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**** Coming Soon! Summer 2020: The Summer of Enrichment**—are you worried your child has fallen behind because of the school changes due to COVID 19? We are offering enrichment this summer to address these deficits including: organizational and time management skills, reading comprehension, writing skills, study and test taking skills, math, and science. Our test prep services and college admissions consultation services continue to draw high school students. Act now to ensure your child's readiness for the Fall of 2020!

****Common App Update:** The new essay prompts have been sent to college admissions consultants like us. We are now working with rising seniors on these essays so that they are completed before summer break. Take advantage of this free time and sign up for essay services!

Helpful Links

For info about SAT I, II, and AP Tests go to:

www.collegeboard.com

For info about ACT test go to:

www.act.org

For info about test optional schools go to:

www.fairtest.org/university/optional

For info about financial aid go to:

COVID-19: Your Response is Normal

As I write this newsletter, we have now been in COVID 19 quarantine for 47 days. Many of us have experienced a variety of emotions ranging from gratitude for our families to resentment and frustration with the very same people! Each of us has our own personal experiences and I thought it would be helpful to validate all of them:

Parents: Our lives have always been about creating a sense of balance between family, life, and work obligations and responsibilities. The quarantine has intensified the nuances involved with striking that balance. Kitchen tables are now places of work negotiations and transactions; bathrooms have become conference rooms for confidential calls; family rooms and dining room tables are now our children's classrooms. We have mastered the lightning-speed needed to hit the mute buttons when our younger children dissolve into a meltdown of epic proportions or our dogs launch into warning barks as the Amazon packages are delivered during inopportune moments on Zoom calls. Parents of younger children have figured out how to maximize their young charges' nap times, to get as much done as possible for work and home duties. Parents of high school seniors swing from moments of pride for their child's accomplishments along the path of reaching this milestone graduation to devastation and mourning over their child's lost opportunity to experience their senior moments including spring concerts, art shows, musicals, sports seasons, awards ceremonies, proms, and graduation ceremonies and celebrations. We experience all these emotions all while recognizing our situations could be a lot worse.

Kids: The nuances of being home and being "out of school" have faded into the stark reality that being home is the destiny for the foreseeable future. Meeting virtually is fun for some children and difficult and extremely uncomfortable for others. Figuring out how to locate teacher portal pages, access homework assignments, and determine how to submit the completed work is a bit of a scavenger hunt and a major source of frustration for students and parents alike. Being away from friends is exceedingly difficult for so many kids and teens, and on the other hand, for the child who shies away from social interactions, this insulation from others comes as a huge relief and source of respite. The uncertainty of when this is all going to end is unsettling. That summer camp may not present itself in its usual iteration let alone at all is potentially devastating for many of our children. High school seniors are mourning the loss of their rites of passage that come with their last year of their high school career. Juniors are in a tailspin, wondering how the quarantine and loss of access to extra-curricular activities,

www.FAFSA.ed.gov

www.fastweb.com

www.finaid.org

For college search info go to:

www.collegenavigator.gov

www.collegeprowler.com

To take a virtual tour of college campuses go to:

www.youniversitytv.com

To learn about Colleges That Change Lives go to:

www.ctcl.org

The following schools have made the following changes to their testing requirements for admissions:

Albion College Test Optional Fall 2020

Alma College Test Optional for traditional first-year students between April 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021

Amherst College Test optional for freshman in 2020-21 admission cycle

Anderson University test optional now

Babson College Test optional for entry in Fall 2021

Bethany College Test Optional Fall 2020

Briar Cliff University waving testing requirements for current high school seniors

Buena Vista University Test Optional for 2021

Butler University Test Optional for Fall 2021 and beyond, though some programs may still require standardized tests

California State University suspending use of SAT/ACT requirements for school year of 2021-2022

Case Western Reserve University Test Optional for students entering Fall 2021

Centre College Test optional for the following cycles: 2021, 22, 23

Carolina Coastal University Test Optional for Fall 2021 applicants with minimum 3.5 high school gpa

Colgate University Test Optional for students entering in fall 2021

standardized tests, and non-pass-fail grading systems will impact their college admissions experience.

