



# **Lessons Learned: NACAC 2014**

**Notes from Sessions Attended  
at the National Association for College Admission  
Counseling Annual Conference**

By Counselors of Collegewise

Dear Counseling and Admissions Colleagues,

We've just returned from this year's NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling) conference in Indianapolis. While thousands descended on the land of the Hoosiers, we know thousands more were unable to attend because of budget cutbacks or the demands of senior season.

At Collegewise, we see the NACAC conference as an exemplar of all we hold dear in this profession: connecting with colleagues old and new, and sharing information to better serve students. Fittingly, this year's keynote speaker, Geoffrey Canada, addressed that latter point head on, as he made us all the more keenly aware of the crisis in education in this country. His words reminded us there is more work to be done to bridge the gap and allow higher education to be a right, not a privilege. It was a call to action. And, in the awards and updates that followed, we saw how many are fighting to bridge that gap, and how this conference continually brings people together to better help our students.

It's a small thing, but in that same spirit, Collegewise wanted to make sure counselors who weren't there had at least some access to information being provided in sessions. So, we decided to do the following:

1. Take good notes at the sessions we attended.
2. Type up our notes at the conclusion of the conference.
3. Make them available to anyone who might want them.

It's been awhile since we were in college, but we dusted off our note-taking skills and tried to capture as much of the information as we could. Of course, all credit for the content here should go to the presenters themselves. They did all the work—we just wrote down what they provided.

We know that reading a collection of notes is not the same as attending the conference in person, but nevertheless, we hope you find the information useful. Please feel free to forward it to anyone you feel might benefit.

Thanks for reading and sharing it, and we hope to see you at NACAC next year!

Sincerely,

The Collegewise Counselors

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## What Every Counselor Needs to Know About a Career in Medicine

This session describes what counselors need to know about medical school admission and careers in medicine to advise students during their college choice process. Preparation for medicine will also be discussed and presenters discuss descriptive data about applicants to medicine and their success rates, as well as discuss the role of undergraduate institutional selectivity on admission to medical school. Attendees will learn the characteristics of applicants to medicine; types of colleges and universities they attend; the key individual and institutional differences among successful and unsuccessful applicants; the role of college selectivity in medical school admission. Special attention will be devoted to underrepresented minority groups as well as first generation and low-income students. Information about opportunities in medicine for undocumented students will be presented including, relevant policy information from a medical school currently recruiting students with Deferred Action status.

Presenters:

*Cindy Kasten, Hinsdale Central High School, IL*

*Sunny Nakae, Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine, IL*

*William Houder, Stanford School of Medicine, CA*

### **The Overview**

- Journey to medicine becoming more flexible.
- Premed Prep:
  - GPA and science GPA (bio, chem, physics and math)
  - MCAT SCORE
  - Medical exposure, research experience
  - Leadership
  - Letters of recommendation
  - Community service, civics and campus engagement, interpersonal skills, writing skills, academic skills, professionalism
- High school -> undergrad -> med school -> residency -> fellowship (extra) -> practice. Licensed after first year of residency. Becoming more common to take time off between undergrad and med school.
  - Undergrad (4-6 yrs)
  - Medical school (4 yrs)
  - Residency (3-7 yrs)
  - Fellowship (1-4 yrs)
  - BA/BS - MD programs offer options to complete both degrees in 6-8 yrs
  - Once in school, boards occur after 2nd year and 3rd year. Once in residency boards again after first year.

### **How does it affect undergrad choice?**

- Most important thing is going to a school where you can be academically successful. Need to be able to demonstrate that academic success.
- Choosing the right school:
  - Size (larger schools more common. Aren't discounted if from a smaller school)
  - Selectivity (HSCs do give an advantage. But also generally going against more applicants from the same school so then might be disadvantage)
  - Public/private

- Research intensive
- Size of surrounding community
- Enrichment opportunities/Curriculum
- Campus community/support
- Rigor
- Premed advisers
- Do not choose a school based on premed advisers record of success
- Many advisers act more like gatekeepers than facilitators
- Students can get access to ALL information advisers have through the AAMC ([www.aamc.org](http://www.aamc.org))
- Don't need advisor endorsement to apply or to submit letters of recommendation
- Student needs to take charge of their preparation and may not have a solid advisor upon which to rely. Seek alternatives
- You may disagree with your adviser and you should see alternative advice if necessary
- Some advisers are discouraging and negative, find someone who isn't!

### Requirements

- 1 bio, 1 gen chem, 1 organic chem, 1 physics, 1 calculus
- Can include classes: stats. biochem, diversity/social justice, medical terminally
- Vary slightly by school
- Some schools require and some recommend. Check out AAMC site for requirements and if a student has a med school they are interested in, check out their requirements to give them an idea.

### Science Courses

- Recommend no science courses above beginning/intro level freshman year....regardless of how prepared you are
- Take the most difficult science courses latter half of sophomore year and beyond
- Protect the GPA (They kept focusing on this. Must be a BIG point)
- Ws are bad. Given the dilemma, a W is always better than a D or F.
- Utilize the summer to reduce the load of simultaneous difficult classes during the school year
- Understand that counting toward a premed and counting toward degrees doesn't necessarily have to overlap
- Understand that most schools premed tracks are antiquated and far from ideal for any student
- Why wait on classes? You'll want the content fresh for the MCAT
- Pace of science courses in college are intense. It's good to give yourself time to be well established as a student first, better to wait till latter half of college.

### GPA Basics

- GPA will not get you in, but keep you out
- Think about classes over 4 yrs including summers
- Do not take more than 2 science or math at a time, especially in the first two years. Doesn't benefit you to get them out of the way
- Learn how to calibrate and predict performance so you know how much you can handle a semester.
- Pass/fail and AP classes don't count in GPA
- Includes any repeated courses. Grades are averaged, not replaced

- Includes coursework at colleges where no degree was earned
- Includes any college classes you've taken in high school for college credit as well!!!

