



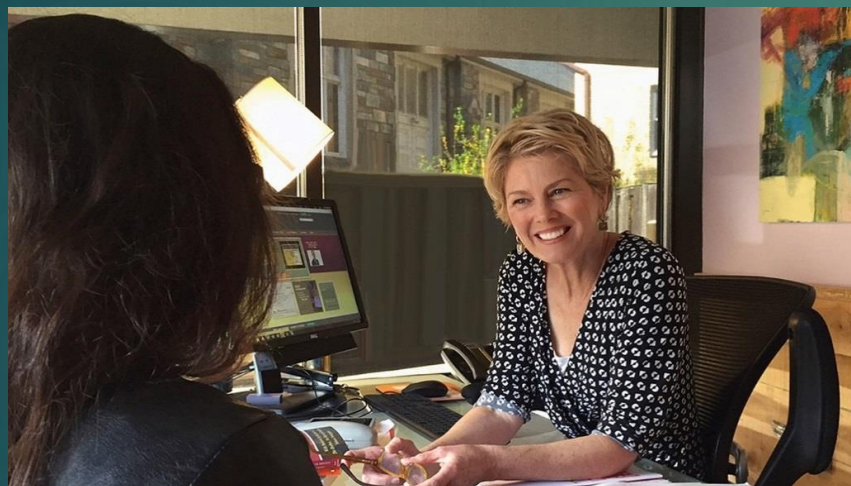
College Planning 101

A PREPMATTERS PRESENTATION

Who We Are

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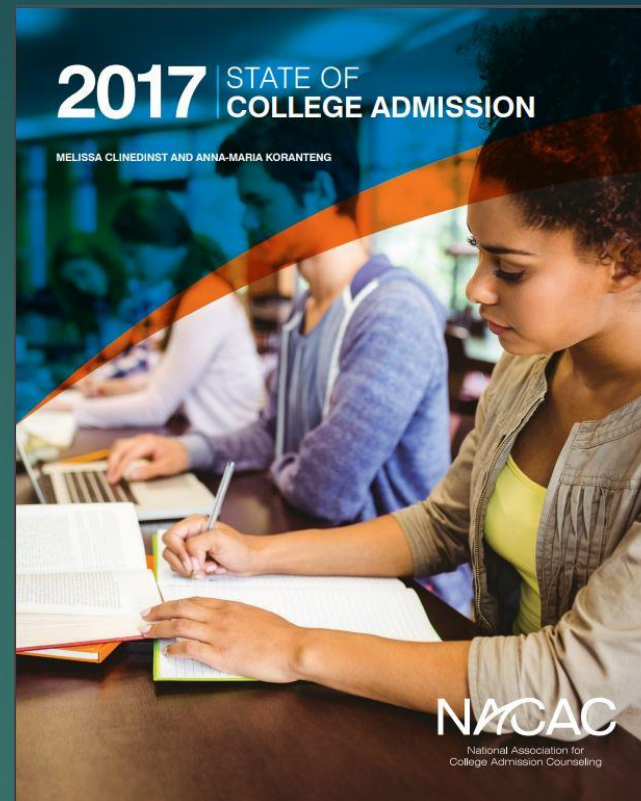


What do colleges want?

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE OF COLLEGES ATTRIBUTING DIFFERENT LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE TO FACTORS IN ADMISSION DECISIONS: FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN, FALL 2016

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

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2016



How Do Colleges Evaluate Students?

▶ ACADEMICS

- ▶ Grades
- ▶ Academic Rigor
- ▶ Test Scores

▶ PERSONAL

- ▶ Extra-curricular Activities
- ▶ Essays
- ▶ Letters of Recommendation
- ▶ Interviews
- ▶ Application Strategy
- ▶ Other Considerations