The uncertainty of what tomorrow will bring; the joy that comes with family togetherness quickly followed by the mounting sense of suffocation; the disappointment about opportunities lost; and the abundant hope for and excitement for a brighter tomorrow all represent a normal spectrum of emotions during these COVID 19 days.

No one knows that will come next, but in the meantime, there is one certainty: **we can control what we can control**. So, create your schedules; establish your routines; call and Zoom with your friends and family; exercise as best you can; eat and sleep well; and acknowledge what you **do** have in your life. When that little voice inside starts to pull you off the tracks, take a deep breath and feel what you feel, it's ok to do so. Then remind yourself that in due time, you will have more information about that concern but in the meantime, you will take it one day at a time, knowing that at some point, we will open the doors to a new normal.

Letter from a Dean of Admissions to High School Juniors

Dear Juniors,

Over the past several weeks, I have spent a great deal of time considering what you must be going through as covid-19 has spread across the globe. As if junior year isn't already stressful enough, now you have to learn remotely, grapple with a pandemic and worry about your basic health and safety. Some of you may be dealing with food and housing insecurity, and mental health and wellness issues; others are impacted by the coronavirus directly as our country goes through a dangerous surge in cases. I hope you are managing and getting the support you need.

Meanwhile, your friends in the senior class are making difficult decisions as they finish their college searches. I've seen first-hand how difficult this is for them. But starting your college search in the midst of a global pandemic while you're practicing isolation and social distancing with no clear end in sight? You're facing a whole different set of challenges; I feel for you.

So many of you are calling and writing to me and my colleagues in admissions and financial aid offices across the country.

"How will pass/fail grades affect my application?"

"Will I be able to visit schools?"

"Will I get credit for my AP courses?"

"My SAT/ACT testing date was canceled. Now I might have to take these test in the Fall as I'm catching up on school work and applying to schools? And they might be online?"

"I don't know where to start..."

I am writing to you not because I believe I have all of the answers, but because I know that you have these questions.

The college admissions process has always brought with it a high level of uncertainty and anxiety for most students. Often, applicants and their families are puzzled by admissions decisions. Every college has its own requirements, values, and decision-making process. The process lacks a feedback loop, often leaving students disappointed and wondering "why?"

College of Wooster Test Optional for 2021 and beyond

Concordia University Texas Test optional for entering classes in 2020 and 2021

Cornell Test Optional for 2021 applicants

Davidson College Test Optional for three years, starting in 2021

Drury University Test Optional for Fall 2021 applicants and beyond

Franklin College Test Optional for current high school seniors

Gonzaga University Test Optional for 2021 applicants

Grand Valley State Test Optional for Fall 2021

Hamilton College Test Optional for 2021-2022 academic year

Harvard University Released letter to current high school juniors stating that applicants entering in Fall 2021 will *not* be penalized if they do not submit AP test scores or SAT Subject Test scores. Juniors should not be concerned if they are unable to take the SAT or ACT multiple times

Haverford College Test Optional for first year and transfer applicants for three-year trial beginning with students entering Fall 2021

Indiana University Bloomington Test Optional beginning in 2021

Indiana University Fort Wayne Test Optional beginning with Spring 2021 and beyond

Indiana University Kokomo Test Optional for Fall 2020 admission

Indiana University Northwest SAT/ACT scores requirements waived for students entering Fall 2020

Indiana University Southeast Test Optional for Summer and Fall 2020 enrollment

IUPUI Test optional beginning 2021 and beyond

Limestone College Test Optional for students entering Fall 2020. Students who have SAT and ACT scored are still encouraged to submit them

Loyola Marymount University Test Optional for Fall 2021 applicants

Mansfield University Test Optional for students entering Fall 2020. SAT/ACT scores are preferred for admission to certain programs, such as the B.S. in Nursing program.

The Covid-19 pandemic has added a level of uncertainty never experienced by students wondering how to navigate the college admissions process; that's potentially the hardest aspect for you to wrap your head around.

Uncertainty marks today, tomorrow, and the foreseeable future. But I encourage you to accept what you can't change and try to focus on the things that you can.