### Activities

- Need to start pursuing activities with a passion. Don't play the premed game, "I'll only do this to help me for med school"
- Choose a major you love, it doesn't have to be science. ANY major. It doesn't matter
- Select e.c. based on interest, not medical school relevance
- Think about having a hook in the application to stand out
- Seek personal growth and community impact. Outside comfort zone.
- Activities/achievements from HS do not belong on your med school application
- Medical experience is important, but don't feel boxed in by it
- Can list up to 15 activities. They don't have to be medically influenced.
- Use AAMC resources to assist as guides: roadmap, checklist. On the website's home page on the left download the "Your path to a career in medicine" – SUPER HANDY
- Get involved but don't over commit. Academics ALWAYS come first. They NEED to see that you can be successful academically
- Learn to study (reading is not studying). The volume of what you have to learn at medical school is immense

### Letters of Recommendation

- Need consistency between what the student is saying and what the recommender is saying.
- Develop genuine relationships: visit during office hours, take classes you're interested in, focus on improvement and learning
- Prepare a portfolio for the writer when the time comes
- Start/request early
- Can you write me an excellent letter of recommendation? A personal letter of recommendation
- Status of the writer matters to an extent (student teacher isn't as good as a professor)

### Interview

- Very important, all med schools use interviews
- Interviews are rated as the most important factor in deciding which applicants gain a letter of admittance
- Different forms of interviews: traditional (open file, partial blind, blind, panel, group, stress, multiple mini interview (2 hr circuit of 10 sequential interviews, each with 10 prepared scenarios that they read 2 min before they walk in the room, dynamic process)
- Prepare: be familiar with the institution, practice interview questions, remain up to date on current health related trends, and or topics and debates
- Review your own application materials

### Cautions/notes

- Off shore MD programs, international medical schools (non-LCME accredited schools)
- MCAT changes in 2015
- Be mindful of blogs and social media. Just one person's perception
- Try to avoid taking a lot of prerequisite as online classes but becoming more popular for every now and again.

## **They Made The Final Four, But That Doesn't Make it Right For You**

What does “fit” mean to high school juniors whose knowledge of college primarily is based on DI athletics? How do we engage students in a developmental process of self-reflection that leads them to a better understanding of themselves and of the academic and social aspects of colleges that best support their continued success? Two experienced high school counselors shared individual and classroom activities and strategies they use to help high school students develop a college list that takes into consideration their academic strengths, financial constraints and social and family culture and yields admission to colleges where they can thrive and graduate.

Presenters:

*Katy Murphy, Bellarmine College Prep*

*Peggy Hock, St. Lawrence Academy*

### **Developing a list: informing, exploring, defining, shaping**

#### **Informing:**

- Discussion of college characteristics
- Emphasize what works for the student
- A good list is in the single digits, has at least 2-3 likely schools, no more than a third of reach schools, every school meets the student's priorities, account for the family's financial situation, every school will make the student happy
- Exercise to do with students: Give them six colleges – just a detailed description with pictures, and have them pick one they would go to. Won't know the name. (Use different types of schools – big, small, specialized, city, college town)
- Exercise to do with students: Give a post it and write as many names as they know and put it on the map and compare with all the other schools. Show them how many more there are.

#### **Stress inducing myths**

- It takes all As to get into a "good" college
- If I don't get into a name brand college, I will have no future
- A public university will cost me less than a private one
- The more selective a college is, the better it is
- My SAT scores will make or break my admissions chances
- The higher the colleges rankings the better it is

#### **What's important to your journey?**

- Campus culture: how many students? Where do they come from? Ethnic diversity? How many live on campus? What do they do in their spare time? What do students talk about at the dinner table?
- Academic culture: semester vs quarter? Availability of desired majors? How easy is it to change? Double major? Style of teaching? Who does the teaching? Class size and course availability? Gen ed requirements, lots, none? How are students graded?
- Academic support: writing or math center? Drop in tutoring center? Departmental tutor? Faculty available to help? Tutoring resources free? Library hours? Help choosing classes? Are there signs for help on campus or will you need to self-advocate?
- Location: how far is the airport? What is the weather like? How close is it to a city or the out-of-doors? Why do you think you need a city? What are the things in a city that are appealing?

- Opportunities
- Prestige: perceived prestige does not equal success
- Selectivity

### **Exploring**

- Exercise to do with students: Draw a picture on a paper. "Me at college". Imagine yourself standing on campus, what do you see? Draw it and label it. Draw their vision of the college environment. Go back to it through their search if they seem to lose focus.
- Make them visit colleges before senior year. Read guidebooks

### **Shaping the list**

- Not all the schools will be on the list for the same reason
- Would the student be happy to attend any college on the list or is it just for the parent
- Need to have financial safeties
- Include at least 2 likely schools
- What testing is needed
- Timing of applications
- Complications of applications - how many and what types? How many essays?
- Commitment to the list - form a student and parent sign
- In April, go back to the picture they drew to help them remember their process.

## Ensure That Your RECS Are Not a WRECK!

Recommendations can play a key role in the application, but students don't always understand how they can capitalize on this opportunity to present additional information. Learn how you can help your students select the right people and educate them on how to effectively steer the writing of these letters, including yours. Learn how to write more effectively and more efficiently along with that information to include and not to include in your letter. This session addresses the difference between teacher and counselor letters of recommendation and when it is appropriate to send that "additional letter." Attendees are trained and encouraged to do turn around training with the teaching faculty at their schools to ensure individual writers are conveying the appropriate information about the applicant.

Presenters:

*Robyn Lady, Chantilly High School, VA*

*Amy Jarich, University of California, Berkeley, CA*

*Timothy Wolfe, The College of William and Mary, VA*

### **How Colleges Read Applications**

- Either data driven (GPA, number of courses, standardized testing) or a whole read (qualitative pieces, essays, activities)
- For the latter, letters can push a decision, *if on the bubble*
- If you ask families, "what matters to colleges?", you'll get varying results. Most will rank test scores first, followed by grades, class rank, and sometimes the essay.
- According to the NACAC survey, the order of importance of an application is:
  1. Grades in college prep courses
  2. Strength of curriculum
  3. SAT or ACT scores
  4. Grades in all courses
  5. Essay
  6. Demonstrated interest
  7. Counselor letter of recommendation
  8. Teacher letter of recommendation
  9. Class rank
  10. Activities
  11. Interviews (if applicable)
  12. Portfolio (if applicable)

### **The Role of the Letter of Rec**

- In an ideal world, the letter of recommendation should be a conversation, so think of this as a discussion between colleagues
- Thus, credibility, honesty, and integrity are *important*
- As a high school counselor, the goal is to help students make the right match; the goal is *not* to get everyone admitted
- It's the different between *being an advocate*, versus trying to admit everyone
- Admissions representatives can compare applicants within a school context, so be wary of trying to impress to point of dishonesty
- Counselor summarizes the whole student, including personal setbacks, within the school context – the purpose is to be all encompassing

- The teacher, on the other hand, puts the lens on the learner, and it should be subject and academic specific

### How to involve students/parents?

- Create packet for students and parents complete:
  - Provide examples of well-written ones
  - Encourage to provide information that is *not* shared in the essay
  - Less is more, so ask them to give salient tidbits. What do they really want you to convey? Better to focus on a few points, than try to do it all
- Admissions offices are looking for authenticity, so remind them not to approach this as: “what do I say that they want to hear?”
- If you ask students/parents to describe themselves in three words, make sure to ask for examples. Use in a sentence!
- Make sure they talk beyond getting a job or a career – what conversations do they want to be a part of? What are they looking forward to studying?
- If they share a sad story, share a happy ending. How has this been resolved?
- For parents, ask: “how would you describe the kid?” and “what’s their greatest weakness?” (and remind them that we all have weaknesses, so it’s only human to have something to work on!)

