

College Prep Guide to Senior Year 2016-17

Table of Contents

College Counseling Info.....	3
Senior Year Responsibilities Checklist.....	4
College Application Process	5
College Essay Writing Tips	6
College Entrance Exams Quick Facts.....	7
FAFSA Process Overview.....	8
Completing the FAFSA	
Types of Financial Aid	
Scholarship Research Tips.....	9
Scholarship Research Resources	10
Senior Year Welcome Letter.....	11
Appendix	
Naviance Student Mobile App Quick Guide.....	A
PrepMe Student Quick Guide.....	B
Parchment Flyer.....	C
Letter of Recommendation Request Form.....	D
College Costs Assessment Form.....	E
College Prep Check-out Form.....	F

College Prep & Counseling Locations & Hours

Hours of Operation

Mon-Fri 8:00am-4:00p

Walk-In Hours of Operation

Mon-Wed 8:30am-10:00am and 2:00pm-3:30pm

Early Release Wed. 8:30-10:00am and 12-1:30

Tues-Thurs 8:30am-10:00am and 2:00-3:30pm

UPSM High School, First Floor
(313) 393-9166 ext. 114UPA High School, First Floor (Blue)
(313) 874-4340

Office Policies

1. **Scheduling:** Students may schedule appointments via email and walk-ins
2. **Passes:** Students will only be allowed in the office or resource center **with a valid pass**. Report to your teacher first to request a pass before coming to the office.
3. **Walk-ins:** Walk-ins will be accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis, only after scheduled appointments, and only for brief issues. Any issue requiring an extended discussion should be addressed via appointment, not walk-in.
4. **Rescheduling:** If you need to reschedule an appointment, please provide notice. Students who do not show up to appointments will receive lowest priority for future appointments.
5. **Resources:** Students may only use resource room computers when there is a counseling team member present, and with a pass.

Senior Year Responsibilities Checklist

September

- Register and study for the Oct. ACT and/or SAT exam (**deadline: Sep.**) *if you didn't take it as a junior, or if you aren't satisfied with your score and want to take it again. (Remember that your counselor can help you with fee waivers*
- Take a look at some college applications and consider all of the different pieces of information you will need to compile.
- Are you on track to graduate and fulfill college admission requirements?
- Take every opportunity to get to know colleges: meeting with college reps, college visits, research, etc.
- Narrow down your list of colleges to: "safe," "reach," and "realistic" schools. (you should have financial aid and college app info for each one)
- Request 3 letters of recommendations from teachers, school counselor, or employers
- Visit <https://fsaid.ed.gov> to create FSA ID (**this FSA ID allows you to sign your completed FAFSA online**)

October

- It is time to fill out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). File the form as soon after Oct. 1 as possible. In addition to determining your eligibility for federal funds, many colleges and states use the form when distributing grants, so don't delay. Watch the mail for your Student Aid Report (SAR)—it should arrive four weeks after the FAFSA is filed.
- Finalize your college essay. Many schools will require that you submit at least one essay with your application.
- Research possibilities of scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information.

November

- Research possibilities of scholarships. Ask your counselor, your colleges, and your religious and civic groups about scholarship opportunities. You should *never* pay for scholarship information.
- Finalize and send any early decision or early action applications due this month. Have a parent, teacher, counselor, or other adult review the application before it is submitted.
- Every college will require a copy of your transcript from your high school. Submit request on **parchment.com**
- Make sure testing companies have sent your scores directly to the colleges to which you are applying.

December

- Begin to organize regular decision applications and financial aid forms, which will be due in January and/or February.
- Register for the January SAT (If needed). **It is the last one colleges will be able to consider for a senior.**

January

- Many popular and selective colleges will have application deadlines as early as January 1. Others have deadlines later in January and February. Keep track of and observe deadlines for sending in all required fees and paperwork.
- If necessary, register for the February ACT (some colleges will be able consider it).

Feb/March/April

- While most of your applications will be complete and you are waiting to receive admission decisions, don't slack in the classroom. **The college that you do attend will want to see your second semester transcript. No Senioritis!**
- Acceptance letters and financial aid offers will start to arrive. Review your acceptances, compare financial aid packages, and visit your final choices, especially if you haven't already.