Take care of yourself. Do everything in your power to eat well, exercise, get the rest that you need and, of course, wash your hands and don't touch your face. Keep up with the passions that make you who you are. While colleges need to see your transcript, your essay, and letters of recommendation, we're not admitting a collection of credentials, we're seeking out the people who we want to welcome into our community.

Look out for your friends and family. Nothing is more important than the people you care about. Support those who you are living with and be sure to reach out to friends and family who are remote. It's easy to become isolated and focus on ourselves and our immediate surroundings. Don't underestimate the positive impact that a phone call, a letter, or an email can have on the people you care most about. Do your best to focus on your education. I mean what I say: do the best that you can given the circumstances. But don't try to do more than that. Far too often, I speak with students in the midst of the college admissions process who are striving for perfection or who want to "please" me or my university. There is no "perfect;" your education should be driven by your passion and interests, not by what you think colleges want. It's okay to struggle. This is especially true in a time where you are likely learning in a remote environment and may be lacking accommodations, services, and the individual face time with your teachers that you might normally have.

Finally, here are a few things you should not worry about:

Pass/Fail grades: There are countless ways that high schools assess students' performance. Admissions professionals see a range of grading point scales (4.0, 4.5, 5.0, 12.0, 100, etc.), narrative transcripts and, yes, pass/fail. Our goal is not to set expectations for your school; instead, we're responsible for understanding your school's grading system.

SAT/ACT: They don't matter as much as you probably think they do. High-stakes standardized test scores have always been a point of contention for many of us in admissions. These scores don't provide as much value as your high school transcript, and they have a problematic correlation with family income, sex, and race and ethnicity. Admissions offices never "need" a test score to make a sound admission decision. Now more than ever, schools are stepping away from this antiquated metric. Well over 1,000 schools had test-optional admissions policies before the covid-19 pandemic. In the wake of canceled SAT and ACT test dates, dozens more are rapidly eliminating these test score requirements for you and your classmates. The College Board just announced a plan to squeeze in additional test dates during your senior year and possibly host an online SAT. ACT responded that it will be offering an online version of its test. But these plans ignore what's most important to all of you. Save your energy and focus for more important pursuits.

The Admissions Committee: The faceless group that sits around a long table discussing your greatest achievements and tries to identify critical flaws in your character and academic record? That's a caricature of the real process and the dedicated admissions professionals who are eagerly looking forward to supporting you

Admitted students who did not submit SAT/ACT scored (1) may need to take placement tests during orientation and (2) are eligible for a narrower range of merit awards

McMurry University (TX) Test Optional for Fall 2020

Mercer University Test Optional for first-year applicants for Summer or Fall 2020

Middlebury College Test Optional policy for at least 3 years, through Fall 2023, on a trial basis

Midway University (KY) Test Optional for Fall 2020

Millersville University Expanding its Test Optional policy to *all* students entering Fall 2020.

NCAA Eligibility Center Waiving SAT/ACT requirement for student-athletes entering Division I and II colleges in the 2020-2021 academic year. The Eligibility Center will also adjust its approach to pass/fail grades received in spring/summer 2020 by students at all grade levels

Northeastern University Test Optional for prospective students for the 2021-2022 academic year. Includes undergraduate and graduate students

Oregon State University Test Optional for undergraduates entering Fall 2021 and beyond

Pomona College Test Optional for first-year and transfer students entering Fall 2021

Purdue University Northwest Test Optional for Summer and Fall 2020

Rhodes College Test optional for 3 years, which will serve as a pilot project to determine if the Test Optional policy should continue

Santa Clara University Test Optional for a two-year period for first-year and transfer students beginning with students entering Fall 2021. Will reassess whether to reinstate the testing requirement after the two-year period

Scripps College Test Optional for students entering in Fall 2021 and beyond. Homeschooled students are strongly encouraged to submit SAT or ACT scores

Seattle University Test Optional starting Fall 2021, GRE and GMAT will be optional for non-law graduate programs for the 2020-21 academic year

Southwest Baptist University **Temporary** changes include:

-Test-optional

-Self-reporting of high school GPA

-May take online Classic Learning Test (CLT) to improve academic scholarship eligibility

through your college search process and advocating on your behalf. The past five weeks I have sat in daily on Zoom meetings with an incredible group of people who are spending their days thinking about how they can support you. They are dealing with remote working issues that include caring for children and families, sharing work spaces with partners and roommates, and dealing with annoying (but adorable) interruptions by pets and children. Their lives and work aren't normal, and they know that yours aren't either. As a result, our admissions team — and others as well — are coming up with innovative ways to connect with you and to provide you with the information that's critical for your college search. This is playing out at universities across the country. We are here for you. Call, email, connect on social media. We are here.

