



WOOSTER SCHOOL

COLLEGE GUIDANCE

HANDBOOK

School Code 070130

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Introduction

This Handbook has been written as an aid for students applying to college. It is intended to provide a clear, uncomplicated, and short chronological guide to the college application process, with the hope that, by observing a step by step procedure and timetable, and understanding the rationale for them, students can avoid some of the anxiety and tension so often associated with college applications.

Where possible, form letters or standard procedural instructions have been included.

The ultimate goal of the college application process is, of course, admission to college, and Wooster works very closely with its students to ensure their success in this area. Experience has shown, however, that there are other factors at work as students complete their applications. For self-knowledge, understanding, and development, the process of applying is very valuable in its own right, and the attitude with which students and their parents approach the process is important. If applications are regarded merely as a means to an end, they may well become tedious, ominous, irritating and anxiety provoking. If, instead, each step of the procedure is considered as useful and informative in its own right, then the process can be enlightening, enriching, and enjoyable. Attitude is a matter of choice.

"Know thyself," as the ancient Greek adage says. This is both a challenge and an invitation. If a student is to attend the college of his/her choice, then it must indeed be his/her choice, not that of a parent, teacher, or friend. It follows that if the decision is to be an independent one, then the student must have a fairly clear idea of his/her personal qualities, needs, and ambitions. More of this later.

If you have any questions, please contact either Mr. Kendis or Ms. McBrayer in the College Guidance Center.

** For an up-to-date listing of colleges and universities that no longer require the SAT, ACT, and/or SAT subject tests, please visit the following website: www.fairtest.org.

Show respect for yourself and your future.

The information you gather, the agenda you create, and the thoughts you have over the next months will shape and influence your future. Take pride in yourself and your work. Start a file for your college application materials and keep them sorted and all in one place.

Get organized. Stay organized. Keep to your timetable.

***** ** *****

A QUESTION FREQUENTLY ASKED BY PARENTS

One of the questions we are asked most frequently by parents is, “What should my son or daughter’s final list include?” Inherent in this question are two considerations: first, to how many schools should my child apply; and second, what range of schools should be included in regard to admissions competition?

While we try to discourage students from adopting the “shotgun approach” of applying to a multitude of schools, we also attempt to insure that students, regardless of academic ability, do not “put all of their eggs in one basket” by applying to only one institution or one level of school. As a general rule, we advise that students apply to approximately eight to ten schools which vary in terms of selectivity, but which possess the most salient features desired by the student. As long as a student does not overly limit him/herself geographically, finding such a group of schools is not that difficult a task when we consider the large number of colleges and universities found in the United States. Generally, we recommend that a student’s final list include schools from each of the following categories:

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Category I | A student’s top choice schools. It is fine in this group to include a couple of “long shots”. These schools possess many of the features the student desires but admission is very, very, competitive. |
| Category II | Schools that possess the significant features a student desires and at which the probability of admission is even to slightly better than even. These are categorized as “realistic” schools. |

Category III Schools that possess the majority of features a student desires and at which the probability of admission is “highly likely” to be “certain”. We refer to schools in this category as a student’s “likely schools”.

While there is no hard and fast rule, we would prefer to see a student include two or three schools from categories one and two and at least two schools from category three. Obviously, those schools that qualify as “long shots”, “realistic” or “likely”, vary tremendously from student to student depending on his/her academic profile.

5 BASIC STEPS TO THE APPLICATION PROCEDURE

(with many smaller ones in between)

Breaking the seemingly daunting application procedure into a number of very basic steps can help to make it less overwhelming. There is logic to the process, and the more organized and structured it is, the more manageable it becomes. For this reason we have divided the operation into steps.

The five basic steps are:

Think

Make a Big List

Make a Small List

Apply

Wait and Decide

College Counseling Calendar

(EIGHTH GRADE)

- A College Guidance Open House is held in the fall for eighth graders and their parents (September)

(FRESHMAN YEAR)

- Freshman are encouraged to focus on their academics and participate in extracurricular programs that are of genuine interest. The College Guidance Office also hosts an interactive workshop during the fall for students and their parents/guardians entitled “Navigating the Upper School Experience”. The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate to students and parents that most colleges look at more than grades to determine which students to admit.

(SOPHOMORE YEAR)

- All sophomores prepare to take the PSATs in November
- Students have their initial college session in groups of three during the month of January.
- The College Guidance Office also hosts “College Counseling Chat & Chew” dinners weekly for sophomores and their parents to discuss further the various aspects of the process and student profiles.

(JUNIOR YEAR)

November

- All juniors take your PSAT/NMSQT in October from which National Merit semifinalists are determined.

February

- Students begin an eight-week college counseling course/seminar that engages them in a college search curriculum and not a college placement process. The program addresses: the interview, research, the resume and/or video resume, transcripts, standardized testing, the college essay, self-evaluation, and teacher recommendations.
- Students will prepare and register for the SATs and/or ACTs.

March

- Students will receive a list of possible colleges to visit during spring break.
- Students may take the SATs in March.
- Students will request teacher recommendations (English or History and Math or Science) and confirm through Naviance.

