



COLEGIO LOS NOGALES



College Counseling

Handbook

We would like to thank Colegio Nueva Granada
and The Hotchkiss School for giving us permission
to use information from their college handbooks.

Table of contents

Welcome Letter	4
Mission for College Counseling	7
Part 1: The College Admissions Process	8
Parts of the College Admissions Process	
Roles and Responsibilities	
Independent Counselors	
Part 2: College Counseling Program in Grades 8°-11°	19
8° Freshman Year (Grade 9)	19
Grades and Transcripts for Foreign Universities	
Understanding Holistic Review in Admissions	
9° Sophomore Year (Grade 10)	22
College Admissions Tests	
Summer Activities	
Collegiate Athletic Recruitment	
10° Junior Year (Grade 11)	28
Evaluation Tools: Betesa and MaiaLearning	
Factors to Consider When Choosing a College	
Exploring a Range of Universities	
Researching Universities	
11° Senior Year (Grade 12)	35
College Application Options	
Financial Aid	
Writing College Essays	
Admission Decisions	
May Reply Date	
Glossary of College Terms	45
Suggested Readings	50
Appendices	51

Welcome letter

Dear students,
This handbook is written for you, the students, although it is intended to be shared with your parents. You are at the center of the college admissions process by learning to take charge and eventually own it. Welcome to this exciting journey in which you will learn about yourself and the opportunities that the world has to offer. You will be proud, not just of the outcome but also of the knowledge that you will have gained through the process.

I expect that this process will honor our core values. Every aspect of the college process is built upon the trust between student and counselor, counselor and parents, student and colleges, and Colegio Los Nogales and the universities and colleges. The college counselor is committed to advocating for students, always showing their best qualities as well as their future potential to blossom.

The college counselor can best fulfill his/her responsibilities when everyone in the college admissions process adheres to the highest requirements of truth. While the “larger” culture sometimes places emphasis on individuals to attain goals at any cost, we believe that completing the college admissions process with honesty and integrity is important in itself and it is as important as any eventual outcome.

During the process you should take into account the following:

- **Reflect on your values, expectations, and interests.** Search for schools that match such criteria. Remember that you are not going to change for a college but rather find a college that allows you to thrive and be the best student you can be.
- **Respect people's privacy.** Not everyone wants to share their test scores, essays, supple-

ments, where they are applying, or their admission decisions. Some students need time to deal privately with bad news before they are ready to share with others.

- **Do not judge colleges.** The college you would not dream of considering may be someone else's "reach." Similarly, the college you visited and did not like may be a perfect fit for someone else.
- **Be sensitive.** The day you get into your dream college may be the day that one of your classmates has just been denied. Or the day you are ecstatic about your SAT scores may be the same day that a classmate is devastated by his/her scores.
- **Please note:** Our policy is not to share with others where you have applied or your admission decisions, other than stating at the end of the process where you have decided to matriculate. This also means that we cannot tell you someone's GPA, test scores, who has applied to a given college, or the outcome.

No handbook can answer all the questions you will have, but by reading the information carefully and following the recommended procedures, you will have more time for important issues during the college admissions process.

I wish you the best in this journey. Remember you are the captain of the ship!

Important information for parents:

Being parents of college-bound teenagers means striking a difficult balance. While they need your support and advice, this is one of their first significant adult decisions. Encourage your teens to have confidence in their abilities, but also give them the authority and autonomy to be in charge of the process. The second semester of junior year is an ideal time to have a discussion as a family about what role each person will play. How will you discuss universities and university options? What are the expectations of each person involved? What are realistic financial considerations? You are essential in this process. We wish you the best as you attempt to be sounding boards, resources, travel companions, and cheerleaders while also treading lightly on teenagers who are hoping to live up to your expectations and trying to create their own identity. Be active participants in the application process, but remember that they are the ones going to college.



Mission of College Counseling

The purpose of the career and college counselling program is to guide students in making sound decisions about their professional future and their life project. In this process, students have support to know themselves and set realistic goals that will allow them to achieve personal and professional fulfillment in the future. They will make a thorough analysis of their abilities, interests, skills, and values. Students participate in different activities that allow them to learn about their potential, professional programs, professions, and local and foreign universities. By learning about these topics, students can make informed decisions about their future by taking into account their personal profiles and the program options that best suit them.



The College Admissions Process

I. Parts of the College Admission Process

A. Application

College applications can be downloaded or completed online. The applications must be done neatly, thoroughly, and with extensive thought. You must proofread it many times and ask others to do the same for you! Many schools in the United States accept the “Common Application”, which is available online. If you are applying to universities in the United Kingdom, you usually apply through UCAS, and if you are applying to Canada, you usually apply through OUAC. If applying to Ontario universities and universities in other provinces, please apply through their websites. You can also apply to other colleges globally through MaiaLearning. You should always keep a copy of your completed application for your records.

B. International or US Applicant?

Students wonder if they should apply as an international student or a US citizen. Usually, there is no choice. A US passport means that you are a US citizen. If you have a US and a second passport, list both countries when asked about citizenship. Being a US citizen or permanent resident will make you eligible for financial aid, if needed, as well as for other benefits. At some colleges, all students educated outside the US are considered “international” regardless of their nationalities.

B. Academic Achievement / Transcript

The transcript is the most important record of the quality of work done in high school. Colleges have found that there is a strong correlation between the secondary school record and the work that is done in college. Therefore, they look for a student who has taken challenging courses. You must request from your college counselor a transcript to be submitted on your behalf. Please check all information in your transcript prior to submission.

C. Test Scores

Standardized tests give universities some information to compare you to other applicants. Depending on the college you apply to, these might include SAT or ACT, AP exams, and/or TOEFL. Be aware that some universities establish a minimum TOEFL score, which is the sum of individual scores per section. All the test scores should be reported directly from the testing service. Colleges/universities may accept self-reporting during the application process, but once admitted, you will have to submit the official reports. Take advantage of the possibility to include the universities to which you want to send scores while registering for the exam.

D. Personal Essay

The personal essay is your chance to show your individuality and present it to the admissions officer. While it is important to share your talents and accomplishments, be careful not to come across as bragging. Being an international student may set you apart, but it is not enough to guarantee admissions! The admissions committee will want to know how that experience has affected you and how you have used it to develop your own sense of self. Once your

essay is finished, have at least two adults proofread your essay before you send it.

E. Supplemental Essays

Some universities will require additional essays, questions, or prompts to get to know you better. The supplemental essays focus on explaining why they are a good fit for a particular university. They challenge students to think creatively and to share who they are. These essays ask what students want from the universities as well as what they will bring to them.