The rest of it? We'll figure it out together.
Be safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Andrew B. Palumbo, Dean of Admissions & Financial Aid Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Keeping on Track:

Seniors: Many of you are considering your options in light of the COVID 19 situation. Find out when the deferral date is at your college of choice. Follow updates from your college closely to learn whether they plan to open on time, delay opening, offer a combination of on-line and in-person classes, or offer on-line courses only. Pay attention to Accepted Student Events as many schools are offering virtual opportunities to meet incoming first-year students and professors.

Consider your options. You can take a gap year but be sure to find out what your school's deferral policies are. Find out what their policy is about taking classes at a community or local college. Will you be accepted as a deferral student under these circumstances or will you have to reapply as a college transfer student?

In the meantime, find out what your high school is doing to mark your graduation. Many schools are having virtual ceremonies, drive-through events, or are postponing their events to a later date. You're full of creativity: think of awesome, outside-of-the-box ways to celebrate this monumental event in your life...in HISTORY!! The Class of 2020 is special in its own right; COVID 19 just adds a special element to this class, making you a class we will never forget. It may be difficult to see how all of this resolves, but it **will** resolve.

St. Edward's University Test Optional for undergraduate applicants for Fall 2021 and beyond

St. Olaf College Test Optional for Fall 2020

St. Thomas Aquinas College Test Optional for Fall 2020

Swarthmore College Test Optional for applicants during the 2020-2021 and 2022 cycles. Students can now choose to report results from previous tests, including the PSAT and PreACT. In Fall 2022, the college will assess the policy and determine whether to continue

Texas Christian University Test Optional for students entering in Fall 2021. Students should consider their academic record and co-curricular experiences when deciding whether to submit test scores

Trinity University (TX) Test Optional for a 3-year period starting with applicants for Fall 2021. Applicants can self-report unofficial test scores via applicant portal.

Tufts University Test Optional for all undergraduates for a three-year period, beginning with students entering Fall 2021. This will determine whether to reinstate the testing requirement at the end of the three-year period.

Tulane University Test Optional for students applying for a spot in the class entering fall 2021

University of California System **Temporary** policy changed include:

-Test Optional for students entering as freshmen in Fall 2021

-No letter grade requirement for "A-G" courses taken in winter/spring/summer 2020

-Admissions will not be rescinded for students who miss the official transcript deadline- admission will be honored from the first day of class until official documents are received by the UC campus

-No cap on pass/fail units that transfer students may put toward the minimum needed for junior standing

University of the Cumberland Adopting a Test Optional policy for current and future applicants. Test Optional applicants are still eligible for institutional grants and need-based aid

University of Houston Test Optional for Summer and Fall 2020

University of Mobile Test Optional for Fall 2020

University of North Carolina System Change in minimum admissions requirements: 2.5 GPA or 1010 SAT score/ 19 composite ACT score; **applicants must submit test scores** but the system schools may choose to admit based on GPA alone. Each UNC system school has freedom to set its own requirements above these minimums. Effective for a three-year period, beginning with students enrolling in Fall 2020

Juniors: Take a deep breath. You may not be able to visit campuses, take your standardized tests, or participate in your usual extra-curricular activities, but you have an amazing opportunity at hand. You have the ability to take this time and make it YOURS. There has never been a high school class that has had the gift of time like your class has right now. What are you going to do with this time? Learn about something you have always wondered about-a new language or culture; how to cook or bake; how something is made. Pursue an old passion you had to table due to a shortage of time. Learn a new hobby-baking/cooking, photography, videography, a new sport, working out, etc. Find a way to help during this pandemic: learn how to sew masks or make face shields; organize a food, diaper/formula, medical supplies, school supplies, or blanket drive. Volunteer to deliver groceries to an elderly or sick neighbor, friend, or relative. Post rainbows or teddy bears in your neighborhood and use Facebook to organize a bear or rainbow hunt for your younger neighbors. Establish and maintain a blog or podcast about an issue or topic you feel passionately.