April

- Students should register for the May SAT.
- Students should start preparing for the Advance Placement Exam which is in May.
- Students will have the option of taking the ACT.
- Both juniors and sophomores attend the College Fair and Interviewing session.
- Juniors and their parents attend the Junior Parent Program which is held during the afternoon of the College Fair and Interviewing Session.

May

- Students begin meeting one-on-one with the college guidance counselor.
- Students may take the May SAT.

June

- Students will refine their college list before leaving for summer break.

(SENIOR YEAR)

September

- Students arrive back to school with a final college list of no more than eight to ten top choice schools (Reach, targets, and likely).
- Students should register for October SAT and/or ACT.

October

- Students will take either or both the SAT and ACT.
- All seniors will participate in Senior Workshop Day which entails mock interviews, college application review, college essay editing, Naviance workshop, and resume editing.
- All Early Decision and Early Action applications and supporting documents are due internally by October 13th.

November

- Students can take the SAT/Subject tests.
- Any student applying to the University of California must submit their application by the 29th.

December

- All Regular Decision applications and supporting documents are due internally by December 16th.
- Students should begin to hear results of Early Decision and Early Action by mid-December.

Standardized Testing

Many, but not all, colleges require the submission of standardized test scores along with a student's application materials. (Each year more colleges choose to make standardized test scores optional.) Two organizations provide the tests: College Board/Educational Testing Service offers the SAT; the American College Testing program offers the ACT. Colleges will accept scores from either test. Historically, the SAT has been used more widely in the Northeast, while the ACT has been more prevalent in the Midwest.

The **SAT** tests three areas, Reading, Mathematics, and Writing and Language. SAT Subject Tests are one hour assessments. On a given test date, a student may take either the SAT or the SAT Subject Test, but not both.

The **ACT** covers English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. There is an optional Writing test as well.

SAT Subject Tests are offered in the following areas:

Literature	U.S. History	German
Biology E/M	World History	Modern Hebrew
Chemistry	French	Latin
Physics	Spanish	Italian

Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish are offered with Listening in November. Subject tests are also offered in Mathematics.

As students begin planning for college, they will need to register to take standardized tests in their junior year. Wooster will inform juniors about registering for the tests. As students begin to create college lists, they will be advised to check the test requirements of each individual college. This is the student's responsibility.

- **Some colleges require no standardized tests**
- **Some require either the SAT or the ACT**
- **Some require either the SAT or the ACT and one, two, or three SAT Subject Tests**
- **Some require either the SAT and a number of SAT Subject Tests, or the ACT**

Information on test dates and registration is available in the College Guidance Center or online: www.collegeboard.com or www.actstudent.org

Some differences between the ACT and SAT:

- The ACT is an achievement test measuring what a student has learned in school; the SAT is more of an aptitude test, testing reasoning and verbal abilities.
- The SAT has 3 components: Reading, Mathematics, and Writing and Language. The ACT has up to 5 components: English, Mathematics, Reading, Science, and an optional Writing test.

The College Board offers score choice: students may choose which test date scores to have sent to colleges and/or which SAT Subject tests scores to submit. The ACT also permits students to select the scores they want sent to colleges. Neither organization will send individual test scores from different dates.

ACT REGISTRATION

Academic Year 2018-2019

<u>Test Dates:</u>	<u>Registration:</u>	<u>Late Registration Deadline:</u>
September 8, 2018	August 12, 2018	August 13-26, 2018
October 27 2018	September 28, 2018	Sept. 29–Oct. 14, 2018
December 8, 2018	November 2, 2018	November 3-19, 2018
February 9, 2019*	January 11, 2019	January 12-18, 2019
April 13, 2019	March 8, 2019	March 9-25, 2019
June 8, 2019	May 3, 2019	May 4-20, 2019
July 13, 2019*	June 14, 2019	June 15-24, 2019

**No test centers are scheduled in New York for the February and July test dates.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Register on-line at <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/>

Wooster School’s Code for SAT: 070-130

Extended time registration note: ACT extended time is different from the SAT extended time. A different application form is needed to apply for ACT extended time.

What is the fee? ACT (No Writing) \$50.50; ACT + Writing \$67.00; late registration, add \$30.00; standby fee + \$53.00; test center change, add \$30.00; or test date change, add \$30.00.

SAT TEST DATES

<u>Test Dates:</u>	<u>Deadline:</u>	<u>Late Registration:</u>	<u>Online Score Release:</u>
August 25, 2018	July 27, 2018	August 15, 2018	September 17, 2018
October 6, 2018	September 7, 2018	September 26, 2018	October 19-25, 2018
November 3, 2018	October 5, 2018	October 24, 2018	November 16-22 2018
December 1, 2018	November 2, 2018	November 20, 2018	December 14-20, 2018
March 9, 2019**	February 8, 2019	February 27, 2019	March 22-28, 2019
May 4, 2019	April 5, 2019	April 24, 2019	May 17-23, 2019
June 1, 2019	May 3, 2019	May 22, 2019	July 10, 2019

***Regular SAT only.*

GENERAL INFORMATION

Register on-line at <http://sat.collegeboard.org/home>

Wooster School's Code for SAT: 070-130

Is there a full practice test available to the student for free? Yes. Please follow this website:
<http://sat.collegeboard.org/practice/sat-practice-test>

Can a student register on-line if they need extended time? Yes. Students must provide their assigned SSD eligibility code when registering on-line.