May

- May 1 is the date when the college you plan to attend requires a commitment and deposit.
- Make sure that you request for your final transcript be sent to the school you will be attending.
- If you are "wait-listed" by a college you really want to attend, visit, call and write the admission office to make your interest clear. Ask how you can strengthen your application.

College Application Process

Students must log all college application submissions and admissions decisions via your Naviance: Family Connection account!

Online Applications

- Print and submit any and all counselor pages from online applications (if applicable)
- Use the Common App for applicable schools for online submission (include counselor's email)
- Update your **Naviance: Family Connection** account with all online application submissions

Many schools strongly recommend using online applications!

Application Payment Options

- Fee waivers – can be received from College Counselor (if eligible)
- Check/Money Order
- Credit/Debit Cards (online)

Transcripts

- Request transcript delivery to the college(s) of your choice upon completion of each application
- All requests are made via www.parchment.com only! (See Parchment Flyer)
- Includes official and unofficial transcripts

Letters of Recommendations for Applications

- Complete a Recommendation Request Form for all recommenders
- Give counselors and teachers at least 2-weeks' notice for a solid recommendation
- Keep resume updated on **Naviance: Family Connection** for counselors/advisors to access for apps.

Extra-Curricular Activities Section on Applications

- Includes anything done outside of regular coursework
- Volunteer Work, Internships, Sports, etc.

On-site Admissions Policies

Please log in your Naviance account to view and sign up for on-site admissions and presentations as they become available

1. **Signing Up:** Sign-up sheets for upcoming onsite admissions will be listed in Naviance. Be sure to complete online application at least 48 hours in advance of on-site.
2. **Deadlines:** Students must sign up no later than one week in advance. Only students whose names are on the official roster will be allowed to attend.
3. **Application Packet:** Students must compile and submit a complete application packet to the counseling office at least **two school days** before the college visit. The college application packet should include the following:
 - a) College application (submitted online)
 - b) Essays
 - c) Letters of recommendation
 - d) Fee waivers (if required)
4. **Acceptances:** If you are admitted onsite, congratulations! Drop a copy of your acceptance letter in your college counselor's Award Letter Tray and update your college application tracking sheet in Naviance.

Admissions Presentations

The admissions presentations are open to any student interested in learning more about a specific college, university, or military branch. If you would like to attend a presentation, please feel free to sign up via your Naviance account under the colleges tab. Spaces may be limited.

Writing a College Essay: Top Ten Tips

- 1. Start early.**
- 2. Be yourself.**
- 3. Be honest.**
- 4. Take a risk.**
- 5. Keep in focus.**
- 6. Write and rewrite.**
- 7. Get a second opinion.**
- 8. Proofread.**
- 9. Be accurate.**
- 10. Don't expect too much from an essay.**

For Example:

Describe an experience that meant a great deal to you, that you would be willing to share with others.

Your basic answer

The most significant experiences of my life are when I was captain of the football team freshman year. This was in 2010, when I was in the ninth grade, while I was taking Algebra II, English 9, Intro Physics, French I, and Civics.

Better Answer

It was ridiculously humid the tenth day of football practice in August of my freshmen year. Campus was deserted, except for one security guard that kept walking by the field. I'd kept hoping he'd come up to me and say "Hey kid, your mom says you don't have to play football after all." Instead, on day ten, the coach came up to me and said "Jamieson, I'm making you captain of the team." And suddenly, a light breeze blew across the field.

Remember the three key questions

- 1.** Is this information somewhere else in your application?
- 2.** Are you telling them, or showing them?
- 3.** Is this in your own voice?

College Entrance Exams:

SAT Quick Facts**Duration:** 3 hours 45 minutes**Sections:** Math, Critical Reading, Writing**Cost:** approx. \$51**Max Score:** 800 per section**Register at** <http://sat.collegeboard.org>**ACT Quick Facts****Duration:** 3 hours (+30 minutes essay)**Sections:** English, Math, Reading, Science, Writing (optional)**Cost:** approx. \$36.50 / \$52.50 (with essay)**Max Score:** 36

FAFSA Process Overview

Completing the FAFSA

The first step to receiving any type of financial aid is to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Every student, regardless of financial status, needs to complete the FAFSA. **Colleges will not offer aid and some scholarships will not be awarded if the FAFSA is not completed.**



Deadlines: The FAFSA opens October 1 of every year, but families need to prepare in advance. The priority deadline for the state of Michigan is March 1. You should complete the FAFSA as soon as possible to qualify for the maximum amount of financial aid.