F. Counselor Recommendation Letter

One of the most important pieces of your application is your counselor recommendation letter. The counselor will always advocate for you, sharing with the university reps the most relevant aspects of your life at CLN (personality traits, academic performance, achievements, leadership and teamwork, challenges encountered, participation in extracurriculars, community service, and internships). This letter is confidential.

G. Teacher Recommendation Letters

Teachers are a great source of information for admissions officers. Be selective in who you ask for a recommendation letter. When selecting teachers as recommenders, ideally they should teach a subject related to your chosen major and know you and your performance in the classroom very well. All recommendations should be requested through the College Counseling Office, which will ask teachers to submit them via MaiaLearning. Recommendation letters are confidential and are sent directly to the universities. Few colleges might accept a third recommendation, sometimes coming from a person outside of school. This person should not be a relative but someone who knows you well and can contribute information not yet included in other parts of your application. If you cannot think of a person to ask, see your counselor for suggestions. It is important to follow the instructions provided by a college and not take it upon yourself to send additional documents. Admission officers expect you to follow instructions. Some colleges ask for a “peer” recommendation.

H. Interviews

Some colleges require interviews. Most small and medium-sized schools recommend one. The interview does not generally carry a large amount of weight during college application review, but a poor interview report can hurt just as much as a positive impression can help an applicant. Interviews tend to carry more weight at smaller schools. The interview is also a great opportunity to ask questions and demonstrate interest and general knowledge of a university. Colleges are sensitive to your knowledge about their institution.

On-campus interviews are ideal. However, if it is not possible to interview on campus, alumni interviews in Bogotá are sometimes available and are a great alternative. Read the website for the instructions regarding interviews and talk to your counselor about how you can prepare. If the university recommends an interview, we assume it is required.

I. Additional Recommendation Letters

Some students and parents think that they can influence the admission process by sending additional letters. Only ask for addition-

al recommendation letters from people who know you well and are in a position to add information not already told. You can hand these letters to your counselor who can then take the most important parts and quote them in their own letter. Very often, teachers in your summer programs abroad offer to write your letter, but universities would rather see a letter from someone who has known you as a student for a semester and not only for three to four weeks.

J. Resume/CV

Some college applications require a resume while others make it optional or do not ask for it. A resume is a brief but detailed synopsis of your high school activities, interests, and involvement in school, out of school, and in your community. A good resume gives the reader a sense of how you spend your time.

A resume is useful as part of a job application or interview. In some cases, however, you may be glad you have one when you fill out college applications (it helps you be more organized and remember everything you have done), or have college interviews (it can serve as the basis for interview questions), or when college representatives come to CLN.

A good resume will often include information about the following:

- Your name, home address, phone number, and email address
- Education
- Any honors or awards you may have received
- Clubs and activities
- Community service
- Languages
- Sports
- Summer activities
- Employment
- Personal interests
- Special talents
- Personal and educational goals

Remember! This resume serves as a personal profile. Do not include any categories that do not apply to you.

The best way to do your resume is over a period of time. You can keep track of your activities, important events, awards by using the Resume Builder on MaiaLearning. Once logged in, click on the Portfolio Summary tab and find the Resume button. Follow the prompts to make new

entries, arrange the contents, and save your resume. This will allow you to add information and always have an updated resume available!

K. Application Fee

It is your responsibility to make sure that the application fee is paid when applying. Paying by credit card is preferable.

L. Additional Materials

Some universities will allow you to add materials if you have an outstanding talent or if you are an accomplished musician, artist, writer. It is not necessary to major in that area, but that you continue to be involved at some level. If you have experienced events that have affected your academic college preparation, many schools would appreciate the additional information. Remember to read the directions about supplemental information for each college and follow its policies.

Visual Artists (fine art, photography, graphic design, architecture)

Art institutions may require portfolios. Requirements may vary, but often students are asked to upload their work onto

the college's site, but some will ask students to provide original work, submit slides of their work through slideroom, or create a website that displays their work. Students should seek assistance from their art teachers if preparing a portfolio of original work for college. Be sure to read the application instructions for each college before submitting the art supplement. Many will require that you submit a supplemental letter of recommendation from your visual arts teachers.

M. Theatre Students and Dancers

Students who wish to apply to a competitive collegiate theatre program will likely be asked to audition. Auditions are intense and admission is based primarily on how well you perform.

The application usually has an earlier deadline, as the college needs to schedule auditions from January through March. Some will require a personal audition while others might allow those students coming from abroad to send in a digital copy. Admission to theatre programs with auditions is competitive.

N. Musicians

Like actors or dancers, musicians who wish to apply to music programs may be required to audition. Auditions take place early in the process; therefore, students should plan their application timetable accordingly so the necessary auditions can be scheduled.

O. School Profile

Colegio Los Nogales will include a copy of the school's profile during submission.

P. Current Courses

As soon as you have your senior year schedule finalized, you should send it to the college counselor with all the courses you will take in the first and second semesters. It is important that you send the list of courses organized by semesters.

Q. Secondary School Report

The college counselor will prepare and submit a Secondary School Report that provides additional information about

CLN and how the student fits into the class as a whole.

R. Mid-Year Report

Many universities will require that a Mid-Year Report be submitted by the College Counselor to report academic progress during the student's senior year. CLN will submit the report to all universities to which the student applied.

S. Final Report

Once admitted to a university, the college counselor is required to submit the Final Report and update any changes (academic or disciplinary), along with your final transcript.

All foreign students who apply to a college or university in the U.S. must complete the following requirements:

1. Proof of Funds

A statement from a bank official is required to provide proof that the parents have sufficient funds to cover college expenses.

2. I-20 Form and Student Visa

Each university/college will issue an I-20 Form to students who are accepted to their school and agree to attend. The US Embassy will issue a student visa (F-1) to individuals with a valid I-20 Form.



II. Roles and Responsibilities

As mentioned above, the college application process involves many people around you. Each person has specific responsibilities, but most of the tasks are your responsibility.

A. Students

- Research colleges and universities.
- Choose teachers for letters of recommendation and inform your counselor.
- Choose two additional teachers and two schoolmates to help your counselor get acquainted with “who you are” and have them email their responses to him/her.
- Request and pay transcripts for 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th grades.
- Sign up for appropriate tests (SAT, ACT, TOEFL).
- Check email, MaiaLearning, and Circular del Mes for upcoming events.
- Write the essays and have at least two adults proof-read them.
- Talk with university reps.

- Universities track interest! (webpages, mails, filled enquiry cards, participation in fairs, campus visits).
- Fill out applications and necessary financial aid forms.
- **Visual arts applicants:** Save your best work for your portfolio.
- **Performing arts applicants:** Save your audition tapes, presentations, and videos.
- **Athletes:** Save newspaper cuttings from different tournaments and videos. Register on NCAA Eligibility Center (ncaa.org/) before the end of your junior year.
- Keep copies of all forms, even electronic ones.
- Keep parents informed.
- Commit to extracurricular activities (passion not number!).
- **Watch deadlines.**

Remember this process must not interfere with your academic responsibilities. One of the aspects universities look at is your time management skills and your ability to prepare a strong application while maintaining good grades.