What is the fee? SAT \$47.50; SAT with Essay test \$64.50; SAT subject test \$26.00 basic subject test fee + \$22.00 per additional test (Language with Listening Tests \$26.00); late registration, add \$29.00; waitlist fee + \$51.00; test type, center, or date change add \$29.00.

REPORTING OF STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

Students are responsible for having their standardized test scores sent to the colleges by the administering agencies.

To have scores sent by the College Board, go to:

www.collegeboard.com

Instructions for having scores sent are in the Student section under “Get and Send Scores”.

To have scores sent by the ACT, go to:

www.actstudent.org

Instructions for having scores sent are in the Services section under “Send your Scores.”

Extended Testing Time for PSAT's, SAT's, ACT's, and AP Examinations

For students to receive extended time or other accommodations on any of the College Board or ACT tests, they must complete and submit the **SSD** (Services or Students with Disabilities) form. This form is available through Wooster's designated **SSD** Coordinator, and must be submitted prior to the first intended test date. The documentation in support of the need for accommodation must be current. In most cases, it must have been completed within five years of the request for accommodation. The SSD forms should be submitted to the College Board no less than seven weeks before the first intended testing date.

To be eligible for special accommodations, a student must:

1. have a disability that necessitates testing accommodations;
2. have documentation on file at Wooster that supports the need for the requested accommodation and meets the ***Guidelines for Documentation;***
3. receive and use the requested accommodation, due to the disability, for school-based tests.

When a student is deemed by the College Board to be eligible for accommodations, he/she receives an **Eligibility Code** that remains in effect for all future test dates, unless the student's status changes.

The **PSAT**, traditionally the first of the "college tests," will be administered to Wooster sophomores and juniors each year in October. If a student qualifies for extended time and would like to make use of this service for the PSAT, the documentation should be submitted to the College Board seven weeks before the test date.

Naviance and Family Connection

Setting Up Your Family Connection Account

Naviance is a college guidance software program used by Wooster and hundreds of other schools. Family Connection is the student/parent part of the program, and all Wooster juniors are given access to this program to help in their college planning. To do this, students need to register and set up an account. As juniors begin meeting with the college counselor in their second semester, they will be given a code enabling them to register.

Your code:

1. Sign up for an e-mail account

You will need an internet e-mail account to use Family Connection. If you already have an e-mail account you can skip this step.

2. Register for Family Connection

You will need a personal registration code to create your Family Connection account. You can get this code from either Mr. Kendis or Ms. McBrayer. Once you have your Internet e-mail address and personal registration code, go to Wooster's Family Connection main page, type your registration code in the New User text box, click Register, and then follow the on-screen instructions. The address for the main page is:

<http://connection.naviance.com/wooster>

3. Review Options

Family Connection offers a number of features that will help you make career and college plans. Once you sign in, you'll see the options available to you in a column on the left side of the screen. Visit the site regularly to find new information.

4. Research Colleges

If you're planning to attend college, you can use Family Connection to help you research opportunities. You can look up colleges by name or search for colleges based on selected criteria. You can also link directly to the college or university website for additional information.

Think

This is the most probing part of the process.

In the early stages, the college application procedure probably seems amorphous, nebulous, daunting, and scary. Information on colleges seems to flood students' lives. They hear from the colleges themselves, from parents, from friends, and from teachers. There are so many different aspects of college life which have to be considered - academics, distance from home, cost, internship opportunities, sports teams, year abroad programs, social life, size, and location - that it seems an impossible task to come up with a sensible individual college list. There are so many personal hopes, expectations, dreams, doubts, and fears associated with this next step that the transition may seem overwhelming. This is normal, for this is the initial stage of the process.

This is the time to learn as much as you can about colleges, and even more importantly, about yourself. Take time to think about your goals, interests, and values, and take time to talk to people: teachers, advisors, parents, friends, and college representatives. This will help you to formulate and clarify your own ideas. It will also provide you with new perspectives and suggestions.

Selecting a college is an exercise in match-making. During the sophomore year, you would have had an opportunity to complete a self-evaluation which assesses your strengths, weaknesses, needs, desires, and dreams in an honest, accurate manner. This exercise assists in your taking inventory of your personal attributes and aspirations, and to take an objective look at your academic credentials through your transcript. You may have felt a little self-conscious when you first considered these questions, but an honest and thoughtful self-evaluation can reveal what you should look for in a college or job, and prepare you for statements you may be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews when you apply. A serious look at yourself will help you find the options that are right for you. Your counselor will show you a copy of your transcript, and you can obtain copies of it from the school registrar.

It is perfectly normal to be undecided, confused, or unsure. It is perfectly normal to change your mind. This is part of getting to know yourself.

