

## **CLASS OF '23 SUMMER TIPS**

### **Be College AppReady When You Return Your Senior Year!**

**ACT and/or SAT:** ACT and SAT test dates continue through summer/fall. We encourage rising seniors to have completed two tests by early/mid fall. To view upcoming test dates and to register, visit [ACT](#) or [SAT](#). Colleges vary in test score review policies (see next section on Test Optional review). Please consult college admission websites or call admission offices for best guidance. Students choosing to submit scores to colleges for admission review are responsible for following how each college will accept a test score for admission review. Some colleges will accept self-reported scores that a student can list within the testing section of the Common Application while other colleges will require official scores sent directly from the testing agency to the college. The college admission website/call to their office is your best resource.

**TEST OPTIONAL ADMISSION REVIEW:** Over 1,800 colleges are offering a “Test Optional (TO) or Test Flexible” admission review process. Click [here](#) for an ongoing updated list. College admissions offices are the best source to learn more about its TO process. Conversations about applying TO can happen in fall with College Counselors when we know more about a student’s score profile/planned college list.

**RESEARCHING COLLEGES – ACADEMIC & SOCIAL FIT:** Students must be active citizens in their college search and do their homework prior to applying. That homework begins with students honestly reflecting on who they are as students and individuals, then looking at the college’s mission, majors, campus life, and freshman class profile to find a good fit.

**A COLLEGE LIST:** A goal for seniors is to return to MUHS in early fall with a relatively firm list of the colleges to which they want to apply. We find a list of three to ten colleges, including two UW System options, provides a good initial, well-balanced, varied list. MUHS seniors average seven-eight college applications.

**ESTIMATING COST – FINANCIAL FIT:** Coming off another year of working with seniors and parents on college choice, we find the conversation of college cost (including debt) arises too late in the process, increasing anxiety. All colleges post a Net Price Calculator (NPC) that families can complete to receive a projected net price based on information entered. Search each college’s website for their NPC. In addition, a number of colleges also use [Myintuition.org](#) offering similar information. Please note, families still need to file the financial aid application(s) required to receive an official financial aid offer but the NPC can be an excellent starting point for your family to complete together and have a conversation on its results.

**Save the Date:** The MUHS/DSHA College Financial Aid Information Night will be held on Wednesday, October 5th at 6:30 pm. This year’s program will be hosted at DSHA. More information will be shared with families in fall.

#### **BEGIN TO COMPLETE PORTIONS OF THE COMMON APPLICATION:**

As more than 900 colleges utilize the Common Application, each junior created his CommonApp account during our February 2022 College & Career Day to enable a head start over summer. The Fall 2023 CommonApp goes live August 1 but his existing CommonApp account will “rollover” for his senior year application process. With that in mind, we strongly encourage rising seniors to begin to complete portions of the application under the “Common App” tab (profile, family, education, testing, and activities). These portions are minimal time commitments but are big pay offs to have underway when he returns in fall.

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**DRAFTING A COLLEGE ESSAY:** Since the essay always takes the most time in a student's college application process, we encourage students to take time during summer to begin their thought and reflection process and complete a solid first draft of the Common Application personal essay. Students are offered seven different essay prompt choices and just need to choose one (500-650 words). Take the advice from this year's senior class - each application involves considerable time and thought in its completion – and that's extra time taken away from class work, activities and/or sleep. Using your summer to work on your general essay is advice every recent Hilltopper Alum would share!

- Common Application: The [Fall 2023 CommonApp personal essay prompts](#) are set.
- The UW System application, used by all University of Wisconsin campuses, goes live on August 1 for Fall 2023 applicants. The Fall 2023 UW app essay prompts will **remain the same** as the Fall 2022 prompts: [UW System shared essay and \(if required\) supplemental campus essay](#).

### **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION (LOR) FOR COLLEGE APPLICATIONS – DO I NEED ONE?**

All MUHS seniors will have an Advisor Letter of Recommendation (often referred to by colleges as a Secondary School or Counselor Letter) that is included with his MUHS transcript/documents that are submitted to your colleges. For the vast majority of college applications, this Advisor (Counselor) Letter is the only letter of support that colleges want for your admission application and most of our seniors do not need to pursue any additional LORs for their college applications. More selective colleges may require an “academic” (sometimes called a teacher) LOR. Do I need one? Do your research! Visit the admission website of your colleges of interest and review the items on their freshman application checklist. If they only say a Counselor/Advisor LOR is needed, you are covered! If they say they also require an Academic (Teacher) LOR(s), then take these next steps.

- Consult with the College Counselors when we return in fall. Together, we can review your planned college application list and determine if an Academic LOR(s) is needed.
- If an Academic LOR is needed, have an in-person conversation with a teacher to ask her/him to write a LOR. An in-person conversation shows your teacher respect and is a great practice of professional skills. Your teacher may have additional questions for you that will assist her/him with crafting the letter.
- A popular question we hear: “The college wants one Teacher LOR. Isn't two better?” The quick answer, echoed by college admissions officers, is no! College admission officers are reading thousands of college applications every fall. The more documents you offer, the more they skim your application and not concentrate on the truly desired and critical pieces.

**OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS:** If you had a slow start as an underclassman or a poor semester along the way, be persistent. In some cases, it may be helpful to send first quarter senior grades or wait for midyear grades to submit to a college (if deadlines permit). Students have the opportunity to address challenging situations/grade trends and every college application offers a section where students can share this. The College Counselors can assist you with this process.

### **SAVE THE DATE! Seniors & Parents: Surviving the Application Process** **Thursday, Aug. 18, 2022, 6:30 pm – O'Rourke Performing Arts Hall**

This is a **mandatory event** for all college-bound seniors and parents. The goal of our evening is to help students and parents understand and set a plan for the logistics of the college application process. More information will be shared with the Class of 2023 students/parents in early August – please save the date!