### Counselor Letters

- Eight key questions to think about as you write a letter:
  1. Personal qualities of a student
  2. Do they take advantage of the curriculum?
  3. What stimulates their enthusiasm?
  4. How have they contributed to the community?
  5. Character/maturity?
  6. Originality in their field?
  7. Unique circumstance?
  8. What is the student’s interest/goal?
- You do *not* have to answer all these questions for most schools, but you are encouraged to answer all of them for highly selective colleges
- These are questions asked in every committee meeting
- The schools will be envisioning this student in the residential hall, so character does matter
- Keep the letter focused
- For the University of California system: have the counselor write a paragraph about a scheduling conflict (a story the student can’t tell), and copy/paste into the 3<sup>rd</sup> essay box in the application
- UC system will also reach out to counselor and student if on the cusp, but need more information, context, or explanation of something
- Secondary school report should mirror the counselor letter – do share scheduling items in the report (ie, AP Latin only offered every three years)
- The check boxes *can* be helpful in reading between the lines
- You can submit a different school report/counselor letter for each school; depending on the school, might *highly* recommend, or just recommend

### Teacher Letters

- Set up individual meetings with students
- Gather information from classroom experiences

- Ask the student:
  - Why did you ask me?
  - How have you demonstrated maturity and initiative?
  - Was anything particularly challenging or eye-opening for this student?
  - Favorite project?
  - How do you see yourself/what proud of?
- Even if this is a subject that the student may not pursue in college, the schools want to see love of learning. Is there a spark?
- When writing the letter, ask: “if this student wasn’t there, how would my classroom be different?”
- Colleges most interested in graduation rates, so they want to admit good fits who will succeed
- Do’s:
  - Write primarily about academic qualifications (want students who will engage and challenge faculty)
  - How stack up in class/teaching career
  - Explain uniqueness in school/program
  - Qualify your adjectives
  - Make recommendation more *evaluative* than *descriptive*
- Don’t:
  - No generic letter
  - Repeat resume/activities
  - Spend half of the letter sharing your own credentials
  - Mention attractiveness, religion, or race without reason
  - List of adjectives
  - Too long or too short
  - Reveal sensitive information without permission
- If they ask for an *additional* letter, it must reveal new information: you don’t want to be the kid whose application never ends
- The goal of a letter: to render human this process

## **Forget Millennials—Are You Ready for the Next Youth Generation?**

According to their Baby Boomer “helicopter” parents, they were all special snowflakes. Now, finally, Millennials and their overbearing parents are cycling out. But just when you think the damage has been done and you “get it”, a new generation is entering high school and is going to change everything all over again. Born post 9/11, raised as the first wired (or wireless) generation and with their “stealth” (and somewhat bitter) GenX parents in tow, this next wave promises to demand instantaneous information and engagement and will do so with a lack of civility. Join our early adopter conversation so you can start to prepare for the next wave now. Presenters discuss what this all means for admission offices and higher education in general. Learn what this next generation of prospective students means for you in the next years to come.

Presenters:

*Brian Niles, TargetX, PA*

*Jeffrey Kallay, Render Experiences, GA*

*Steve Maples, University of Nevada, Reno, NV*

*Fran Cubberley, Delaware County Community College, PA*

*Sarbeth Fleming, The Westminster Schools, GA*

- We weren’t ready for Millennials when they arrived in high school and college, but now they are our colleagues, so who is next?
- The theme to remember is: “All of this has happened before, and all of this will happen again.”
- Examples:
  - Boy Bands (The Beatles, The Monkees, Jackson 5, The Osmonds, Menudo, New Edition, New Kids On The Block, Boys II Men, Backstreet Boys, NSYNC, Hansen, and now One Direction)—remember what it was like with your generation’s boy band? That’s what it’s like for this generation and theirs.
- We have to look at history and the continuum.
- The panel recommends reading Howe and Strauss books to get a sense of how American generations cycle.
- Idealist leads to Reactive leads to Civic leads to Adaptive
- Every generation rebels against the previous one
- Boomers—Idealist
  - GenX—Reactive
  - Millennials—Civic
  - iGeneration/GenZ/Homeland Generation—Adaptive
- The Adaptive generation before the Boomers was the Silent Generation who was born and raised with the crises of two world wars and the Great Depression.
- The newest Adaptive generation (the panelists called them Homeland Generation) was born into crisis and has lived in crisis their entire lives. 9/11, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Great Recession, the mortgage crisis, and now Student Loan Debt.
- Howe and Strauss say that Adaptives are socialized as more conformist because their parents have less time due to the crises.
- GenX parents will be stealth bomber parents—“we can overcome any obstacles if we (over)plan right!” and rejecting the philosophy of “prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child”—they are driven by FEAR that their kids will be at a disadvantage if they don’t

- Example: Gifted/Talented programs are technically designed for the 2-5% of students who are outliers, yet some schools have 30-35% G/T participation. The kid becomes “special” in parents’ eyes but at some point reality sets in.
- Panelists believe that the Homeland generation will be:
  - Less wasteful
  - Savers
  - Willing to compromise
  - More likely to consider a community college for strategic reasons
  - More fiscally conservative for their bachelor’s degree if they are likely to attend grad school
  - Making financially strategic decisions about higher ed, not “settling”

## The College to Career Connection: New Reality of the Recruitment Process

With an ongoing tough job market and questions about the value of a college degree, higher education institutions have been adding programs and services to show students and parents why they are the best fit not only for an education but also for a career. Increasingly, those career-related initiatives are becoming necessary tools in the recruitment process. Come hear how Indiana's private colleges are offering expanded career development services in diverse and innovative ways.