Thoughts to Evaluate College Preferences

In making your college decision, sooner or later you will need to answer six questions:

1. What kind of college do I want to attend? liberal arts, pre-professional, polytechnic

2. What size school do I want?

Very small	(under 1,500 students)
Small	(1,500 - 3000)
Medium	(3,000 - 6,000)
Large	(7,000 - 15,000)
Extra Large	(20,000 - 30,000)

3. Where do I want to be? Close to home or far away?

4. What location do I want?

Campus in a city	Campus in a suburb
Campus within driving distance of city	
Rural campus	Small college town

I must be near:

Water	Mountains	Home	Shopping	Other
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5. What lifestyle do I want? E.g., conservative, liberal, fraternity/sorority schools, football schools, religiously oriented schools.

6. What special programs or services do I want? E.g. learning support, particular majors, opportunities for research.

Other factors:

a) Why are you going to college?

b) What are you most looking forward to about college?

c) What worries you most?

d) What is the most important consideration in your choice of college? For example, are you interested in career preparation, technical training, general knowledge, skills of inquiry and thinking, or a new social environment?

f) What degree of academic challenge is best for you? Do you want an academic program where you must work and think hard or one where you can make respectable grades without excessive effort? How important is it for you to perform at the top of the class?

g) How would you feel about going to a college where you were rarely told what to do?

h) Do you prefer a fast-paced environment where something is happening most of the time or an organized environment where you can join in a wide variety of planned activities or a more serene, relaxed environment where you can go your own way?

i) How would you feel about going to a college where the other students were quite different from you?

j) How free do you feel to make your own college decisions?

k) What financial considerations will influence your choice?

Colleges: Name the colleges which you are already considering and explain why.

Colleges Reasons 1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

1. What type of college is it?

- 2-Year/4-Year
- Co-ed, Men, Women
- College, University, Technical
- Liberal Arts, Business, Nursing, etc.
- Private, Public, Religious, Military

2. Academics

- If you do not know what you want to study, does the college offer a wide range of courses?
- Is there a core curriculum? That is, are there courses that everyone is required to take?
- How difficult is the program? How hard would you have to work?
- Is there academic pressure or competition among the students?
- How selective is the college? What are the admission requirements?
- What is the intellectual atmosphere on the campus?
- What is the background and reputation of the faculty?
- What is the average class size?
- Does the college offer internships or semesters abroad?

3. Activities

- What intramural and intercollegiate athletics are available?
- Is there a variety of campus activities and organizations?
- What are the opportunities for community involvement?
- What is the emphasis on fraternities and sororities?
- What is the social atmosphere on the campus?

4. Costs

- Room, board, tuition
- Additional costs – books, etc.
- Financial aid programs
- Scholarships
- Work-Study programs

5. Personal Services

- Counseling services
- Advisory system
- Medical facilities
- Career placement services

6. Physical features

- Location – (urban, suburban, rural – surrounding community)
- Dormitories and dining accommodations
- Classrooms, library, laboratories, and art facilities
- Athletic and recreational facilities

7. Spiritual Development

- Churches and synagogues
- Religious clubs and organizations

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THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Every college on your list should be one that you would actually attend if it were the only one that accepted you.**
- Beware of publications that rank or compare schools. All students must make their own personal decisions, and a guide cannot possibly include your personal needs in its rankings. Rankings cannot show you what your college experience will be.
- Visit whatever colleges you can. Firsthand experience of a campus can tell you quite clearly whether or not you want to be a student there. The College Visit and Interview sheet provides ideas about what to look for and what to ask when you visit.

College Comparison Worksheet

College Name				
Location - distance from home				
Size - enrollment - physical size of campus				
Environment -school setting (urban, rural) - location & size of nearest city -co-ed, male, female -religious affiliation				
Admissions Requirements -deadline - tests required -average test scores, GPA -special requirements - notification				
Academics -your major offered - special requirements -accreditation - student-faculty ration -typical class size - work/study				
College Expenses -tuition, room & board - estimated total budget - application fee, deposit				
Financial Aid -deadline - required forms - % receiving aid -scholarships				
Housing -residence hall requirements -availability -types and sizes -food plan				
Facilities -academic - recreational -other				
Activities -clubs, organizations -Greek life -athletics, intramurals -other				
Special Opportunities				

Creating the Resume

Example:

Charlie Wyatt Zanape
Street Address
City, State Zip Code
Phone
Email Address

SKILLS

XXXXXXXX

EMPLOYMENT

Name of Company, City, State

Title

Dates

- Most important Duties
- 2nd Most important Duties
- 3rd Most Important Duties

Name of Company, City, State

Title

Dates

- Most important Duties
- 2nd Most important Duties
- 3rd Most Important Duties

VOLUNTEER/INTERNSHIPS

Name of Company, City, State

Title

Dates

- Most important Duties
- 2nd Most important Duties
- 3rd Most Important Duties

ACTIVITIES

EXAMPLE

ST. Marks Episcopal School Varsity Soccer

Captain

10th and 11th

Wooster School Debate Club

Tenor

9th, 10th, and 11th

ACHIEVEMENTS

Barnard School Honor Roll

10th

Happy Academy Varsity Soccer

Most Valuable Player

11th

INTERESTS

Bowling, Surfing, etc.

