



September 11, 2020

Doherty High School

Class of 2021 SENIOR BULLETIN



College Visits During a Pandemic

While some colleges have opened back up to in person visits, but most are still virtual. Although virtual may not be perfect, the colleges have worked really hard to make sure you have a great tour of the campus.

Reach out to admissions reps to ask specific questions. Be sure to make a list of questions you would like to ask.

Find the school you are interested in and take the virtual tour. It is worth your time.

Visit the senior page on the Doherty Counseling webpage to see info on upcoming college fairs.

<https://www.d11.org/domain/1368>

The Major Question

Sometimes Seniors get “stuck” trying to figure out where to apply to college. There is an assumption that you first have to know what your “major” will be and then look for the college with the best department with that major. Consider the following and give yourself time to explore the academic world:

1. Less than 20% of seniors graduating from college will graduate with their original major.
2. Students who enter college as undecided are more apt to graduate in 4 years than those who begin as Freshman with an identified major.
3. At least 25% of adults with bachelor's degrees are working outside the field of their major.

Coming in the Future

FAFSA Presentation at the end of September

FAFSA opens October 1st.

Free Application Day for Colorado Colleges and Universities.
October 13th, 2020

Why Visit Colleges?

You hear it from colleges. Come visit! You hear it from your high school counselor. Have you visited any campuses yet? But what's the big deal about seeing a college?

You Can't Judge a College by Its Brochure

Choosing a college will be one of the biggest consumer decision you ever make. A campus visit is your opportunity to get a firsthand view of a college. A college catalog, viewbook, or website can only show you so much. To really get a feel for the school, you need to walk around the quad, sit in on a class, and visit the dorms.

CollegeBoard tell us a visit gives you the chance to talk to students, faculty, and financial aid and admissions folks.

You can get answers to questions, such as:

- What is the average class size, and the student to faculty ratio? Are most classes taught by professors or by teaching assistants?
- What is the campus meal plan like? How is the food? Be sure to eat a meal in the dining hall.
- What is the make-up of the current freshman class? Is the campus fairly diverse?
- What's the social scene like? What kinds of activities are planned by the college's Residential Affairs?
- Is there ample space in dorms or does there seem to be a housing crunch?
- How many students are commuters/residents?
- Do I feel at home here? Is this what I pictured college to be?

Be sure to also do the following:

- Visit a class in your major
- Schedule a conference with a professor
- Explore on your own
- Take the campus guided tour
- Talk to lots of students
- If its possible, sleep over
- Take pictures and notes so you remember when you get home, all tours start to run together
- Read the bulletin boards to see what is happening on campus

In planning a college visit, contact the admissions office at least two weeks in advance to make sure they can accommodate you. If your parents go with you, go your separate ways and compare notes at the end.

Is This College Right for You?

Ultimately, it's your decision. Listen to your gut. Do you feel comfortable walking around campus? Do you click with the students and faculty?

Spending time on a campus allows you to determine if a school is a good match.



Terms and Definitions

Associates Degree: A two year degree which generally prepares the student for further study. Earned at community colleges. (A.A., A.S.)

Bachelors Degree: A degree awarded after completion of a 4 or 5 year program of study in a specified subject (B.S., B.A.)

Masters Degree: The degree awarded after the completion of a post-graduate program, often 2 years in length. (M.A., M.S.)

Doctoral Degree: Highest academic degree awarded by a college or university. May take 5-6 years to complete. (Ph.D.)

Matriculate: To enroll for the first time in a college or university.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. Students must file this application after January 1 to access Financial Aid.

CSS/Profile: An additional F.A. form required by some private colleges.

EFC: Expected Family Contribution. The Federal government uses a formula that analyzes each family's financial “health” and arrives at this amount.