B. Parents

- Be honest, open, and direct when discussing college selection and financial matters.
- Tell the college counselor before the process begins if your son/daughter is going to work with an independent counselor or agent.
- Send the college counselor the Parent's Commitment Form before classes start in August.
- Prepare any necessary financial documents (certificate of finances and bank letters).
- Provide test, application, and courier fees as needed (keep records).
- Assist students in managing deadlines.
- Help students gather and save samples: art work, newspaper clippings, videos, and audition tapes.
- Proofread applications and essays, if asked.
- Assist in gathering information.
- Help your son/daughter manage stress.
- Be an active participant in the application process, **but remember that they are the ones going to college.**

C. College Counselor

- Write a letter of recommendation for each student (information from the student, parents, 2 friends, and 2 additional teachers).
 - Send all school documentation (Maia-Learning-Certified mail).
 - Recommend some universities according to the students' interests and profiles.
 - Maintain records of what was sent and when.
- Monitor the overall process.
 - Remind students of upcoming deadlines.
 - Read essays to give feedback.
 - Provide information of upcoming events.
 - Coordinate the teachers' letters of recommendation.
 - Help students compile all of the pieces needed for their applications.
 - Maintain open communication with parents.

Independent Counselors

Our students are fortunate to have a college counselor who has knowledge, expertise, and experience in college admissions. Some students and parents seek independent college counselors for additional help with the process. If families decide to seek private assistance, they should be certain that they are working with someone who is certified and experienced.

If a family decides to work with an independent college counselor, the student will work with our college counselor to prepare recommendation letters, transcripts, and other school documents. It is the independent counselor's responsibility to work on the college selectivity list, Common Application essay, personal statements, and supplements. The school counselor should be notified when a family is working with a consultant.



College Counseling Program in Grades 8°-11°(9-12 grades)

I. 8° Freshman Year (Grade 9)

A. Grades and Transcripts for Foreign Universities

Study hard and be mindful of your grades. Universities will start taking your GPA into account from here on. We issue transcripts with GPAs reported on a 4.0 scale. We report a weighted cumulative GPA and all AP courses that students complete successfully have a weight of 0.5 additional quality points. Our grading system includes five letter grades with equivalent US letter grades and quality points as follows:

Letter Grade	Description	US Letter Grade	Quality Points
AH	High Honors	A+	4.3
H	Honors	A	4.0
S	Satisfactory	A-	3.7
S	Satisfactory	B+	3.3
A	Passing	B-	3.0
A	Passing	C	2.0
I	Insufficient	F	0

Beware of your discipline. Your disciplinary record from your freshman year until the summer of your senior year has to be disclosed by your counselor.

Start collecting all your awards, diplomas, and graded essays or portfolios.

B. Understanding Holistic Review in Admissions

The holistic application review takes into account every piece of the documentation sent by both the student and the school. This means that the university reviews academic performance, personal qualities, and

overall achievements of the student comprehensively in the context of Nogales.

When evaluating holistically, universities want to take a close look at academic results (GPA, rigor of courses taken, and standardized testing, although it is becoming optional at many universities), but they also want to get to know the students' interests, skills, and accomplishments, which are regularly seen in the extracurricular activities that the students are involved in.

Remember, what matters is not the number or variety of activities, but your commitment and passion as well as the meaning or purpose they have for you.

These activities will help admissions officers understand “your story”.

The recommendation letters play an important role for universities to get to know you better: your personality traits, soft skills, and competencies come to life and are supported by the facts that your counselor and teachers share in their letters. Your counselor recommendation letter summarizes who you are as a student and person, and it includes your extracurricular activities that are aligned with your interests and passions. Any summer programs or activities that give a picture with purpose are also included. The different letters also provide a broader perspective of who you are and how you have changed, matured, or improved throughout your high school years.

Some other important elements of the application are the essays. Your personal essay is the piece in which you share your passions and who you are. In addition, the universities’ supplemental essays will always let officers know why you are a good fit. The artists or athletes will have to

add a portfolio, samples of their work or videos, and rankings in which they share these strengths. Universities might ask for additional materials that can showcase your potential.

Performing Arts applicants: Save your audition tapes, presentations and videos.

Athletes: Save newspaper articles from different tournaments, videos, and pictures.

Extracurricular activities: Get involved in extracurricular activities because you are passionate about them, not because you want to meet a requirement. It is not about the number but about your involvement, passion, and/or talent. Colleges would rather see students involved and assume leadership positions in a few activities rather than limited involvement in many different activities. The type of activity is less important than the commitment a student makes to a particular activity.

Summer programs: Attending a summer program can be a good opportunity to get to know yourself better and get a glimpse of the living abroad experience.



II. 9° Sophomore Year (Grade 10)

Some tips for the sophomore year are:

- Study hard.
- Start researching colleges and universities that may interest you.
- Start thinking about two teachers who will write your letters of recommendation.
- Start building relationships with your teachers. They will get to know you and will be the ones to share information for your applications.
- Check your email and the Circular del Mes for upcoming events or any relevant information from the college counselor.
- Talk with university reps. There are plenty of ways in which you can reach out. Because of the global pandemic, webinars, live tours, and presentations have become available for anyone. Take advantage of this opportunity!
- Work during your vacation or volunteer. There are opportunities in Colombia and abroad.

College Admissions Tests

A. PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test)

The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test includes evidence-based reading and writing (sections 1-2) and mathematics (sections 3-4). This test is an early indicator of SAT scores. Test scores range from 160 to 760 on each subtest and correlate with the 200 to 800 SAT scale. Colegio Los Nogales requires all sophomores to take the PSAT as a way to get important information about college readiness and to compare performance locally and globally. Additionally, this test serves as practice for taking college entrance exams. Most students earn lower PSAT scores than SAT scores. Colleges do not accept PSAT scores.

PSAT scores are used by the US-based National Merit Scholarship Corporation to determine who is eligible to enter the National Merit Scholar Competition. US citizens who perform exceptionally well on the PSAT/NMSQT are identified as “Commended” or National Merit “Semi-Finalists.” Semi-Finalists with high SAT scores, good grades, and positive recommendations may be named “National Merit Scholars” and could get scholarships.

Additionally, the National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) identifies outstanding Hispanic/Latino high school students who achieve a minimum PSAT/NMSQT score for their region and have a junior year cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher by the middle of their junior year and designates them as National Hispanic Scholars.

B. SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test)

Most colleges require SAT scores because the results are the only common comparison they have between students coming from a variety of schools and backgrounds. For students going to the US or Canada, SAT scores are required by almost all universities.

Students who take the SAT more than once can choose “Score Choice”, which allows students to send only their best overall score from a given test date, so students can take tests repeatedly with no apparent penalty. There is one catch. Colleges can require applicants to report every SAT score. Several colleges say Score Choice is irrelevant because they pick the highest individual math, verbal, and reading scores from among multiple tests (often called “super scoring”). This is one of the reasons why we advise you to not

take the SAT more than three times. The SAT is just a requirement for the admission process.

Students are encouraged to take their first SAT exam by the middle of their junior year because more high school math, science, social studies, and English courses will be completed, and the score will be better. The SAT is a **graduation requirement** at Colegio Los Nogales.

C. ACT (American College Testing)

Colleges accept either ACT or SAT scores for admission purposes. The ACT is a three-hour test that consists of four sections: English, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension, and Science Reasoning. Subject test scores range from 1 to 36, with English, math, and reading tests also providing sub-scores ranging from 1 to 18. The ACT composite score is the average of all four tests. The optional writing test provides a writing score ranging from 2 to 12.

All US colleges accept ACT scores. While most students earn equivalent scores on the ACT and the SAT, some students do better on the ACT than the SAT or vice versa. Since the tests are designed to be equivalent, do not ex-

pect that scores will be wildly different between the two tests. Even though the writing test is optional on the ACT, it is still advisable to take it since many colleges require it.

D. Differences between ACT and SAT

ACT vs SAT: which test is a better fit for you? Students may take whichever test they prefer (assuming there are available testing locations for both tests). If you are not sure which test you would prefer, consider the key differences between the ACT and SAT. Some students find that the ACT caters to their strengths more so than the SAT, and vice versa. Check out the ACT vs SAT Comparison Chart (<http://www.studypoint.com/ed/act-vs-sat/>) for more information.

E. English Proficiency Requirements

Colegio Los Nogales does not have English as the main language of instruction, thus English proficiency exams are required in any admission process abroad. Depending on the university, applicants can take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Lan-

guage Testing System (IELTS), the Cambridge Advanced Exam, the Duolingo English Test, or the Pearson Test of English Academic. The tests scores requirements are usually between the CEFR equivalents of B2-C1. We strongly advise you to check the requirements for the universities and select a test valid for all of them.

There are many resources online to practice. We recommend students do some test runs to get familiar with the type of questions even if they feel very confident with their English level.

F. Practice Resources

There are books, courses, tutors, and computer programs available to help prepare for the SAT. As long as they do not take away from homework or other activities, using one makes sense. Unless you already are making AH's, do not spend a lot of time taking a prep course, especially during the school year. Remember that admission officers say courses and grades are the most important factor considered when making an admission decision.

We also recommend Khan Academy (<https://es.khanacademy.org/sat>) or any of the numerous SAT EXAM PREPARA-

TION Apps available for Apple or Android for your study sessions. Refrain from cramming all content in one sitting.

There are practice books in the College Counseling Office available for you to borrow to study for the ACT and TOEFL.

G. Summer Activities

Attending a summer program can be a good opportunity to get to know a university and get a glimpse of the college student experience. If you are traveling or have the resources to visit a university during your vacation, it can be a great opportunity to explore the universities that interest you.

You can also take online courses in Coursera or EdX that will help find out what you want to study. Some students intentionally use part of the summer as an opportunity to develop their intellectual and extracurricular interests through volunteer work, athletic or special interest camps, part-time employment, enrichment programs, or travel. Choose summer activities that will both energize you and further your growth.

Many students are regularly encouraged by their parents to pursue summer school and scholastic camps, as opportunities

for intellectual growth. Given that colleges recognize CLN curricular rigor, we encourage you to be judicious with academic enrichment programs. From an admission committee's perspective, summer after summer in a classroom can, counter-intuitively, be a less appealing use of a prospective student's summer vacation.

H. Collegiate Athletic Recruitment

If you are interested in playing competitive sports in college, you need to take a proactive approach in the recruitment process. The first step is to speak to the college counselor about your ability to play at the college level. It is best to have this conversation early during the junior year. The college counselor is an excellent source of information and can also recommend camps, showcases, advice on how to search for opportunities on the team's college rosters, and how to prepare your cover letter.

The first semester of eleventh grade is a good time to begin contacting coaches and expressing interest in their programs or teams. The student must show interest. Start by visiting the athletics websites of the colleges that interest you. Complete the recruiting questionnaire, if available. Click on the coach's name and email, and make a

chart with the interested teams and coaches' information. Completing initial athletic profiles is the first step to ensure your placement on a coach's "recruit" list. Follow up with an email to the coach with a cover letter and a complete athletic resume, highlighting training, performance, and awards you have earned in your primary sport. Athletes who participate in more than one varsity sport should note those performances, records, awards, and training as well. Multi-sport athletes are attractive to some coaches because they are versatile and high-performing. The letter should also include a link to your recruitment video.

The coach manages the process. If a coach has space on the roster for a student with your skill, he or she will contact you. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) does not allow a coach to contact prospective athletes until after July 1, the summer before senior year. He or she will initiate interest with emails or phone calls. The coach may also invite you to campus to watch a game, join practice, or organize a recruitment visit with a team member. If you are a highly desirable athletic recruit, the coaches will make it known that they are interested in you.

The athletic recruitment process is complicated, and it is best to alert your College Counselor early if you plan to make athletics a priority during the admissions process. Division I recruitment is quite different from Division

III, and each athletic league conducts athletic recruitment differently. We will do our best to help you navigate each step.

Please always remember that you are applying to a university and your first responsibility is to study. You will have to send your academic application documents like other students.

I. NCAA Eligibility Center

If you plan to participate in Division I or II athletics, you must meet the requirements for high school graduation, and the NCAA Eligibility Center must approve you. You

can register at www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.org anytime in your junior or senior year. You must create a login name and password and then pay a one-time fee by credit card. You must then print out the secondary school form and take a copy to the College Counseling Office. We will then mail a current transcript to the Clearinghouse and follow up with a final transcript after your graduation. These items must be complete before you are eligible to play your sport on a Division I or II team in college.



III. 10° Junior Year (Grade 11)

Some tips for the junior year are:

- Study hard.
- **Athletes:** Register on NCAA Eligibility Center: ncaa.org/
- Research colleges and universities and narrow down your choices. Determine the characteristics you want in a university. Use MaiaLearning to start your research process.
- Keep in mind that universities track interest! Explore and share information through different channels: webpage, mails, filled enquiry cards, participation in fairs, campus visits.
- Make a personal appraisal. Betesa and MaiaLearning Assessments might help.
- Check your email and the *Circular del Mes* for upcoming events or any relevant information from the college counselor.
- Talk with university reps. There are plenty of ways in which you can reach out. Because of the global pandemic, webinars, live tours, and presentations have become available for anyone. Take advantage of this opportunity!
- Sign up for appropriate tests. Take your first SAT or ACT exam in December of your junior year.