The College Visit and Interview

Some colleges require an interview as part of the admissions process, but most do not. Whether they do or not, it is still important for you to visit the college at which you may spend the next four years of your life. Visiting the campus will help you in your selection of a college or in verifying your choice. If there is an opportunity to interview, take advantage of it.

Call ahead to arrange for a visit and an interview if it is required and/or you desire one. Most colleges have regularly scheduled tours which begin at the Admissions Office. Try to arrange to sit in on a class. Plan to talk with professors in the fields that interest you and coaches of sports in which you might participate. When you arrive, introduce yourself to someone on the Admissions staff so that they know you are visiting. This is not only good manners, it also demonstrates to the college that you were interested enough to visit. Take an active role in your tour. Attend the Information Session and listen and ask questions.

If you visit before you apply, take a copy of your transcript along. You can get a copy of your transcript from the Registrar at Wooster. Ask the Registrar for this a few days ahead of your visit.

Be prepared to talk about yourself: what sort of student you are, your interests and activities, and your plans. Be able to talk about what clubs and organizations you might join on campus, what values and issues are important to you. Think about a current event, or book, that you might like to talk about. Read about the college before the interview, so that you can ask informed questions.

Send a thank you message after your visit.

QUESTIONS YOU MAY BE ASKED AT A COLLEGE INTERVIEW

1. What kinds of things do you do outside of school?
2. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?
3. Which one of your activities has given you the most satisfaction?
4. Describe the community in which you live and your participation in it (work, sports, etc.).
5. What are some of the fine qualities that may set you apart from the other people I may interview today?
6. Name three adjectives that describe you.
7. Do you have any part-time jobs? What do you do?
8. How did you choose this college?
9. What major do you intend to follow?
10. If your SATs are low, why do you think they are?
11. What are the career areas that you've considered during high school?
12. What magazines do you read? Newspapers? Last book?

QUESTIONS FOR A COLLEGE VISIT/INTERVIEW

1. How do students feel about the distribution requirements and the course load?
2. What is the relationship between faculty and students like?
3. Are most courses taught by professors or graduate students?
4. What size are the classes?
5. Is there a Greek system (fraternities and sororities)? Is it strong?
6. Is the social life centered on or off campus?
7. What are the major social events on campus?
8. Do I need a car?
9. Do students stay on campus on weekends?
10. What will housing be like for four years? Co-ed/single sex dorms? Can I access the library directly from my dorm room? What is the system for allocating housing after freshman year?
11. How hard do students work?
12. How is the advising system set up?
13. What are the career planning services like?
14. What is the atmosphere of the surrounding community?
15. What learning support systems are in place for students?
16. How politically active is the student body?
17. What do students like best and least about the college?
18. What is distinctive about this college which might separate it from its peers?
19. How do I compare academically with students already attending this school?
20. Is it likely I'll be admitted?

College Evaluation Sheet

Rate each of these aspects of the college on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent).

1. Academic program and atmosphere
2. Accessibility of faculty outside of class
3. Faculty teaching reputation
4. Opportunities for independent study
5. Opportunities for international study
6. Opportunities for internships
7. Career counseling program
8. Academic counseling program
9. Campus setting and architecture
10. Academic facilities
11. Library
12. Cultural facilities
13. Opportunities to hear visiting lectures and see visiting performers
14. Personal counseling program
15. Recreational facilities
16. Location of campus and its environment
17. Size of student population
18. Opportunities to participate in sports, clubs, and activities
19. Residence halls
20. Opportunities for entertainment
21. Food

Other factors of importance to you:

APPLY

This is the most straightforward part of the process.

Once you have finalized your list of colleges, it is time to apply. Regardless of whether you apply by paper or the internet, you will need to follow the same steps and supply the same information. Application materials can be found on the individual college websites, or through the Common Application website: www.commonapp.org. As a rule, there are three sections to an application:

- The student's application
- The teacher/s recommendations
- The high school portion

a) The student's application form requests much of the information that you collected for your résumé. The essay section, however, provides an opportunity for you to show your personality. It allows you to reveal your intelligence, talent, sense of humor, enthusiasm, maturity, creativity, sincerity, and writing ability - traits that count in the admissions evaluation. The Essay Writing tips will help you with your writing. **Be sure to show your essay to someone who can help with editing.**

Some colleges request supplemental information in addition to the essay. Read the checklists provided by the college or the common application site.

Students arrange for SAT or ACT test scores to be sent directly to the colleges from the organizations. Our **high school code** is **070130**.

b) **Teacher recommendations** should be written by a teacher who has taught you recently in an academic subject. It is your responsibility to contact the teacher, request that he/she write the recommendation, and provide him/her with the forms in a timely fashion. Remember: treat this process with respect and consideration. Follow these steps to obtain recommendations:

1. Ask your teachers in person if they would be willing to write your recommendation.
 2. Make an official request for a recommendation via Family Connection. To do this, log on, go to Colleges, Colleges I am applying to. Scroll down to Teacher recommendations, add request. Find the relevant teacher and click their name. This step will send them an e-mail request and connect them to your applications.
 3. Give teachers ample time to do this writing and provide them with the following material:
 - ✓ A list of the colleges to which you are applying. Indicate on this list whether the college uses the common application, has its own form, or has no form for the recommendation.
 - ✓ The pertinent forms if a college is not on the common application list. These should be completed with your name and address. Remember to check the appropriate box about waiving (or not) your right. Sign the form.
 - ✓ A copy of your résumé.
 - ✓ Addressed and stamped envelopes to the colleges. The return address should be Wooster School.
2. Thank your teachers!

c) **The High School Portion** consists of the Secondary School report or Counselor recommendation form (not all colleges have these forms), your school transcript, and standardized test scores.