THE ACADEMICS

GRADES, RIGOR, TEST SCORES

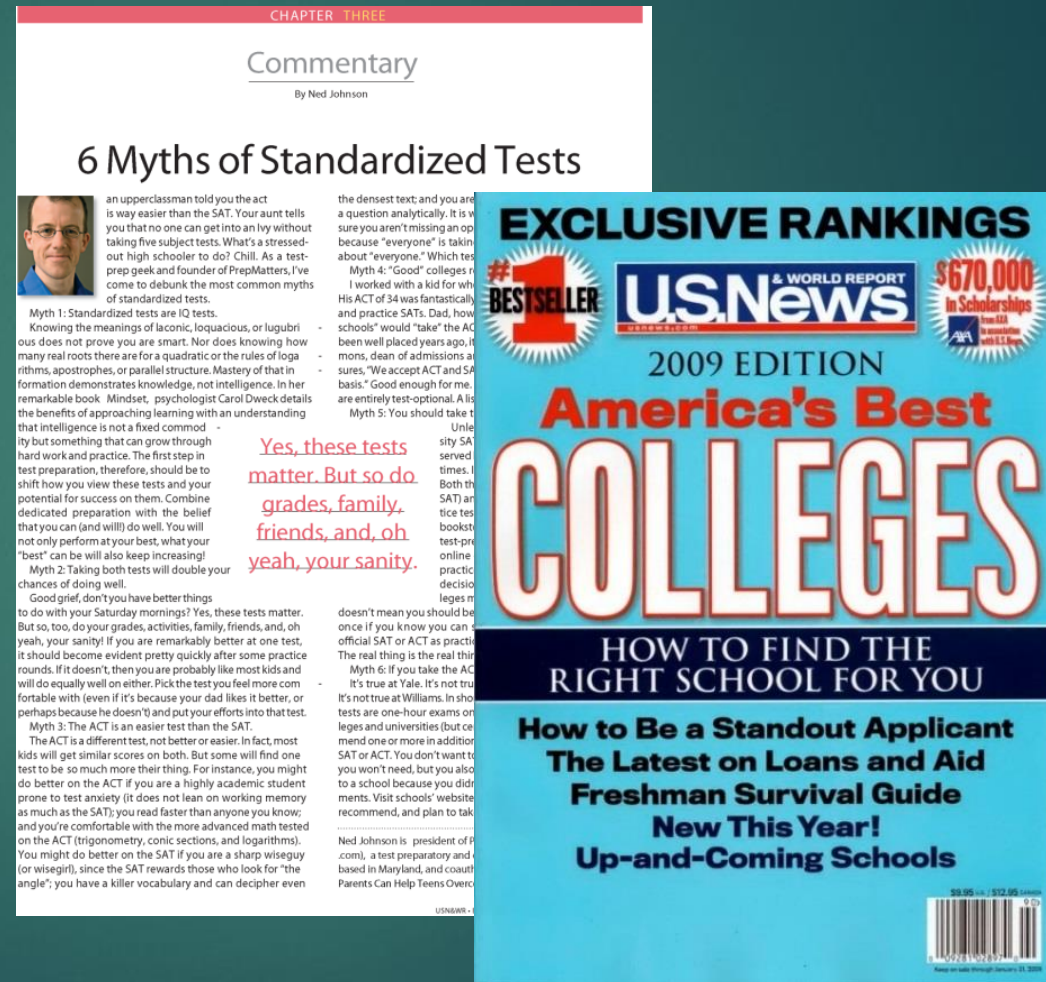


Grades and Academic Rigor

- ▶ Do I need to identify an intended major for undergraduate admissions?
- ▶ GPA, how important is that number?
- ▶ What's better? High grades or high rigor?



- ▶ PSAT
- ▶ SAT/ACT
- ▶ SAT Subject Tests
- ▶ AP/IB Exams
- ▶ TOEFL/IELT



Standardized Testing

- ▶ How do students choose which tests to take? ACT or SAT?
- ▶ What is super-scoring and score choice?
- ▶ Do colleges require Subject Tests?
- ▶ What are test-optional/flexible schools? (Visit [Fairtest.org](https://fairtest.org) to learn more.)



When to Take Standardized Tests

SAT	ACT
May 5, 2018	June 9, 2018
June 2, 2018	July 14, 2018
August 25, 2018	September 8, 2018
October 6, 2018	October 27, 2018
November 3, 2018	December 8, 2018
December 1, 2018	February 9, 2019
March 9, 2019	April 2019

PERSONAL QUALITIES

ACTIVITIES, ESSAYS, INTERVIEWS,
LETTERS OF REC...



Extracurricular Activities



- ▶ What activities look good on college applications?
- ▶ Should students focus on depth or breadth?

Application Essays



- ▶ What makes a compelling college essay?
- ▶ When should students start working on their college applications and essays?

Letters of Recommendation



- ▶ What about letters of rec from teachers, counselors, and other people?
- ▶ How many is too many?

Other Considerations



- ▶ First generation
- ▶ Under-represented minority
- ▶ Recruited athlete
- ▶ Legacy/Development applicants
- ▶ International students
- ▶ Early decision applicants

Application Options



- ▶ Common Application (Common App)
- ▶ Coalition Application
- ▶ School-specific applications
- ▶ UCAS
- ▶ Others

Application Deadlines

- ▶ Regular Deadline (Jan.)
- ▶ Early Decision (Nov.)
 - ▶ Early Decision II (Jan.)
- ▶ Early Action (Nov./Dec.)
 - ▶ Restrictive
 - ▶ Single-choice
- ▶ Priority Decision (Nov./Dec.)
- ▶ Rolling deadline
- ▶ Waitlists (March through summer)



Picking a College



- ▶ Creating the college list
- ▶ Making campus visits
- ▶ Interviewing

PrepMatters Educational Planning

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