- Start writing your Common Application Essay or Personal Statement at the end of your junior year. Take advantage of the workshop during the *remediales week*.
- Choose teachers for letters of recommendation and inform your counselor before the end of the school year.
- Choose two other different teachers and two schoolmates to help your counselor get acquainted with “who you are” and email her before the end of the school year.
- Send your Application Commitment Form. This form should be signed by your advisor and parents.
- Fill out the Student Questionnaire and Parent Questionnaire before vacation.
- Take an English Proficiency Exam during vacation (TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo).
- Register and start filling out your Common Application.

A. Evaluation Tools: Betesa and MaiaLearning

Betesa and MaiaLearning are useful evaluation tools to get to know who you are, what you value, what you enjoy, and what you are good at to find out your best fit colleges! But this may be

a very daunting and challenging task at your age.

You can start using your MaiaLearning Assessments results as well as your Betesa brain dominance. If you want a more personal starting point, we can recommend some questions you can ask yourself. They can help you focus college selection and admission where it belongs — on you as an individual. You may feel embarrassed or self-conscious when you first consider these questions. However, an honest and thoughtful self-reflection can reveal what you should look for in colleges and prepare you for statements that you will be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews when you apply to college. If you are willing to reflect, you can find colleges that are right for you. Please refer see the questionnaire in the appendix.

B. Factors to Consider When Choosing a College

There are several factors that may influence your college choices. After looking at yourself, ask yourself questions that will help you decide what type of college would best meet your personal needs and interests. The list below will help you narrow your college choices.

Student Enrollment

- Size (total enrollment, number of freshmen, percent of undergraduate and graduate students)
- Residential or commuter (percentage living on-campus, off-campus, at home)
- Background (geographic, ethnic, racial, male-female ratio, religious and percentage receiving financial aid awards)
- Conservative or liberal
- Retention rate (percentage of students who finish their freshman year and the percentage who graduate in four or five years)

College Type and Philosophy

- Public or private
- Liberal arts or specialized (business, engineering, nursing, arts, professional, technical)
- Religious affiliation (Does it matter to you?)
- Traditional, experimental, scholarly, or career-centered location
- Large city, small city, college town, or rural
- Urban or suburban
- Distance from home
- Climate
- Proximity to recreational areas

- Attractiveness of campus and surroundings
- Travel costs and convenience
- Facilities: library, laboratories, student center, fitness center
- Calendar: semester, trimester, quarter, module, inter-term program

Faculty

- Percentage with a Ph.D
- Student-faculty ratio
- Emphasis on research or teaching
- Faculty advisors
- Percentage of classes taught by graduate assistants or teaching assistants
- Faculty involvement in student life
- Number of office hours per week
- Opportunities for discussion and ideas
- Opportunities for undergraduate research with a professor or researcher

Environment

- Academic demands (workload and course expectations)
- Strengths of specific departments
- Honors programs

- Core curriculum and requirements
- Class size (freshman lecture courses, seminars, and upper-class courses)
- Student attitude toward learning
- Competitive vs collaborative learning environment
- Interest in political, social, or world issues
- Percentage of those who go on to graduate and professional schools
- Job placement

Cost and Financial Aid

- Student budget for tuition and fees, room and board, books, and personal expenses, including travel costs
- Range of financial aid awards and average awards for international students
- Scholarships
- Need-based or merit awards (talents)

Campus and Student Life

- Diversity and inclusion programs
- Honor system
- Campus safety
- Liberal/directive/restrictive social regulations

- Percentage living on campus and off campus
- Types of residential halls (coed, single-gender, doubles, singles, suites, separate dorms for freshman, living and learning communities)
- Types of meal plans
- Greek system
- Community service opportunities
- Athletics and fine arts
- Presence of religious, ethnic, or cultural groups
- Organizations (newspaper, radio station, music groups, and clubs)

C. Exploring a Range of Universities

While it is not unusual for students to talk about their “first choice” college, it is rare that there is only one single, best college. Even if, after thorough research, you decide on a first choice, the final list should include a number of colleges. Once your senior year begins, you will have to narrow your list of potential colleges down to a manageable number of seven to twelve universities. Twelve is mostly recommended when applying for financial aid. With this number,

you can do a thorough job on each application, instead of being overextended trying to complete too many. With each application fee of approximately US\$50 to \$100, plus costs of sending ACT/SAT and TOEFL/IELTS scores, applying to a larger number of schools will quickly add up and can consume your senior year. To make certain you are admitted to at least two universities, you need to make certain you apply to a range of colleges.

Taking into account the university's accepted students average GPA, average standardized test scores, and acceptance rates, apply from one to three "reach" schools (colleges that normally accept students with GPAs and test scores higher than yours), three to five "possible or target" schools (colleges that generally accept students with profiles similar to yours), and one or two "likely admit" (colleges for which you are an extremely strong candidate). Make sure that your "likely schools" are those you would still like to attend. Just because you are likely to be admitted does not mean the college should be thought of as a "lower status" college in your mind. Also, remember what may be a "likely school" for you might be a reach for one of your friends because these cat-

egories vary for each student. Be realistic about your grades, test scores, and the entire application.

A truly exceptional student with a realistic chance at the highly selective universities can choose to apply to more "reach" schools - as long as there are at least a couple of truly "likely" schools. Because of the large numbers of outstanding students applying to the most selective schools, many acceptance decisions will be made based on extremely subjective distinctions. If you are an AH student with top scores applying to Ivy League schools, you may want to complete up to a maximum of ten applications. Every year very few students are admitted to places where the odds seemed impossible. The opposite occasionally occurs as well. A college looked like a safe bet, but a letter of rejection arrived anyway. Using the method of applying to some likely, some possible, and some reach schools is the best way to have options.

Some features that define the admission's difficulty to a university (reach, target, and likely status of universities) are:

- Percentage of students admitted, which takes into account total number of applicants for the year, total number of spaces available in the freshman class,

percentage of applicants to whom the college can offer admission. Acceptance rates of 30% and up are on your side.

- The middle 50% or median range of SAT or ACT scores of accepted students.
- Percentage of admitted students that are in the top 10% - top 25% of their class.
- Cumulative GPA or decile in the grade distribution.

The prestige factor is also an important consideration. Many families overemphasize the importance of a university's prestige. While it is true that in many parts of the world a person is often hired as much for where they graduated as for what they learned, in the US, being hired or admitted to graduate school is based on what you learned through coursework and internships as well as what professors say about you. The name of the college is less important.