Getting Organized: Completing the FAFSA is much easier if you get organized beforehand and have all your financial documents ready. Both the student and one (1) parent must create a **FSA ID** to electronically sign the FAFSA. This ID allows you to “sign” the form online. Visit <https://fsaid.ed.gov> to create an ID.

Documents Needed: Social security number, driver’s license, 2015 W-2 forms, 2015 income tax returns (IRS Form 1040, 1040A, 1040EZ), untaxed income records (Social Security, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, welfare, or veterans benefits)

If you do not know the answer to a question, do not guess. Always refer to a college financial aid officer or to the FAFSA hotline **1-800-4-FED-AID (1-800-433-3243)** or 319-337-5665 or the TTY line at 1-800-730-8913.

Types of Financial Aid

Loans: Borrowed money that must be repaid with interest.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education (student loans), banks (private loans)

Grants: Aid that does NOT have to be repaid and is typically need-based.

Sources: U.S. Department of Education, state of Michigan, college financial aid offices

Scholarships: Aid that does NOT have to be repaid and is often merit-based.

Sources: College financial aid offices, corporations, foundations, nonprofit and community organizations, employers, churches

Work-Study: Money earned by working (usually on campus).

Sources: College financial aid offices

Scholarship Research Tips

1. **Research, research, research.**
2. **Look carefully at eligibility criteria.**
3. **Ask local organizations.**
4. **Ask teachers and advisors to proofread.**
5. **Organize yourself.**

Letters of recommendation from teachers or employers:

Resume:

Essays:

Scholarship Application Tracking Sheet: Document the name, deadline, submission date, and contact information for every scholarship you apply to.

6. **Submit scholarships on time and complete.**
7. **Be sure to look at deadlines. You cannot turn in scholarships late!**



Scholarship Research Resources

Recommended Websites

www.Naviance.com

www.scholly.com

www.collegegreenlight.com

www.fastweb.com

www.zinch.com

www.scholarships.com

www.scholarshipmonkey.com

www.collegeboard.com

www.uncf.org (United Negro College Fund)

www.collegedata.com (go to Scholarship Finder section)

www.princetonreview.com (go to Scholarships & Aid section)

www.scholarshipexperts.com

www.blackexcel.org/100minority.htm

<http://www.naacp.org/pages/naacp-scholarships>

<http://littleafrica.com/resources/scholarships.htm>

<http://www.freschinfo.com/>

Dear Class of 2017,

Welcome to your senior year! This is your year to secure your post-secondary options. As you are striving to successfully complete your final year of high school; you will also start preparing for life after high school. With your college and career goals in mind, let that motivate your daily decisions.

Your **college prep team** is dedicated to your senior year responsibilities and will guide you through the college preparation process; including the application process, financial aid processes as well as securing scholarships. Please make time to come talk to your counselor in order to get acquainted! **Please email your appointment requests.**

Your **college counselor** is here to ensure you are on track for graduation and have established a solid post-secondary plan. Please schedule an appointment to meet with your counselor regarding your graduation progress and for (re)establishing your college plan. Your **college prep coordinator** is also available to assist you along the way with college admissions processes and procedures.

This handbook will serve as a guide to your senior year responsibilities, the college admissions process, and my office policies and expectations. Please keep it in a safe place and use it often. The information inside will be a valuable resource for you throughout the year.

Congratulations on your accomplishments thus far. We look forward to guiding you on your road to continued success in high school, college, and beyond!

Sincerely,



Venus Crosby

Director of College & Career Development
University Prep Schools
venus.crosby@uprepschools.com

cc:

Lauren Morris

College Counselor
University Prep Academy
lauren.morris@uprepschools.com

Rosalyn Jones

College Counselor
University Prep Science & Math
rosalyn.jones@uprepschools.com

Brittany Foote

College Prep Coordinator
University Prep Academy
brittany.foote@uprepschools.com

Ashley Lane

College Prep Coordinator
University Prep Science & Math
ashley.lane@uprepschools.com