The school transcript, the record of all your high school grades, will be sent by Wooster to the colleges to which you apply. **It is therefore imperative that you keep the school informed of your college choices.**



The Counselor recommendation, sometimes called the High School or Secondary School report, is written by the College Guidance Counselor and will be sent with the transcript. Give all of these forms to him, with your name and address filled in. The counselor recommendation provides colleges with a complete, thorough overview of a student's high school career at Wooster and is composed with great care. The College Guidance Counselor consults with teachers, records, and the students themselves when writing the recommendations.

d) **Submit your applications, with the fee, by the Wooster deadline.** About ten days after you have submitted your paperwork, telephone the admissions office to ensure that everything has been received.

Early Decision: If you are absolutely certain that one college is your clear preference, consider applying Early Decision. By this system, you indicate to the college that it is your first choice, and that if you are accepted, you will attend. The application is due earlier, but you are notified of admission earlier, too. **Early Decision acceptances are binding: if you are admitted to the college under this system, you must attend.**

Steps for Applying to College

1. Research.
2. Make preliminary college list.
3. Ensure appropriate range of colleges.
4. Visit colleges.
5. Finalize list, ensuring adequate range of colleges.
6. Take SAT's and/or ACTs.
7. Check if SAT Subject Tests are required by colleges, and take as appropriate.
8. Arrange to have scores sent to colleges.
9. Compose resume, listing activities, sports, programs, jobs, community service. Indicate year(s) of involvement and time commitment per week, as well as any awards earned.
10. Gather application materials.
11. Decide on teachers for recommendations. Request that teachers write recommendations.
12. Register to use the Common Application at www.commonapp.org
13. Complete the privacy waiver for the Common Application. This can be done either at the Common Application website or through your Family Connection page.
14. Add your colleges to the appropriate section on the Common Application.
15. Through Family Connection, electronically request teacher recommendations.
16. Check what supplements are required. (Shown on your college list on the CA.
17. Check the application deadline.
18. Write essay and have it checked.
19. Complete application form, uploading essay and resume, and have it checked.
20. Send applications, with fee.
21. For any colleges that do not take the CA, give teachers and counselors the necessary forms.

22. Contact admissions office to ensure that materials have been received.
23. Wait for decisions.
24. Choose college, send deposit and acceptance, inform other colleges that you will not be attending.

Keep your college guidance counselor and the registrar informed of any changes to your plans.

Application Responsibilities

Wooster will:

1. Send the school transcript, copy of school profile, grade distribution sheet, and explanation of grading.
2. Send 1st trimester grades.
3. Send mid-year grades.
4. Send end-of-year grades.
5. Send counselor's recommendation.
6. Send teacher recommendations.

N.B. By October 13, all seniors are to check with the registrar to ensure that their credentials are complete and correct.

Students are expected to:

1. Send your part of the application. Show your application to an adult – the Director or Assistant Director of Guidance, your senior advisor, etc. before you send it.
2. Contact the College Board or ACT to have scores sent to colleges.
3. Inform the College Guidance Counselor, Mr. Kendis or Ms. McBrayer, of your college choices and any changes that are being made.
4. Request teacher recommendations.
5. Check with your counselor each month to inform them of changes to lists.
6. Call the colleges to ensure that the applications are complete.
7. Inform relevant people if parts are missing from applications.
8. Contact colleges again to follow up.
9. Inform your counselor of college decisions.
10. Inform colleges of your decision to attend or not attend.

List the colleges to which you are applying. Indicate the date the application is due, the kind of application (Early Decision, Early Action, Regular, or Rolling), whether you are applying on paper or electronically, and whether or not you are using the Common Application.

College	Due Date	ED/EA	Paper/Electronic	Common App./ Individual App.
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____

If you add or delete colleges from this list you must inform Mr. Kendis or Ms. McBrayer. If this is not done we cannot guarantee that materials will be sent to the additional schools.

Essay Writing Tips

Generally speaking, the college admissions staff will evaluate your application essay on three levels:

- They will look at your ability to use standard written English with correct punctuation, grammar, usage, and syntax.
- They will look at the content, substance, and depth of insight in your essay, as it reflects your ability to think about yourself and convey your true feelings about a topic.
- They will look at creativity and originality. It is at this level that you may be able to present yourself as unique, as an individual who would bring a freshness of vision to the college that will enhance the quality of its academic and social life. Be yourself in your writing.

The care and attention you give your essay will express the level of your motivation and investment in your application.

1. Plan your essays as early as possible. Start thinking in the summer before your senior year, and allow yourself enough time to produce an essay with which you are satisfied.