Top law or medical school graduates come from a number of state universities and small liberal arts schools as well as the Ivies. The most prestigious institutions earned their reputations primarily by the strength of their graduate programs.

At this point in your life, you need to be concerned with finding a school that of-

fers a good undergraduate education. The prestigious universities often put more emphasis on research than they do on undergraduate teaching.

Make sure you know why you are choosing a particular school and be honest about the prestige factor. If attending a high-profile college is important to you, admit it. If you are not honest with yourself, you may end up at a school for the wrong reasons. Remember that what looks good may not be a good fit.

D. Researching Universities

There are many ways to learn about universities. We encourage you to use any available opportunities and tools to get to know them the best you can. Most universities have virtual tours on their webpages. As you may know, our school has an average of 120 university visits every year, where admissions representatives will share with you information about their universities during lunchtime. MaiaLearning is used to check the visits available in the coming weeks and to confirm your attendance. These representatives are usually the ones who read your applications; therefore, we highly advise you to attend these visits as a way to show interest.

During individual college interviews and information sessions, most admission officers will give you a chance to ask questions. It is important to have some questions in mind. As you formulate questions, think about what you have read or heard from others about a particular institution. When admission officers visit CLN, listen attentively and do not be afraid to ask questions. Many schools tend to blend together when you are learning about so many. Try to discover the distinctive qualities of each school. If you are willing to

learn more about each university, please refer to “Important Questions to Ask University Reps” in the appendix section.

Lastly, if you are planning a trip abroad and one of the universities you are applying to is close by, you can organize a visit. We do not recommend going on a trip just for a college visit, as it implies investing resources. Nowadays technology can help you learn about anything anywhere, and it is not mandatory to go there just for a visit.



IV. 11° Senior Year (Grade 12)

Some tips for the senior year are:

- Study hard.
- Research colleges and universities and narrow down your search to seven to nine (twelve if you need financial aid) taking into account the application plan (Two difficult, reach, or unlikely universities; three likely or target universities; two most possible, probable, or likely universities).
- Proofread your Common Application Essay or personal statement and share it with your parents.
- Write your supplements, always researching and showing why you are the best fit for each college.
- By Mid-September, decide if you are applying early.
- Register for additional standardized tests.
- Keep track of your applications in MaiaLearning.
- Maintain open and continuous communication with your college counselor and readers.

A. College Application Options

Once your list of universities is done, visit each website to get on the school's mailing list. Feel free to contact more schools than you will apply to. Receiving materials or an application does not mean you have to actually apply.

There are different versions of US application plans, each with its own set of deadlines, procedures, and obligations.

1. Early Decision

Early Decision (ED), an option offered by less than twenty percent of colleges, is an application option in which you specify that a college is your absolute first choice. This does not only mean this is your first choice but also that you have a strong profile that will have a good chance of being admitted. You have to stand out and be an attractive candidate among the pool of ED applicants. Remember that you can only choose one ED application. The deadline for ED is usually November 1. Students who choose ED are usually notified about their acceptance around December 15. Some universities are now offering an ED II option with a later deadline.

If you are accepted, you must withdraw all other applications and agree to attend the Early Decision college. The college counselor is ethically required to hold you to your early decision and will not submit transcripts or applications to other schools if you are admitted ED. Only apply ED if you have an absolute first choice school. If you choose to apply to a binding ED college or university, you are indicating that this institution is your first choice for further study to all universities worldwide. No matter where else you may have applied, in the US or other countries, if you are admitted ED, you must withdraw all other applications and enroll. CLN will not process additional requests for transcripts. One ED advantage is that admission committees feel positive about a student who has clearly designated their college as the first choice. Students who apply ED usually have a better chance of admission than those who apply Regular Decision. If you are not accepted, you will either be rejected or deferred. Those students who still have a chance of being admitted—or who did not send SAT scores on time but seem admissible—are usually deferred. Deferred students are reconsidered in the spring with the regular decision applicants.

The disadvantage to ED is the limited time to review all options since you are committing to a school early in senior year. Also, if

you have strong first semester grades, ED schools will not see them or any other test scores received after the deadline.

Some colleges now offer two rounds of Early Decision, with the first round deadline in November and the second round deadline in early to mid-January (EDII). EDII is recommended for students who feel their first semester senior year grades should be included in their applications. If you are rejected as an ED candidate, your application will not be reconsidered in the second-round or regular decision pools.

2. Early Action

Early Action (EA) schools allow you to apply early and receive early notification but do not require you to withdraw other applications. Applications are usually due on November 1 and the decision notification is in mid-December. Accepted students do not have to decide to accept until the regular May 1 reply date. Colleges will not see your first semester senior grades or your later test scores, but they might ask for your first quarter grades (Mid-Term Report).

3. Restrictive Early Action

Some Early Action (EA) schools state that EA applicants may not apply to any other early action or decision program, although they are allowed to apply to colleges with a rolling, priority, or regular decision option. This is called

“Early Action Single Choice.” If you are applying to an EA school, read the rules carefully.

4. Priority or Early Response Deadline

Some colleges offer an early or priority deadline. For students whose completed applications are submitted by their deadline (usually November 1), these colleges guarantee that a decision will be released much earlier, usually in December. Students whose applications are complete after the Early Response deadline receive decisions on a rolling basis. If a college offers a way to find out decisions early, students should consider that option.

5. Regular Decision

A Regular Decision application has a set deadline for application submission and a standard date for decision notification, which is usually April 1. Some schools, primarily large state universities, have rolling admissions, which means they tell you the admission decision a few weeks after the application is sent. Admission officers keep accepting and rejecting students until the freshman class is filled. It is beneficial to get your application in early because the longer you wait, the harder it is to get admitted. Applications for large state universities are brief, since they process thousands of applications. They may also emphasize numbers (GPA and test scores) in their decision process.

B. Typical Timelines

	Early Decision	Early Action	Regular Decision	Rolling Admissions
November	Send in application	Send in application		
December	Receive response	Receive response		Ongoing process
January	Cancel other applications if accepted		Send in application	Until spaces are filled
February				
March			Receive response	
April			Receive response	
May		Confirm enrollment	Confirm enrollment	

C. Financial Aid

Financial aid comes in four forms: scholarships, grants, work-study, and loans. Most college financial aid awards will consist of a combination of all forms of aid.

Scholarship money is gift aid that can be awarded from the college, employers or other private entities. We recommend you to research options for your desired universities. When applying for scholarships, you will

have to write additional essays, so keep that in mind.

Grants also represent aid that does not have to be paid back. The money for grants is allocated mainly from the US Department of Education or from a college's financial aid endowment.