Presenters:

*Raj Bellani, DePauw University*

*Drew Moser, Taylor University*

*Jon Riester, Hanover College*

*Jonathan Stroud, Earlham College*

*Corey Wilson, University of Indianapolis*

### **Why this matters?**

- The sentence “9X% of all graduates have jobs after graduation” is pretty meaningless now.
- We talk about college being an investment, but families and other constituents are demanding “proof of return on investment”
- Has ramped up since the financial crisis in 2008 along with other financial issues, and the Federal Scorecard is adding to that too
- Return On Investment (ROI)
- Foreign concept within higher ed
- College ROI isn't a straightforward financial calculation because students define success differently, even within schools and departments

### **DePauw U**

- Work with 4-year comprehensive plan for all students and want students to pursue appropriate experiential opportunities
- Have created 4 academic terms (Fall, Jan, Spring, May) and the Jan/May terms create space for applied learning
- Use their alumni base as mentors and teachers (on campus and off) especially in Jan/May terms
- They've incentivized their 4-year plan and have an app for it (just like Starbucks) and the rewards are career/professional in nature—a portfolio, business cards, dinner with alumni, etc.
- Created a sophomore institute for LinkedIn and resume creation/strategies
- Have created a way to pay a living wage for student internships that would otherwise be unpaid (thanks to alumni donations and grant money)

### **University of Indianapolis**

- Brought in a director with lots of industry experience to remake the Professional Edge Center (formerly their career services office)
- They are doing some “force-feeding” (that's the speaker's word choice) of career-specific social capital and soft skills
- They also create mentorship relationships between current students and alumni
- Their approach helps undecided students gain focus on major and career and also get attention at a critical time

**Taylor U**

- This year, more than 25% of their admits came in undecided while 25% of their graduating seniors said they plan to start their own business or nonprofit
- The take-home message from the above stats: students need to find and declare a major but they don't want to be defined by it
- Changed their career center's name to Calling and Career Office, which gets first years and sophomores to come in and get help
- Worked to develop stronger connections between CCO and Admissions—their CCO reps now meet with prospective students too
- They show how Liberal Arts gives a broad curriculum AND allows students time to figure things out
- Research about supporting entrepreneurship/creating entrepreneurs says “Keep the majors, don't create an entrepreneurship major!” so that's what they do while fostering entrepreneurship in other ways

**Hanover**

- Moving to decentralize their career services so they meet students where they're at (example: fostering business within liberal arts)
- Invite their alumni to participate in majors fairs so students can directly see career paths of alumni and ask questions of them
- They provide salary/stipend for unpaid internships
- Offer a parent portal on their website and also publish all their newsletters about career services on their site

**What do they suggest students should try to do in high school and/or 12<sup>th</sup> grade?**

- Don't wait for a teacher or counselor to tell you how to think or what to do
- All educators need to push the conversation to “what's the outcome of education?”
- Experience failure in some way before college
- Know it's okay not to go for a top paycheck if it's not a good fit—EVERY major provides a path to a paycheck

**What assessments do they recommend and/or use?**

- Taylor: all take StrengthsQuest to help raise own understanding of who they are, then offer the option for Strong Interest Inventory
- UIndy: MBTI is main one. They also work with basic professional skills (handshakes, networking, how to work a room, etc.)
- DePauw: different in every year of college—they've created their own assessments on majors, and have also asked on-campus offices to accept resumes and cover letters for work-study jobs so students get practice with them

*All of them philosophically are trying to get students to realize it's not all about the first job—it's also about how to get their 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> job as well. MOOCs can help them cross-train (such as an English major taking an Excel class.) And businesses that come to campus to speak or recruit answer the question “What are you looking for?” by saying “Technical skills aren't as important as critical thinking and initiative, which are ESSENTIAL for hires*

## A Closer Look at Early Action Admissions: Inside the College Admissions Office

As more and more students choose to “go early” in applying for admission, the selection process becomes increasingly complex. This panel will analyze the way decisions are made, with careful attention to how the early action outcomes can “set the stage” for meeting the institution’s enrollment goals. Comparisons will be made to the data over a two-year period for acceptances, deferrals, and denials.

Speakers:

*Phil Trout, Minnetonka High School*

*John Mahoney, Boston College*

*Stuart Schmill, MIT*

*Alisa Fisher, Notre Dame*

*Sally Lindsley, Michigan*

### **The Overview**

- This was a very data-driven presentation with four universities giving us a rich look at the numbers in their Early Action pools. Most striking was how each school managed the process very differently. For example, while MIT chooses to defer the vast majority of student they do not admit in EA over to the RD pool, Notre Dame chooses to deny many, many more right there in EA. Specifically, in fall 2014, MIT received 6820 EA apps of which they admitted 612. Another 4538 were deferred into regular and only 1403 were denied altogether. In contrast, for ND, 6357 applied EA, 1982 were admitted and only 895 were deferred. 3336 were straight denied! Most notably, of those deferred at MIT, only 164 were eventually admitted. At ND, only 103 but that's in stark contrast to them admitting and denying many more early.
- Murmurs from the audience indicated ND had the more appealing approach as it gave students a chance to "move on" earlier from the disappointment. The MIT dean however protested that their applicant pool sees many, many students so tightly packed together with stellar credentials that seeing the entire pool is valuable to them. Regardless of the philosophy each school embraced in the deny vs defer debate, all agreed that EA should be used by those students who have a strong record at the end of their junior year and will not need the support of a strong first semester of senior year in any way.
- The other important takeaway was Boston College's use of Restrictive Early Action. Unlike HPYS's Single Choice Early, at BC, a student can apply to multiple other EA schools. However, they cannot apply anywhere ED simultaneously. This was in contrast to MIT and Michigan which allow student to apply to them in addition to applying elsewhere Early Decision. A small caveat, but an important one that reminded all of us that the devil is always in the detail when college counseling.

