- Naviance/Family Connections (College, career, scholarship information -- available on WHS homepage under Quick Links and Guidance web page.)

FINANCIAL AID
- www.studentaid.ed.gov
- www.fastweb.com
- www.fafsa.ed.gov
- www.oasfaa.org
- www.ohiocan.org
- www.regents.state.oh.us/sgs
- www.ohiocollegegoalsunday.org
- www.pellgrantsonline.ed.gov
- www.ed.gov/DirectLoan
- www.ed.gov/Inits/hope
- www.cityyear.org
- www.ed.gov/Programs/easistate.html
- www.collegeboard.org
- www.finaid.org
- www.kaplan.com
- www.salliemae.com
- www.mapping-your-future.org
- www.ed.gov/prog_info/SFA/StudentGuide

COLLEGE NAVIGATOR
- www.nationalcollegefairs.org
- www.collegeweeklive.org

CALCULATORS
- www.fastweb.com
- www.finaid.org/calculators

CAREERS/MAJORS
- https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection
- www.fastweb.com
- www.collegemajors101.com
- www.monster.com
- www.acinet.org
- www.bis.gov/oco

COLLEGE ADMISSION/ COLLEGE INFORMATION
- https://connection.naviance.com/family-connection
- www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org
- www.collegeboard.org
- www.collegelink.com
- www.collegeresults.org
- www.kaplan.com
- www.dn.nie/NACAC
- www.petersons.com
- www.campussafety.org
- www.ed.gov/thinkcollege
COLLEGE PLANNING CALENDAR

JUNIOR -- GRADE 11

FALL
- Make sure you are in line to meet all graduation requirements, or college requirements
- Keep your grades up!!
- Register for the PSAT, Practice ACT or ASVAB
- Speak with college representatives who visit the school. Sign up through Naviance.
- Attend any college/career fairs
- Begin the application process for military academies
- Develop a list of preferences that you want from a college
- Future Division I and II college athletes complete NCAA Eligibility Center application
- Future NAIA college athletes complete NAIA Eligibility Center application
- Attend local financial aid meetings
- Attend College Credit Plus meeting with parents if interested. Take ACT early to meet CCP deadlines.

WINTER
- Continue to collect/sort college information
- take Career Interest Profiler & Cluster Finder in Naviance
- Register for the ACT and SAT
- Begin to narrow your college choices. Add these colleges to your “Colleges I’m Thinking About” list in Naviance.
- Give thought to courses for your Senior year schedule

SPRING
- Work with your English teacher to develop a college essay
- Take a college entrance exam (ACT/SAT) before summer starts.
- Take college visits
- Request applications if considering ‘Early Admission’
- Continue to work hard in classes
- Narrow list of college choices to 5. Use the College Comparison Tool in Naviance.
  (Include: 1 ‘sure bet’, 3 ‘good prospects’, and 1 ‘dream school’)

SUMMER
- Visit the colleges on your short list.
- Talk with people who now attend (or have attended) those colleges
- Try to develop a ‘plan of attack’ for the Senior year (timetable)
- Request applications
- Begin a list of positive and negative aspects of each school on your list
SENIOR -- GRADE 12
FALL
- Keep your grades up; colleges WILL ask for a final transcript (showing Senior grades)
- Check with your counselor to make sure all graduation requirements have been met
- Males – Register with Selective Service before your 18th birthday
- Create a Common App account if needed.
- Attend a local college fair
- Finalize your top college choices
- Obtain information about college and financial aid deadlines. Watch deadlines and stay organized.
- Check our scholarship list in Naviance on a regular basis.
- Speak with college representatives who visit W.H.S. Sign up through Naviance.
- Get letter of recommendations EARLY if needed -- provide information about yourself/your plans- use Student Profile doc available in Naviance or in the Guidance Office.
- Submit your application/transcript folder to your counselor well before any deadline
- Send ACT/SAT score reports directly to colleges that require it.
- Register for ACT/SAT test if need to retake.
- Save electronic copies of all applications, etc.
- Try to send all college applications before Thanksgiving
- Make college visits
- Athletes – Complete NCAA Eligibility Center application (should be completed junior year)
- Fill out the FAFSA (after October 1)
- Attend local financial aid meetings
- Make a College Now appointment for individual help with FAFSA/Scholarships

WINTER
- Complete the local scholarship application.

SPRING
- Keep your grades up! The college you plan to attend requests a final transcript.
- Compare financial aid offers from colleges
- Decide on a college
- Notify all colleges of your decision by May 1
- Send in any deposit or forms requested by college that you select
- Request that a final high school transcript be sent to your college