Work-Study aid allows students to get a job on campus and use the money earned toward books and other expenses while in

school. Work-study is a federal program where the student's earnings are subsidized by the government.

Loans are funds that must be repaid with interest and can be acquired in the students' and/or parents' names. Educational loans can be obtained through the institutions themselves, federal or state government or banks, and other financial institutions.

Funding can be awarded as need-based or merit-based aid. The latter may require submitting financial aid documents depending on the school. Need-based aid is awarded to students who meet income eligibility requirements while merit aid is awarded based on a particular talent, skill, interest, program of study, or academic achievement.

D. Applying for Aid for US Citizens and Permanent Residents

Financial aid procedures and deadlines can vary slightly by school. However, almost every college requires the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) and/or the CSS Profile.

Completing and submitting the FAFSA will generate a Student Aid Report (SAR) for the applicant that includes an estimated Expected Family

Contribution (EFC), the amount the family will most likely be expected to contribute annually to the student's education. The FAFSA determines eligibility for any federal financial aid programs (Pell Grants, Stafford Loans, Perkins Loans, and Work Study). It will also generate an application for any state aid or scholarship programs for residents of a particular state. The FAFSA should be filled out after October 1 of the student's senior year. Some early applications might require sending it along with the application. Always remember the appropriate deadline, usually different from the application deadline. The CSS Profile, required by most selective schools, can be accessed through the College Board website. While the FAFSA determines federal aid eligibility, the CSS Profile provides each institution additional details that they will use to distribute institutional funds. A registration fee is required as is an application fee per school. The CSS Profile is available after October 1 of the senior year and must be submitted by the appropriate deadline.

E. Financial Aid for International Students

Not all US colleges offer financial aid to students who are not US citizens. In fact, the majority of colleges expect international students to find their own financial sources to pay for their college education.

To get a visa, you must prove you have sufficient financial resources to pay for college, living expenses, and a return trip to your home country. If a college does not offer aid to international students, you must plan to pay for all of the expenses. Because of the limited amount of aid available to international students, even those colleges with international student aid only offer it to the strongest applicants. If you are a non-US citizen requiring financial aid, you will need to be among a college's top applicants in order to receive an offer of aid. As the FAFSA is only for US citizens, read the international students financial application instructions carefully to see what forms should be completed. Many colleges provide institutional financial aid to international students. You should fill out the CSS Profile to help these colleges understand your financial situation in the context of your local economy. The CSS Profile application will collect information about your family's income, assets, and expenses. You and your parents will be able to enter the information in your home currency – it will do the currency conversion for you.

F. Writing College Essays

The most difficult, time-consuming, and sometimes intimidating component of the application is writing the essays. As a CLN student, you have written personal narratives and essays and gained experience in refining your skill at

balancing 'showing,' 'telling,' and reflection. Our experience in the College Counseling Office has shown that CLN students can tackle this college 'assignment,' and, after investing time and effort on their college essays, they usually craft superior work.

The difference between an English class personal essay and a college essay is your audience and your purpose for writing. Approach your college essays as your opportunity to speak for yourself in an honest and straightforward manner. Consider it an invitation to share with an admission committee; it is like an interview on paper.

Colleges ask essay questions for these reasons:

- Learn more about you
- Discover if you are a skilled and articulate writer
- Confirm that the person represented on a transcript, extracurricular resume, and recommendation letters matches the person represented in an essay
- Gain a sense of your fit with the institution

Every essay should reflect these attributes. This is your chance to reveal your best qualities and to distinguish yourself from other applicants. Never underestimate the power of your written words.

The end of your junior year or the beginning of your summer vacation following

junior year is not too early to begin thinking about college essays. While college essay topics often change from year to year, many essay questions, such as those on the Common Application, remain the same. Review these essay topics before beginning to make sure you answer the questions that the colleges ask.

Brainstorming about your personality traits and defining your strengths is a good place to begin because you can understand the themes of your candidacy. Make a list of traits and experiences that set you apart from others. Develop a chronological list of important things you have done in and out of school and other meaningful experiences. Look for experiences and activities that illustrate your personality and strengths. Finally, identify one or two experiences or anecdotes that have meant the most to you so you can develop those experiences and reflect on the lessons you learned. Consider taking notes to record your thoughts no matter where or when you are inspired.

Starting the essay can be the hardest part. After reviewing your notes, choose an essay topic that is close to your heart. Brainstorm how you can approach your topic creatively or from a particular perspective. Consider creating an outline to organize your ideas and to help you de-

cide where you can include descriptions that help your reader connect with your anecdote. Do not worry about making your rough draft perfect; there will be plenty of time to polish your writing.

Now is the time to showcase the writing skills you have learned in your English classes. Lead into the essay clearly and quickly. Use transitions between paragraphs. Remember Hemingway's sentiment, "Show, don't tell!" – but also remember that you will want to reflect on your experience, and therefore may need some 'telling' to balance your 'showing.' Avoid slang, long words found in a thesaurus, and controversial topics; remember that you do not know the political or religious views of the admissions officers who will read your essay. Be judicious in your use of humor. Since your essay has a word limit – the Common Application essay, for example, expects essays between 250 and 650 words – refine your focus and your language continuously. Remember to be concise. Most admissions readers allow approximately 2-3 minutes per essay.

As you write, always remember that your reader is an admissions officer. Find your own voice. Tell the admissions committee what you want them to know, not what you think they want to hear.

Like any piece of writing, your first draft will be very rough. Leave it for a few days, and then read it again with fresh objective eyes. Rewrite. Ask a friend you trust, your teacher, or your advisor to read it and make suggestions. Ask if your personality shows through in the essay. Take feedback gracefully. Re-read your draft and pay attention to grammar, spelling, and organization. Ask someone to proofread for you; they are likely to catch errors you may overlook.

Finally, college admission officers can identify essays that have been overedited by parents or writing coaches. The college admissions committee expects you to write the way a teenager writes, not the way a parent writes. Please do not download any part of your essay from the internet or copy another individual's work; not only will colleges deny you admission, but you may also face disciplinary action at CLN.

G. Admission Decisions

Types of admission decisions may vary from institution to institution; however, most schools will have the decision categories below.

Early Decision

Admitted

You are offered a place in the fall and must submit your tuition deposit immediately and withdraw your applications from all other institutions.

*** Most colleges will release students from early decision offers without penalty if applicants receive a financial aid package that does not make it feasible economically for the student to attend.**

Deferred

For early decision, you have not been admitted. However, your application will be considered with the regular pool. You have the opportunity to submit additional or new pieces of information to your file including essays, recommendations, additional awards, and semester grades. You may want to contact the admission office to see if they will pinpoint a particular weakness in your application. It is also important to submit applications to other institutions.