### **The Numbers**

#### **Boston College**

- 1/4 of applications are from early action
- 41% admitted EA, 34% regular decision
- EA yield is higher- over 30%
- 20% denied EA
- Only small number admitted after deferral (less than 1/4)

- Try to enroll no more than 30% through EA
- EA applicants less likely to be needy, apply for financial aid
- Need-blind
- Only 20% AHANA (Asian, Hispanic, African American, Native American) at EA, 30% RD
- More opportunities for wooing events for EA admits
- No plans for ED- feel it would deter highest flyers

#### **MIT**

- Feel September or October is too early for binding choice
- Nearly half apply EA
- 10% of EA admitted, majority are deferred, very few admitted (190/4500)
- Overall admit is also around 10%
- 1/4 or RD admits were initially deferred
- Never consider ability to pay for domestics
- International students can't currently apply early
- Yield EA over 80%, RD just over 70%

#### **Notre Dame**

- Now restrictive EA
- Deny about half of EA
- 10-12% of defers ultimately admitted
- Will likely decrease number of defers
- Yield is about the same for EA and RD just over 50%
- Do not look at ability to pay

#### **Michigan**

- 32% of public 4 years have EA, 8% have ED
- Demonstrate interest by applying early during rolling
- Defer far more than admit EA
- Need blind in all reviews
- Prop 2: can't use race, ethnicity, gender in review
- Can use SES in review
- 40% yield overall
- Over-enrolled freshman class in 2013
- Guarantee housing for freshman
- Becoming more conservative in EA
- 37.5% EA admits, 33% overall

## Talking to Students about STEM: Tools for Counselors

Seventy percent of the fastest growing occupations in the US are in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. To meet this demand, we must look beyond the curricular requirements needed for success in STEM and show young people how rewarding STEM careers can be. The National Academy of Engineering describes engineers as creative and collaborative problem solvers who shape the future and who contribute work that improves our health, happiness, and safety. Panelists correlate these important messages to discuss STEM professionals and STEM careers in general. This sessions gives counselors tools they can use immediately to inspire their students to consider these career paths. Discuss STEM messages, enrichment activities, after-school clubs and programs, and summer opportunities that can lead your students to make a world of difference in STEM.

Presenters:

*Jonathan Hoster, Syracuse Univesrity, NY*

*Mark McFee, Rochester Institute of Technology, NY*

*Meagan Pollock, Purdue University, IN*

*Kristen Harris, Columbia Secondary School for Math, Science, and Engineering, NY*

*Donna White, Albuquerque Academy, NM*

### Overview

- Question: can you list all of the things you've used so far today that have been engineered?
- Discussion: is there anything that wasn't? (hint: NO)
- Purpose of this exercise: help engineering become tangible for students—they don't know what engineering looks like as a field, or the people in it
- Demand for STEM careers is growing 5x as quickly as the rest of the workforce
  - Many scientists and engineers are approaching retirement
  - These careers are the fastest growing
  - They have high earning potentials
  - 20% of jobs worldwide require STEM skills (even if they don't require a STEM degree)
- We tend to target math/science superstars for STEM majors but that's not the best hook (see [www.engineeringmessages.org](http://www.engineeringmessages.org) for better messaging to interest students in STEM, listed below):
- 3 better/modern messages:
  - STEM careers make a world of difference
  - STEM careers are essential to health, happiness, and safety
  - STEM careers require creative and collaborative problem solvers
- Creative types and "thought diversity" are largely missing from engineering in particular
- Grand challenges for the 21<sup>st</sup> century involve energy, water, infrastructure, medicine, and cyber/computer issues ([www.engineeringchallenges.org](http://www.engineeringchallenges.org))
- Multiple pathways to STEM—1/2 of all jobs available are for those with a 2-year degree OR LESS
  - This changes who we market to
  - Some 2-year jobs yield higher income than jobs that require PhDs
- A STEM degree enables many career options and opportunities
  - If you help them figure out "why does this matter to me?" then you can figure out the curriculum that's the best fit

### Beyond MA/SCI Paradigm

- Unique STEM programs such as packaging science require math and science and creativity—only a handful of programs like this but there aren't enough people to fill the jobs

- STEAM is important too (STEM plus arts)
- STEM is not exclusive to “top of the class” kids

### **STEM enrichment opportunities**

- Project Lead The Way (PLTW)
- Imagine@RIT
- FIRST
- VEX
- Technology Student Association
- Girls Who Code
- USA Science and Engineering Festival
- National STEM League
- Future City Competition
- Science Olympiad
- MATHCOUNTS
- Mathematical Association of America/American Mathematics Competitions
- National Quiz Bowl
- National Science Bowl
- Purple Comet! Math Meet!

### **Summer STEM Programs**

- Students can use summers to explore and get experience
- Some are free, some require pay, some have scholarships
- American mathematical society - summer math camps
- Science buddies summer science camp directory
- Ten life summer programs
- Engineering education
- National girls collaborative project
- MS 2 at Phillips Academy in Andover

### **STEM Role Models**

- Students need STEM role models that look like them
- MentorNet
- [www.nepris.com](http://www.nepris.com)
- [www.spark101.org](http://www.spark101.org)
- [www.nsta.org](http://www.nsta.org)
- [www.hightechhighheels.org/speaker\\_request.htm](http://www.hightechhighheels.org/speaker_request.htm)
- [www.stemrolemodels.org](http://www.stemrolemodels.org)

### **Takeaways**

- POSITIVE messaging—explain value of STEM then talk coursework
- Pathways to STEM careers
- You can email Jonathan Hoster ([jjhoster@sy.edu](mailto:jjhoster@sy.edu)) for copies of the slides from this presentation. (Yes, he offered to the whole room. 😊 )

## **Defining Promise: Optional Standardized Testing Policies in American College and University Admissions**

Over the last 35 years, optional standardized testing has grown from a small handful of colleges to more than 800 four-year institutions. This session presents a three year, foundation-funded national study of optional testing policies at 33 colleges and universities: 20 private colleges and universities, six public universities, 5 minority-serving institutions, and two arts institutions, with 123,000 student and alumni records. Few significant differences submitters and non-submitters of testing were found in cumulative GPAs and graduation rates, despite significant differences in SAT and ACT scores. Optional testing policies also help build access; non-submitters are more likely to be first generational, minorities, Pell Grant recipients, women, and students with learning differences.

