

FROM THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

TIPS FOR COLLEGE APPLICANTS

1. **College Visits:** Remember you are not only choosing a school, but the place where you will live for several years! If possible, visit schools while the college is in session. Check location, size, facilities, support services, class size, social life, etc.

2. **Testing:** Many schools require that you take the SAT I; some highly competitive schools require that you take SAT II subjects tests. Registration booklets and information about preparing for both tests are available in the Guidance Office. Don't delay - some filing deadlines occur very early in September.

3. **Reference Materials:** Make sure you are familiar with the many reference materials available in the Guidance Office for students seeking information about virtually any type of college. Use these materials as well as the computer software entitled, "Choices" to narrow down the number of schools you are interested in. Family members, alumni and faculty may also be excellent sources of information.

4. **In Depth Information:** Viewbooks and academic catalogues contain very specific information about particular schools and the requirements for various majors. The College Handbook contains addresses, phone numbers and E-Mail contacts for all schools.

5. **How Many Schools?:** If you research admission standards carefully, it is not necessary to apply to an endless list of schools. Most experts suggest that a student apply to a range of schools. The range might include one or two "reach" schools that might be quite difficult to get into. Apply to several schools that you would really like to attend and where you have a solid chance of being accepted. We strongly advise that every applicant apply to one "safety valve" school, where the student's admission is a virtual certainty. This provides the student with an option if none of the other schools work out. Most students, if they choose wisely, will receive acceptances from several schools.

6. **Financial Range:** Early in the process no school should be eliminated from your consideration for financial reasons. In some instances financial aid may make it possible for you to attend a very expensive school. However, we highly recommend that you include a few "more affordable" schools on your list of schools to apply to. Then if your financial aid packages from the most expensive schools are not sufficient, you will still have some less expensive schools to choose from. Remember that a more expensive school is not necessarily a better one.

7. **Deadlines:** Make sure to apply prior to a school's admission deadline. It is not a good idea to wait for deadlines as some schools may fill their spots for freshmen prior to this date, or some specific programs may be closed. Generally speaking you should submit your applications by Christmas vacation. Applications may be submitted after this time, but if you complete applications by Christmas, you can shift your attention to mid-term exams and financial aid applications.

8. **Applications:** Make sure that you comply with Guidance Department policies regarding application. Remember that only completed applications will be accepted by the Guidance secretaries, and the applications must be submitted by the deadlines published in the department timetable. It is of critical importance that you return your record release form (white), student information form (green), and teacher evaluation forms (pink) to your counselor as soon as you have them available. All paperwork you submit should be neat and complete. The essay you write should be the best work you are capable of and unless otherwise specified by the college, typed. Remember, everything you submit to the schools is a reflection of you. Put your best foot forward!

9. **References:** Give teachers plenty of advance notice if you are requesting a letter of recommendation. Provide mailing envelopes and postage for the teacher. It is your responsibility to check with the teacher to see that the references have been mailed.

10. **Majors:** In many cases you need not declare a major until your sophomore year if you are seeking a Bachelor's degree. Therefore it is permissible to apply "undeclared" and choose a major later. Some majors involve so many required classes that it is helpful to start taking required classes as soon as possible. It is useful to consider long range career options as you make decisions about choice of major.

11. **Grades:** Your high school grades and the quality of the courses you have taken are probably the number one factor that colleges consider when evaluating your application. Therefore the most important thing you can do to help yourself at this time is to perform well in your current classes.

12. **Financial Aid and Scholarships:** Applicants for government aid must file an application entitled FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) as soon as possible after January 1st. The Guidance Department will sponsor a guest speaker who will review the procedure for filling out the form. Some private schools will also require students to file an application entitled the "Financial Aid Profile". Brochures which explain how to order and use the "Financial Aid Profile" are available in the Guidance Office. Note that these forms must be completed by specific deadlines which may vary according to the timetable set by the colleges that require it. References about sources of private scholarships are available in the Guidance Office.

13. **Help is Available:** Don't let these decisions and procedures overwhelm you. Like many Exeter alumni you can successfully make the transition to post-secondary study! Please speak up if you need help. We are happy to help you in any way that we can.

GOOD LUCK!!