

## Sophomore College Counseling at Trinity Prep

"Colleges can successfully deliver genuine value by demonstrating educational integrity."

Source: *The Education Conservancy* ([www.educationconservancy.org](http://www.educationconservancy.org))

### Studenthood and College Discovery

The sophomore year College Counseling Program builds on what students learned from freshman year as they continue to consider the question, "Who am I?" Our focus on studenthood -- qualities that equip a student to make education happen and engage in learning -- strives to empower students as they set goals for academic and extracurricular activities, and this builds on what they learned as freshmen.

Students continue to identify and take advantage of academic and extracurricular strengths, but they also explore new areas of interest now that they have adjusted to high school. All in all, sophomore year is mainly about self-discovery and building confidence in skills and strengths.

Sophomores also begin researching different colleges and familiarizing themselves with various aspects of those schools. With over 3000 colleges and universities in the USA, higher education choice is wide and diverse. We invite students to reflect on the different components that go into choosing a college: size, location, major areas of study, and cost.

Trinity Prep families investigate a wide range of national and international college/university options each year. Part of our sophomore program also introduces sophomores to the variety of resources they can use in the college search process, including our College Resource Room as well as websites and web resources. We also encourage sophomores to take part in the annual Central Florida College Fair, co-hosted by Trinity Prep, and we offer advice as they begin visiting colleges.

### Testing

Sophomores and juniors take the PSAT each October. This testing for the sophomores is practice on critical reasoning, math, and writing for the junior year PSAT and for the SAT. English and math teachers prep the students for the PSAT, and some families elect additional test prep opportunities in the summer between the sophomore and junior year. The College Counseling Office has a list of recommended test prep options for families to consider.

### Researching Colleges

Researching colleges is an important task during sophomore and junior years. In the fall of the tenth grade, students continue investigation of colleges using MyRoad.com--an invaluable tool for matching personal preferences with college and career options and for building a résumé. In the spring, they also use Naviance/Family Connection, an interactive college investigation and college counseling website. The College Counseling Office organizes a fall program for sophomores and juniors to enhance

understanding of college characteristics and to build a list of questions to ask about colleges. Visits to sophomore English class by the college counselors enable students to learn more about the college selection process and what admissions committees do.

## **Decision-making Skills and Connecting with Colleges**

Sophomores are encouraged to focus on developing independence and in-depth involvement in one or more activities. Initiative and leadership in classes and in activities are also valuable. Building a strong record should begin early in the student's Upper School experience. Developing important decision-making skills is also essential to success.

The building blocks of the sophomore year will enable students to prepare for the junior year college admission testing schedule, for college representative visits to Trinity Prep, for narrowing the college list to 10-15 colleges to research, and for setting academic and non-academic goals.

### **Suggested Sophomore Activities: Preparing for College Admissions and Discovering Colleges**

#### **Get ready:**

Take a practice SAT (Free sample online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)). Complete and score in the privacy of your home!

#### **Use your brain:**

- <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/>
- <http://www.actstudent.org/>
- <http://www.princetonreview.com/>
- <http://www.fastweb.com/>
- <http://www.collegetours.com/>
- <http://www.myroad.com/>

Plan and take a sampler college tour. Stay local and save money: See Rollins, UCF, and Stetson. Compare and contrast: what did you like or not like at each place?

#### **Touch base with colleges:**

Request a college brochure. Go online to the websites of your favorite colleges. Attend the October NACAC College Fair and the February Central Florida College Fair, both of which are on the UCF campus.

#### **Check the bottom line:**

- How much does college cost?
- Where will the money come from?
- What is the most/least expensive college in the country?
- What is the average cost for private colleges and for public universities?

- What is Florida Bright Futures?

**Plan ahead for the summer:**

Consider taking advantage of summer opportunities that will allow you to explore your interests, try out something new, volunteer, or even get a job. Make plans to be engaged in summer activities and to try things that you may not have time for during the school year. Summer program resource materials can be found online on the College Counseling Canvas pages, various college websites, or through a Google search.

**Find mentors:**

Get to know your college counselors! Talk with your parents, friends, and teachers about colleges.

*Source: \* "A Question for Lloyd Thacker: AGB Trusteeship." The Education Conservancy, 30 April 2008.*

## Contacts

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