Presenters:

*William Hiss, Bates College*

*Valerie Franks, Bates College*

*John Fraire, Washington State University*

*Martha Blevins Allman, Wake Forest University*

- This session was an overview of a research project that can be found for free online here: <http://www.nacacnet.org/research/research-data/nacac-research/Documents/DefiningPromise.pdf>
- Academic threshold- students who meet specific academic criteria are required to submit test scores, but scores are not used in admission- Texas Top 10 policy, 3.0 Cal State policy- assured admission criteria
- Recommended for placement purposes but not used in admissions
- Optional for all
- Optional plus- students are required to submit something else in place of testing
- Recommended but not required
- Optional for all + optional plus = 30% of students in study
- Did not include test flexible schools in study
- 40% public academic threshold students
- 20 private colleges, 6 public, 5 minority serving, 2 art institutions
- 4 cohort years of data2 graduated, 2 currently enrolled
- Private colleges- mostly optional for all- average non-submitter population that enrolled was 35% of class
- Public institutions- admitted on basis of HS rank or GPA regardless of testing, 62% average non-submitter population- also had above average testing in pool
- Study covers students admitted with testing below their institution's averages
- Minority serving institutions- lots of missing data, small student head counts, average non submitter pop 27.5%, primarily recommend for placement
- Arts institutions- primarily optional for all
- No significant difference in cumulative GPA or graduation rates between submitters and non-submitters
- College GPAs closely track HS GPAs
- non submitters more likely to be first gen, minority students, Pell recipients, and women
- Admissions decisions made without testing just as reliable as those made with
- Bell curve of financial need for non-submitters- balances institutional budgets

- Small LD sample- more likely to be non-submitters, apply ED, perform as well as their peers with modest accommodations like extended time- graduate at same rate as peers
- Commonly overlooked for non-need merit awards
- Wake Forest 30% of applicants non submitters, 30% of enrolled students as well
- Finance majors tend to be submitters at WF
- 3% receive merit, first non-submitter received merit aid this year
- Added interview component- on campus and Skype60% of those who interview enroll
- Read more carefully, explore curricula, school profiles now that they're test optional
- Attract needier applicant pool now

## Understanding and Responding to the Tiger Mom: Research and Practice

As Asian American students and their families pursue college options, high school counselors and college admission representatives strive to provide the best information and advice possible. Sometimes cultural, social, generational, familial, and educational issues hinder our ability to be as helpful as we wish. Hear from researchers recently published in the NACAC Journal of College Admission who examined these issues in order to better understand the dynamics of the so-called “Tiger Mom.” In addition, a high school counselor and college representative will share their impressions on how this understanding impacts their work with Asian-American students.

### Presenters

*David Kamimoto, University of California, Santa Cruz, CA*

*OiYan Poon, Loyola University Chicago, IL*

*Daniel Follmer, University of Chicago, IL*

*Arun Ponnusamy, Collegewise-Los Angeles, CA*

- This session focused primarily on the research of Dr. OiYan Poon at Loyola University of Chicago. More about that research can be found here:  
<http://www.nacacnet.org/learning/communities/Admitted/Lists/Posts/Post.aspx?ID=422>.
- In summary her research found:
  - Sources of information: Counselors, Family, Teachers
  - Importance of: Academic rep, Family approval, Affordability
  - Significant ethnic differences found in:
    - Teachers’ opinions: More important for Filipino Americans
    - Institutional ranking/prestige: Matters more for East Asian Americans
    - Proximity to home: Less important for East Asian Americans
    - High school counselors’ opinions: Less important for East Asian Americans
- More important for 1st Generation students:
  - Teachers’ opinions
  - High school counselors
  - Less important for 1st Generation students:
    - Family approval
    - Institutional rankings/prestige
    - Alumni success
- It's helpful to remember that Asian Americans are by no means a monolith in terms of demographics. Huge variations in income, education, etc.
- As one of the speakers, I focused mostly on best practices with working with this population-- mostly drawn from experiences with the predominantly Chinese communities in the San Gabriel Valley. Specifically, I suggested taking time--and it does take time!!!--to explain the USNWR rankings and their fallibility, sharing [www.Payscale.com](http://www.Payscale.com) data of income outcomes from various universities as well as speaking to local community group and encouraging early college visits.

## **Make Your Stories Pop: Strategies to Help Students Share Their Own Unique Voices in College Application Essays**

In 2013, admission officers ranked college essays as the top qualitative measure in the college admission process. These essays help students communicate their unique voices and stories and therefore become three-dimensional for admission officers. Presenters offer their key experiences from both sides of the admission desk, focusing on strategies to release the authentic voices of the actual applicants. In addition to sharing recommendations from the high school and college side, the admission officers share some real-life examples of college application essays that did and did not succeed in helping communicate a student's story. All of the presenters also share different guides teachers and counselors can use to help their students brainstorm essay topics, draft and then revise their essays. Finally, the session addresses how Common Core Standards can help school-based counselors encourage English teachers to participate even more in the process.

Presenters:

*Rebecca Joseph, California State University, Los Angeles, CA*

*Valerie Gregory, University of Virginia, VA*

*Anya Good, Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, VA*

*Margit Dahl, Yale University, CT*

### **NACAC rating of most important factors in an admissions decision**

- Rigor of high school courses
- Grades
- Test Scores
- Essays
- Letters of recommendation
- Activities and Interests
- Special skills, talents, awards or legacy affiliation
- *The essay is one piece of your admissions process you can still control even as you enter senior year. It's your opportunity to tell a story that's important to you*

### **Margit Dahl from Yale:**

- Make your story personal; it's amazing how many college essays are completely impersonal
- I have to learn something about you and understand what kind of person you are.
- It's a big problem for me if the essay does not help me learn anything about the student
- We want students to sound like 17-year-olds, not 45-year-olds
- Too many essays look doctored by mom and dad or someone who is clearly older and we do not get the teenager's frame of mind
- Parents should not edit.
- Students often feel that they have to pick the right topic, but the topic doesn't make the essay
- The student should ask him/herself: what is important to me?
- It's so important to talk about they why
- Do not spend so much time on the "what" that you completely neglect to capture the why
- What you do is not critical or unique; it's really the 'whys' and 'hows' behind it that are more compelling

- The essay should be consistent with the rest of the file; this is often described by admissions officers as a "file that hangs together well;" and it means that the glimpse of the student you see throughout the application really comes alive in the essay.

**Valerie Gregory from UVA:**

- No interviews at UVA, so essays are key!
- Echoed what Margit said: we want to hear the teenager and not the adult
- Students spend too much time worrying about how we will react
- They want to show that they're intelligent
- If you focus on getting a positive reaction with your essay, you are wasting your time because we all react differently to different stories
- This is the first time in a long time, maybe ever, that students are being asked to write about themselves and it is hard.
- We are not looking for 'extraordinary,' we are looking for the "EXTRA" in the 'ordinary.
- Typically the first thing that comes to mind for a student came to mind for a reason and can probably make a good essay if the student finds a creative way to share.
- If you drop the essay on the floor and a friend finds it, it should be clear that it is yours.
- If the essay does not reflect who you really are, it seems forced and that is really apparent to us.