2. Think about the form you might use to convey the information for the essay question. Straight prose is fine, but other approaches may work as well.

3. Write a rough draft. Then set it aside for a day. Then reread it to spot cliches, triteness, vagueness, and errors. Rework the essay as you need to.

4. Rewrite the essay, and repeat step 3, to sharpen your essay.

5. Ask your English teacher or college counselor to read the essay. Ask for specific suggestions but do not ask this person to rewrite your essay.

6. Polish the essay for the final draft.

7. Type the essay and mail it with your application. Relax. If you have followed the steps listed, your thought and care will be apparent to the college admissions staff.

Wait and Decide

This is the most nerve-wracking part.

Once your applications have been sent, the matter is out of your hands. If you have been careful and conscientious about the first four steps of this process, you do not need to be overly anxious, although of course you will be eager to hear of the colleges' decisions. Keep busy and concentrate on your school work and other activities. (Remember that even after a college has accepted you, they expect you to maintain your usual academic standards.)

Two weeks after you submit your materials, telephone the colleges to ensure that they have received everything. Do not be surprised if your file is not yet complete; colleges have a great deal of mail to sort and file. Follow up on missing forms.

Depending on the policy of the individual colleges, you will be notified of their decision either within weeks of sending your application, or by a specific date, e.g. April 1 or April 15.

If you are accepted by a college, generally you have until May 1 to inform them of your decision of whether or not to attend. Please note: **You must inform all colleges to which you have been accepted of your plans.** It is important to secure your place at the college of your choice, but also to release the places being held for you at other institutions so that they are freed for other applicants. Send your deposit, and celebrate.

You may be deferred or placed on the Wait List of a college. If this occurs, the college will usually ask you to indicate whether you wish to remain on this list. If you wish to remain on the list and still hope for admission to the college, make this clear to them. Write a letter stating your level of interest. If it is true, tell them that if accepted, you will attend. Provide an update on your studies and activities.

Please keep your college guidance counselor informed of the admissions decisions for **all** the colleges to which you applied. Your counselor has invested time and care in the process too, and has an interest in the results.

ATHLETIC INFORMATION

Many college athletic programs are regulated and governed by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). This organization has established rules on eligibility, recruiting, and financial assistance. There are three divisions in the NCAA: Division I, Division II, and Division III.

Students who desire to play Division I or Division II sports as college freshman must be approved and certified by the NCAA Initial Eligibility Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse monitors the admission of student-athletes and verifies that they meet the qualifications established by the NCAA. Students register with the clearinghouse towards the end of their junior year at the following URL: www.eligibilitycenter.org. There is a registration fee.

Please note that students must send SAT scores to the clearinghouse through the College Board website (code 9999) to qualify for eligibility.

SPECIAL INTEREST LETTER

If you are interested in a particular program, athletics, academic or extracurricular, you may want to write to someone for more information. See example below:

Mr. Grant Puck
Hockey Coach
Hello University
Appletree, Arkansas 01010

Dear Mr. Puck:

I am currently in my senior year at Wooster School in Danbury, Connecticut, and I am applying for admission to Hello University's Class of 2020. I have been playing hockey on the school's varsity team for three years, and will participate in a county program which sponsors a summer schedule for teams within a one hundred-mile radius.

Should I attend Hello University, I would be very interested in trying out for the freshman hockey team. Accordingly, I would appreciate you forwarding to me any information which you may routinely send to prospective players.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Mario Susa
Chocolate Hill Circle
Fitzwilliam, MA 00700

ADMISSIONS REPLY LETTER

If you have been accepted by a college and have determined not to attend, it is only common courtesy to inform the college of your decision as quickly as possible so that they may admit other students who may be on the waiting list. See example below:

Ms. Sally S. Clout
Director of Admissions
Snub State University
Snub State, California 25201

Dear Ms. Clout:

On April 15th, I received notification of the favorable action taken by the Admissions committee on my application. I am most please by this consideration.

Having finished my college plans, however, I am writing to inform you as early as possible that I have decided not attend Snub. I will be attending Bruin University in Franconia, Montana.

I would like to thank you, nevertheless, for your very kind assistance and personal efforts in support of my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Mario Susha
Chocolate Hill Circle
Fitzwilliam, MA 00700

What Can Parents Do?

Freshman Year:

- Talk with your children about their academic interests.
- Encourage good study habits.
- Help your children's growing independence by encouraging them to participate in new social, athletic, and extracurricular activities.
- Have a conversation about what your children want out of life. Ask them how they will attain their goals.

Sophomore Year:

- Explore interests with your children and encourage widening their base of experience through courses and activities. This is the time for students to test their academic ability, explore values, and enjoy new friends, social events, and extracurricular activities.
- Keep grades in perspective. Grades count, of course, but most colleges look at the whole academic record, and a glitch in a class does not seal a student's fate.
- Continue the conversations about goals and aspirations and the value of a college education.

Junior Year:

- Understand that not all students reach the same college planning milestones at the same time.
- Help children to understand that there is more than one college which is appropriate and where they can be happy.
- Remember that where your neighbor's child is applying has nothing to do with your child.
- Encourage students to start a college file. The more organized the papers, the easier the process.
- Ensure that students register and take the appropriate standardized tests.
- Help students plan and organize college visits.
- Encourage and support your children with advice and guidance.
- Inform yourself about financial aid, scholarships, and college testing.