Sites to start your search:

www.collegeboard.com

www.christiancolleges.com

www.campustours.com



Tips for Applications

- Most schools allow you to complete the application form either in paper form or online. If possible, do it online.
- Download the application and complete a rough draft. Proof read all information and run spell check
- Have a transcript sent. Your counselor has the request forms available. Your test scores are included on the transcript.
- Letters of Recommendation– give your recommender the form or instructions well in advance of the deadline. Your counselor has a Teacher Letter of Recommendation form to help you.
- When writing your personal essay be sure to elaborate on the questions. Most importantly, proofread!!
- Interviews– while not required by all schools, it is a great way for the committee to get to know you. Call the college and see if you can schedule an interview.
- Be sure you use a tasteful email address, your D11 account is a great account to use.
- Do print and keep a hard copy of your application, and all correspondence with the college.
- Two weeks after sending the application, confirm that it arrived.

How Many Colleges Should You Apply For?

If you are interested in only one school, the choice is easy. However, most advisors suggest that you apply to between 3 and 5 schools. Each school will fall into one of the following categories:

- The dream school: This is the long shot. You would love to attend this school but may not meet the admissions requirements. If you don't mind the extra application fee, take a chance.
- The possible school: This is the school with real potential. There's a good chance you will get in, but no guarantee.
- The safety school: This is the sure thing. You may want to choose one school that you will have no trouble getting into, just in case the others don't work out.

How to Get Wonderful Recommendations

A great teacher recommendation can give your application the edge that sets it apart from hundreds of other applications.

1. Find people (who are not related to you) who can say nice things about you.

- You need someone who can say meaningful things about you and your accomplishments. Your list may include teachers, professors, advisors, employers, religious leaders, coaches...

2. Always give your recommender the chance to say “No”.

- It is important to ask each person, “Do you feel comfortable writing me a recommendation letter?” You want someone who has the time and feels they can write you a great letter.

3. Give your recommender information Make the process as easy as possible for the recommender. Get a form from your counselor to fill out to give to people who are writing you a recommendation. This provides your recommenders with all the information they need. Be sure to include activities, community service, and other activities you are involved in that the teacher might have forgotten or not know about. If the college provides you a form for the teacher to fill out, complete your personal information first. Also give them pre-addressed, stamped envelopes.

4. Deadlines Give your recommender ample time to write your letter: two weeks is recommended. Remind them a few days before to ensure they remember.

5. Say “thank you”

- Writing recommendations can be time consuming and hard work. Remember the manners your parents taught you and write a note saying thanks.

Use documents found at the very bottom of the page <https://www.d11.org/domain/1368> to send to your recommender so they have information to write about you.

Writing Your College Essay

While there is no magic formula for the perfect admission essay, there are a few things prospective college students should know. **Write about yourself.** A great history paper on the Civil War might be very well written, but it doesn't tell me anything about the writer. Regardless of the topic, make sure you shine through your essay.

- **Use your own voice.** Readers can tell the difference between the voice of a 40-year-old and a high school senior.
- **Focus on one aspect of yourself.** If you try to cover too many topics in your essay, you'll end up with a resume of activities and attributes that doesn't tell me as much about you as an in-depth look at one project or passion.
- **Be genuine.** Don't try to impress me, because I've heard it all. Just tell me what is important to you.
- **Consider a mundane topic.** Sometimes it's the simple things in life that make the best essays. Some of my favorites have included essays that reflect on the daily subway ride to school, or what the family goldfish observed from the fishbowl perched on the family kitchen table. It doesn't have to be a life-changing event to be interesting and informative.
- **Share your opinions, but avoid anything too risky or controversial.** Your essay will be read by a diverse group of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, so try to appeal to the broadest audience possible.
- **Tell a good story.** Show me why you are compassionate; don't tell me you are. Show me that you have overcome great difficulty; don't start your essay with “I have overcome great difficulties.”
- **Don't repeat what is already in your application.** If you go to a performing arts school and all of your extracurricular activities and awards relate to dance, don't write about how much you love dancing. Tell me something I couldn't know just from reading the other parts of your application.
- **Finally, don't forget about the supplements.** The supplement questions are very important – you should plan to spend as much time on them as you do on your essay. A well-written essay won't help if your supplement answers are sloppy and uninformative.