**General Tips:**

- Read essays that are good, not to copy, but to understand what stands out
- Prepare a resume, not to repeat in your essay, but to take account of all you've done
- Create a master chart of all of your essay prompts to see where there's some overlap
- Know when to stop. Don't make a grand, sweeping conclusion and force yourself to circle big. Stop at the end of your story.
- Draft. Redraft. Redraft. Finalize.
- Write in first person; show don't tell
- The thesaurus is not your friend
- Don't try to sound smart by using language you wouldn't normally use.
- Don't just answer the prompt in the most straightforward way possible; use it as an opportunity to share something about YOURSELF
- Don't try to capture everything; the best essays pick a small slice of life or maybe 1-2 things

## **Engineering Their Futures: Advising Prospective Engineering Majors**

Learn how to best work with students interested in studying engineering in colleges. This partical, nuts and bolts session will address questions such as: what course does my student need to take in high school to study engineering in college? What kinds of students should I be talking to about majoring in engineering? What courses do engineering students typically take in colleges? Are admission processes different for engineering majors? Are there differences between admission to – and curricula at – science/technology focused colleges and universities that have engineering programs? Join three highly-experienced admission professionals and learn what high school counselors need to know about admission to engineering programs.

Presenters:

*Robert McCullough, Case Western Reserve University, OH*

*Elizabeth Santiago, University of Illinois, IL*

*Sherri Geller, Gann Academy, MA*

*Kristin Tichenor, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, MA*

### **Overview:**

- What do engineers do? Solve problems
- Don't have to love math, need to be proficient in it. Need to be excited about using the math and science together for problem solving
- HS courses: need calc but it's not a necessity in high school (just may take longer to graduate), sciences
- Internship experience, related experience, some sort of engineering exposure. Can benefit someone who doesn't have as much math and science
- Students who show discipline and commitment, need to be willing to put in the time.
- Illinois - engineering most selective. Allow them a second choice major
- Case Western - admitted larger university, not just engineering school. Looking for exposure to the field.
- Once at school- time intensive program, group work, experiencing the field
- Ace Mentor program – [www.acementor.org](http://www.acementor.org)

## **Advising NCAA Prospective Student-Athletes: Beyond Academics**

Designed for attendees with an intermediate or advanced understanding of the NCAA Eligibility Center process, this session is designed to address aspects of the NCAA initial-eligibility process that will not be covered in the 'NCAA Eligibility Center: Overview and Updates' session. Topics to be discussed include recruiting, financial aid, National Letter of Intent, and amateurism.

Presenters:

*Nick Sproull, NCAA Eligibility Center, IN*

*Thomas Mitchell, Purdue University, IN*

*Louise McCleary, NCAA, IN*

*Susan Peal, NCAA, IN*

### **Introduction**

- Students and families have a vested interest in where the student plays sports in college
- Expectations versus reality: If your students say they want to go pro during senior year, but yet they haven't heard from any coaches. . . . As a counselor, don't be a dream killer, but do share the realities.
- the NCAA has 1300 participating institutions.
- There are 450 thousand student athletes and 6% of high school student athletes play in the NCAA
- 2% of those go on to play professionally
- Communicate options with the student.
- Encourage use of NCAA resources
- Encourage students to register with the Eligibility Center as a prospective student athlete sooner rather than later. Even if they don't have scores of 6 semesters of grades and courses for the NCAA to evaluate eligibility, it helps to have the account ahead of time.
- This year's juniors will be under the NCAA's new standards: <http://www.ncaa.com/news/ncaa/article/2012-04-26/new-eligibility-standards-start-2016>
  - A minimum 2.3 GPA (as opposed to 2.0) And you must finish 10 of the 16 required core classes before senior year. No more jamming in everything senior year, slow and steady is preferred from the education vantage point.

### **National Letter of Intent**

- The National Letter of Intent is an agreement between a prospective student athlete (PSA) and an National Letter of Intent member institution that the student will play for that college and receive an athletic aid award (not necessarily full scholarship; often partial). DI schools can offer multi-year aid packages.

### **National Letters of Intent Member Institutions**

- There are 644
- There are no Ivy institutions who use these letters
- No service academies
- No junior colleges
- In order for an NLI to be sent to a student, there must be some level of athletic aid attached to the contract.

### **Who Signs the NLI?**

- Seniors in high school sign it
- If the student is under 21, the parent/guardian must sign as well
- There are 42,000 signees each year and that number has been growing by about 1200 a year in the past few years; the NCAA projects this growth will continue for some time.

### **When is the NLI Signed?**

- NLI signing dates vary by sport

### **Why Sign the NLI?**

- If a student signs an NLI, other schools are banned from recruiting the student. This can mean a lot for a student who receives a lot of email, calls and text messages from coaches.
- The coach at the NLI school can have unlimited contact with the student because there is an athletic aid agreement.

### **How is the NLI fulfilled?**

- It can be either through attending full time for one year and playing your sport at the NLI school or graduating from a two year college is the student signed the NLI and then went to attend a community college instead of attending the NLI institution.

### **What is the NLI Penalty?**

- Less than 2% ask to get out of NLI and there is a process whereby 96% of those 2% are released from the contract, but if a student breaks an NLI the penalty is one year at the NLI institution and the player loses a season of competition

### **Notes:**

- The NLI can come before the admission decision is made, and if the student is not admitted it becomes null and void. That is part of the reason athletes are pushed to apply early.
- That is why some schools try and offer early credential reviews to prospective student athletes.

### **More information on NLI's can be found here:**

- <http://www.nationalletter.org/frequentlyAskedQuestions/bindingAgreement.html>
- More information on rules of contact and the process of preparing to play college sports in the NCAA (free as a PDF):<http://www.ncaapublications.com/p-4354-2014-15-ncaa-guide-for-the-college-bound-student-athlete-sold-as-a-package-of-25.aspx>

## Preparing Students for an International Education: Lessons from Canada and the United Kingdom

Hear from representatives from the Australian, Canadian and British embassies about the structures of higher education programs and degrees in their countries and how your students can be best prepared to enter them. Learn where to find the most objective information online, degree models, modes of assessment, and each country's learning culture. Find out how universities review university applications and what makes American students stand out and get accepted. Each speaker discusses the ideal curriculum for an aspiring application and go into detail about what exams help them achieve their international institution goals.