The possibilities are endless. When you look back on this time, what do you hope to be able to say about how you spent this time?

In lieu of real-time campus visits, use websites like www.campustours.com and www.youvisit.com to get an idea of what the colleges are like.

Think about whom you want to ask to write letters of recommendation and ask them now. Popular teachers will fill up quickly.

Finally, start working on those personal statements!**

****We are helping students with their college admissions essays now! Schedule your appointment today.**

University of Oregon Test Optional for students entering Fall 2021 and beyond. Standardized tests scored will still be needed for certain automatic scholarships

University of Pittsburgh Bradford Campus Test Optional for Fall 2020

University of Richmond Test Optional for Fall 2021

University System of Georgia Test Optional for students entering Summer and Fall 2020. Students without test scores must meet specific GPA thresholds. Applies to all USG schools except UGA and Georgia Tech, which have already have fall class waitlists

University of Toledo Piloting a Test Optional admissions model for Summer and Fall 2020. Test Optional NOT available to:

- Homeschooled students
- Students who attend high schools that do not report grades
- Students applying for majors in the colleges of Nursing, Engineering, and Health and Human Services will use self-reported grades and GPAs to conditionally admit students until final transcripts are available

University of Virginia at Wise Lifting test requirements for incoming freshmen and transfers with less than 30 credits

University of Washington Test Optional for Fall 2021

Vassar College Piloting a Test Optional policy for the 2020-2021 admissions cycle. Will evaluate after the one-year pilot to determine whether test-optional policy should continue

Virginia Tech Test Optional for 2020-2021

Washington State University Vancouver Test Optional for Fall 2020

Wellesley College Test Optional for first-year applicants entering in Fall 2021. Suspending the regular Decisions with Early Evaluation option for first-year applicants entering Fall 2021. Regular decision deadline move to January 8 from January 15

Westminster College (New Wilmington Pa) Waiving SAT/ACT requirements for students entering Fall 2020

Williams College Test Optional for students applying as freshman or transfers during the 2020-2021 admissions cycle. For students who choose to submit test scores, results will be considered as a part of the holistic admissions process. Due to school closings, remote learning, activity cancellations, and temporary changes in high school grading systems, they will grant additional flexibility and are willing to work with students affected by COVID-19 and their school counselor

TEST UPDATES

ACT: ACT Plans to offer the June and July test dates as CDC guidelines allow. Registration for the June 13th test date is May 8th. The make-up date for the June 13th test is June 20th and the make-up date for the July 18th test is July 25th. Students can make free test dates changes from the June test date to the July test date. In addition to the originally scheduled test dates of September 12th, October 24th, and December 12th, ACT will also offer remote proctoring options for the ACT tests in late fall/early winter 2020, which will allow students to test at home on a computer. This test-at-home option will be launched as part of the national testing program. Fee waivers for low-income families will apply to this test option, and ACT will continue to examine other ways to address access and equity issues. ACT will take measures to ensure the security and accessibility of the at-home testing option.

SAT: The June 6th SAT exam has been cancelled. The College Board plans to offer monthly weekend exam dates every month, beginning in August, if it has been deemed safe to do so. Dates will include August 29th, September 26th (new date), October 3rd, November 7th, and December 5th. Students will receive word the week of May 26th as to when they can register for these test dates. The College Board is calling on its member schools and colleges to provide additional test sites so as to meet the anticipated need.

**Students can gain early access to registration for the August, September, and October test dates if they are already registered for the June 6th exam and/or are members of the Class of 2021 and do not yet have an SAT test score.

Pay it Forward: Do you know someone who is struggling with the shift to virtual classroom learning?? Send them this newsletter or forward us their contact information. We want to help!

Contact Us

<http://www.Academic-Ally.com>

Hannah@Academic-Ally.com
610 647-3959 ext. 105