Senior Year:

- Support children in their growing independence. Students are expected to complete their own applications, and allowing them to do this is both ethically and developmentally sound.
- Remember that this process is not about you, the parent. No matter how similar your children may be to you, they need to make their own decisions and observations.
- Prepare your children for possible disappointment. For many students this is the first time they could face bad news. Remind them that there is no perfect school and that admissions decisions do not reflect on their worth as people or your worth as parents.
- Keep the lines of communication open. Work out a mutually acceptable way for pacing the work, meeting the deadlines, and showing that the applications have been completed.
- The happiest parents are the ones who know that their children will be happy wherever they go.

Policy on Reporting Disciplinary Information

In keeping with the National Association of College Admissions Counselors Principles of Good Practice, Wooster will report at the time of occurrence, suspensions and expulsions to schools, colleges, scholarship providers, or potential employers. Wooster responds to questions about disciplinary history in a straightforward manner, and when responding to such questions, provides a clear explanation of the disciplinary issue in question, and a description of the School's subsequent social/disciplinary experience with the student involved. • Wooster expects students will make prompt, honest and complete disclosures about suspensions and expulsions to schools, colleges, scholarship providers, or potential employers.

Glossary

- ACT:** American College Test
- Alumni/ae Interviews:** Admissions interviews conducted by graduates of colleges, often offered locally when a student is unable to travel to the college campus.
- AP:** Advanced Placement. The Advanced Placement program gives students the opportunity to pursue college level studies while still in secondary school and to receive advanced placement and/or credit, upon entering college.
- Associate's Degree:** Degree granted by most two-year colleges and some four-year colleges at the end of two years of study. A student may earn an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree, depending on the course of study.
- ATP:** Admissions Testing Program
- Bachelor's Degree:** Degree granted by four-year institutions after completion of four years, or, in some cases, five years, of study. A student may earn a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree depending on the course of study.
- Candidates' Reply Date:** May 1, the earliest date that a subscribing college may require an accepted applicant to say whether or not he/she will attend.
- CEEB:** College Entrance Examination Board
- CEEB Number/
High School Code:** Six digit number used to identify high schools. Wooster's CEEB: 070130
- College Work Study Program:** Government-supported financial aid program coordinated through financial aid offices whereby an eligible student (based on need) may work part-time while attending class at least half-time, generally in college-related jobs.
- Common Application:** A not-for-profit- organization that serves students and member institutions by providing an undergraduate admissions application – online and in print – that students may submit to any of its 300 members. www.commonapp.com
- Consortium:** Several colleges and universities in an area joined together in a cooperative association which gives students the opportunity to use the libraries and take courses at all member institutions.

- Cooperative Education:** A program in which the student alternates between full-time college study and full-time paid employment related to the area of study.
- CSS:** College Scholarship Service. The financial aid division of the College Board. It provides a needs analysis service for financial aid applicants.
- CSS Profile:** Financial aid form required by some colleges.
- Deferred Admission:** An admissions plan whereby a student applies to a college, is notified of acceptance during the senior year, and then takes a year off to travel or work.
- Early Action:** Application process requiring early submission of forms (November 1 or 15) and providing early notification of decision. It is non-binding, with the regular committal date of May 1. (EA)
- Early Admission:** A plan that allows students to begin college work after their junior year of high school.
- Early Decision:** Application process requiring early submission of forms (November 1 or 15) and providing early notification of decision. **ED Application is binding, and a student may not apply to other institutions if accepted.** (ED)
- FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid form, required by all colleges, available on line at: <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>. The FAFSA should be submitted as soon as possible after January 1.
- Grade Point Average:** A number that indicates a student's average grade.
- January Admit:** College acceptance granted to an applicant, with a January, rather than September, enrollment date.
- Naviance:** College guidance software.
- National Reply Date:** May 1. The date by which students must notify colleges of their decisions.
- NCAA** National Collegiate Athletic Association. Students intending to participate in Division I or II college athletics as freshmen must register and be certified by the NCAA Initial-eligibility Clearinghouse. Forms are available in the guidance office.
www.ncaa.org
- Pell Grant** Federal grants awarded to students with demonstrated financial need.
- Perkins Loan** Low interest loan for students with exceptional financial need. The loan is made through the college financial aid office.

PSAT/NMSQT The Preliminary SAT[®]/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.
A standardized test that gives students a chance to enter National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) scholarship programs. It also provides practice for the SAT Reasoning Test.

Rolling Admission: Colleges operating on the rolling admissions plan make decisions as applications are received rather than by a set date.

SAT: 3-hour reasoning test with verbal and math sections.

SAT Subject Test: 1-hour subject tests.

Secondary School Report/ Counselor Form: Sheet included in many applications, to be given to school counselor.

Test Center Code: Five digit code used to identify CEEB test sites.

Waitlist: Some colleges place students on the Wait List. If fewer accepted students decide to attend the college, the college may take students off the Wait List and into the accepted pool.