Presenters:

*Tamsin Thomas, British Council, NY*

*Kirsten Kazlauskas, Education Trade Commission, Embassy of Canada, DC*

### **The UK**

- In Scotland, "college" is 4 years, so students do have a little bit of flexibility in the first year. In the rest of the UK, "college" is typically 3 years and there is not a lot of flexibility or room to change one's major or "course" as it is called there.
- Course = Major. The word "major" is not used because the whole program tends to be in the one or two fields the student is studying.
- It is however, very possible to pursue interdisciplinary degrees
- Independent scholarship and critical thinking are key; there is not a lot of hand holding at universities in the UK.
- The UK is a good match for students who are highly accomplished in high school and who are interested in research. All undergraduate degrees in the UK have a research core component (although it goes by different names at different institutions).
- Students who are interested in studying in the UK should pursue subject tests and AP exams (UK intuitions do not have time to get to know all schools in the United States).
- In the UK, sandwich degrees are common and they are similar to co-op programs in the United States.
- Co-ops are often paid and they are required to be paid at a rate that is commensurate with the level of work and the role the student is playing.
- In the UK, students pick a course, and are not as focused on which institution they attend; this can lead to some Americans feeling remorse about not getting the "college experience" they wanted because it's not the same as it is in the US.
- Because Scotland is a bit more like the US, it can be an easier transition
- Personal statements should be like graduate school

### **Resources:**

- <http://www.ucas.com/> (the "Common Application" of the UK)
- <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/> (use to compare courses in the UK at different institutions)

### **Canada**

- Canada's system is a lot like the system in America.
- You can work in college part-time on-or-off campus.
- Tuition is manageable and often less than private schools in the U.S.
- Students can get a 3yr work permit after college to work in Canada (just involves paperwork)

- Admissions process is governed by province and so it will vary regionally
- In most cases (except the most popular destinations like McGill, U. Toronto, and U. British Columbia, SAT/ACT scores are not a huge factor)
- Performance in high school is the most important thing. (AP/IB coursework is a plus)
- You can usually bring over federal financial aid (not Pell grants)
- Essays are not a huge factor either

## What Admissions Directors Think: A Report on the 2014 Survey by Insider Higher Ed

This presentation will involve an overview of the findings by the editor of Inside Higher Ed (findings new just for this meeting), and then responses from two experts in admissions. Presentations on the survey (previous editions) at NACAC meetings have had standing room only audiences. The findings are based on an Inside Higher Ed/Gallup pool of admissions directors at colleges in the United States.

Presenters:

*David Hawkins, National Association for College Admissions Counseling, Director of Public Policy*

*Pamela Horne, Purdue University, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admissions*

*Scott Jaschik, Inside Higher Ed, Editor*

- 61% of colleges and universities did not meet their enrollment goals by May 1<sup>st</sup> (up from 60% last year)
  - 71% of private colleges did not
- 32% had recruited students after May 1<sup>st</sup> (violating principles of SPGP)
- 79% directors said they were concerned about meeting goals
- Public and private schools looking to recruit: international students, out of state students, full time students, transfer students, and minority students
- Private colleges are increasingly addressing community college/articulate agreement routes
- Public colleges are more likely to target veterans, first generation bound college students, and part time students; private colleges more likely to target “full pay students”
- 77% of admission directors believe they are losing applicants because of the applicants’ fear of accumulating debt (89% of privates, 64% of publics)
  - Families not getting message about cost versus value
  - Can’t talk about academic prowess *only* anymore, must also discuss value
- Gapping (when financial aid award package does not add up between cost of attendance and the family need):
  - 72% of privates are doing this, 39% public
  - 76% of privates feel is necessary, 38% of public
  - 75% of privates feel this is ethical, 46% of publics
- Only 2% of colleges planning to leave the Common App
- 90% of admission directors love the change in the SAT, especially writing; 50% of admission directors didn’t even look at the writing portion
- 40% of colleges polled believe *all schools* should be test optional
- People not liking the Obama college ratings: 14% believe helpful
- 2% of privates admitted to reporting *false data* (for things like the US News & World Report)

## The IB Diploma Programme: International Education for the 21st Century

The number of schools that offer an International Baccalaureate (IB) program is growing rapidly. Just in the United States and Canada, more than 200 schools per year apply to offer one or more IB programs. In Ecuador 500 public schools will offer the IB Diploma. In 2014 the first cohort of IBCC graduates will enter university. Why IB? The IB prepares students for higher education in a globalized society.

Professionals on both sides of the desk are working closely with students and families who are participating in IB Programmes worldwide. Our panel will discuss how they address issues such as: What is the IB? Is the IB the same everywhere? How does the IB prepare students for college? Advanced standing and credit granting policies in domestic and international settings, course selection and impact on admission, and determining English Language Proficiency through IB Scores will be discussed.

### Speakers:

*Marie Vivas, International Baccalaureate, MD*

*Phyllis Cindy Gould, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI*

*Mollie Weinstein-Gould, University of Pennsylvania, PA*

*Ray Marx, Colegio Americano de Quito, Ecuador*

*Valerie Piehl, Fishers High School, IN*

- IB diplomas and certificates are offered
- Some schools allow students to do IB courses a la carte, some may only offer the full diploma
- It takes a long time for a school to become IB certified; they cannot just decide to start offering these courses
- When schools offer joint AP/IB courses, that is not recommended or endorsed by IB.
- The IB program was created for Europe, but it can now be found all over the world in all but one state and in many countries.
- Every IB diploma student will have a high level of proficiency in another language
- 6 courses are required as well as an extended research essay (around 4k words)
- Diploma is awarded if students earn a minimum score of 4 (out of 7) in all subjects for 24 points total
- Tests are in spring throughout the world, which means that for the Northern Hemisphere, they are offered in May.
- IB scores are 30% based on internal assessments; 70% based on the exam/lab notes graded by trained IB examiners.
- The paper is graded A-E
- IB offers counselor breakfasts in various areas
- IB often makes students much stronger in areas they previously thought they were very weak.
- Colleges can tell that students are not afraid of research, not afraid of academic challenge in many different areas, so they do like to see students come out of IB programs
- There is evidence that IB programs do a great job of preparing students to pursue research opportunities earlier on in college because they've done it before and they have the experience they need to know what they're getting into.