Denied

You have not been admitted and your application will not be reconsidered. Focus your efforts on your regular-decision college choices.

Early Action

Admitted

In some cases you may have the option to apply “early action” to a college or university. Unlike early decision, early action is NOT binding. You may be admitted to a college under early action, but you do not have to commit to enrolling at the college until May 1, the National Candidates Reply Deadline.

Deferred

Just as with Early Decision, you can be deferred under Early Action. An admission decision is not made early and your file will be considered with the Regular Decision Pool.

Denied

You are not admitted to the college. Focus your efforts on your regular- decision college choices.

Regular Decision

Admitted

You are offered a place in the class and you must send a tuition deposit by May 1 to reserve your place in the class. It is important to write to the other schools in which you were offered admission to let them

know that you will not be attending their school. This is the ethical thing to do since other students may be on a wait list.

January/Spring Admit

Some colleges offer January or Spring Admission to a few students to fill vacancies created by students on leave and studying abroad. These are students who because of their academic potential, strength of character, and personal qualities are still a good fit for the campus. Receiving admission for spring is an offer of full admission to the college community, and each university sets the conditions that a student must adhere to during the gap months.

Waitlisted

You are not admitted at this time, but the college would like to have you in the class if space becomes available. Most schools give you a choice to remain on the waitlist. If the school is your first choice, be sure to contact the admission office and let them know they are your first choice and that you will come if given the opportunity. Most schools will not rank their waitlist and have very little idea of whether or not they will be going to their list until mid-May. Therefore, it is essential you send a deposit to another college.

Denied

Your application has not been accepted. It is important you move on and choose a school from among the good offers of admission you have received. In most cases, colleges will not allow you to appeal a denied decision.

H. May First Reply Date

When you have your acceptance letters, you must decide where to go. The US candidate reply date is May 1st. If you do not tell a school by then that you are coming in the fall, they can withdraw your acceptance. Notify all other schools that accepted you of your decision not to attend. An email is a great way to do this. If you are sure you will not be attending, notify the college promptly so they might be able to open up slots for other students.

After you have made your choice, pay the non-refundable enrollment deposit, which indicates to the university you are showing up in the fall. Also, check on housing arrangements. Read the materials you received with the acceptance letter to see how you should take care of these matters.

Double depositing or committing to enroll at more than one college by sending a financial enrollment deposit to multiple colleges is considered unethical.

Thank the people who proofread your essays and wrote letters of recommendation. Teachers asked to write recommendations may feel hurt when seniors forget to say thank you or do not share the outcome of the process.

Glossary of College Terms

Acceleration: Speeding up the educational process. Students can sometimes graduate in three years by receiving college credits for Advanced Placement courses in high school or, in some colleges, by going to school year-round.

ACT: The abbreviation of American College Test. This is an aptitude test that covers English, mathematics, social studies, reading, and science reasoning (and an optional writing section) and is accepted by all colleges instead of the SAT Reasoning Test. The scores are reported on a scale from 1 to 36.

AP: Advanced Placement is a program created by the College Board that offers college-level curricula and examinations to high school students. American colleges and universities may grant placement and course credit to students who obtain high scores on the examinations.

Aptitude Tests: SAT Reasoning Test or ACT standardized test, which presumably measure a student's potential for success in college.

Associate's Degree: A two-year degree earned at a community college (some abbreviate A.A.).

Bachelor's Degree: (Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Bachelor of Business Administration): A diploma earned after successful completion (usually spanning four years) of required courses at a university or college.

Betesa: Vocational assessment based on the analysis of thought structure, developed from neurophysiological and neurochemical research to optimize personal performance and the choice of the life project.

Calendar: The system by which an institution divides its year into shorter periods for instruction. The most common calendars are semester, quarter, and 4-1-4.

- **4-1-4:** Consists of two terms of 16 weeks separated by a one-month term used for intensive short courses, independent study, off-campus work, or other educational experiences.

- **Quarter:** A quarter is an academic calendar period of 11 weeks. Students normally attend three quarters each year and take three or four courses per quarter rather than the traditional five taken under the semester system.

- **Semester:** A semester is a division of the school year into two parts, usually 18 weeks in length. Schools may have an additional eight-week summer session.

Candidate Reply Date: The date by which the student must reply to the colleges' offers of admission. In the US, May 1 is the date to which most colleges adhere.

CEEB: Abbreviation for College Entrance Examination Board, which creates and supervises the administration of the SATs and achievement tests. Each high school has a CEEB ID code. CLN's is 925437. It should be used for all standardized testing.

Class Rank: How a student's academic performance, as determined by the grade point average, compares to other members of his/her graduating class. CLN does not rank because our classes are small and our grades are distributed in a nar-

row range. The School prefers to show the School Profile through the information provided by a Grade Distribution Table.

College: The term commonly used to describe any institution of higher education. Strictly speaking, it is an institution with a single type of program, such as a four-year course leading to the bachelor's degree or a three-year course leading to the law degree. A college may be one part of a university (e.g., Yale College is the undergraduate division of Yale University) or it may be independent.

College Board: It is an American non-profit organization created to expand access to higher education. The College Board develops and administers standardized tests and programs of study used by secondary and post-secondary institutions to promote college preparation as part of the college admissions process.

Common Application: An application form devised and accepted by over 900 colleges to make it easier for students to apply to universities and for teachers to write recommendations. Practically, it means that if you are applying to more than one participating college, you may use the same application form for all. These forms are available online at <http://www.commonapp.org>.

Community/Junior College: An institution in which students study toward a two-year Associate degree after completion of secondary school. Four-year colleges and universities will typically grant transfer students junior class standing after completion of the community/junior college degree program.

Core Curriculum: A specified number of courses or credits in the humanities, social sciences, life sciences, and/ or physical sciences, required of all

students, regardless of major, to ensure a basic set of learning experiences. This may also be referred to as distribution or distribution requirements.

Cross Registration: A system whereby students enrolled at one institution may take courses at another institution without having to apply to the second institution.

Deferred Admit: The practice of permitting admitted students to postpone enrollment, usually for a period of one year. In order to request this, you must apply and be admitted first. Universities generally do not accept matriculation at another institution during that period.

Distribution or Distribution Requirements: See core curriculum or general education requirements.

Double Deposit: Committing to enroll at more than one college by sending a financial enrollment deposit to multiple colleges. This is unethical.

Dual Degrees: A program of study in which a student receives two degrees at the same time from the same institution.

Duolingo Test: The Duolingo English Test measures English proficiency and reports scores on a scale out of 160 in 5-point increments. Test results include an overall score as well as subscores of literacy, conversation, comprehension, and production. It is a digital language-proficiency assessment exam, accepted frequently at most universities.

Early Action: An admissions plan whereby a student typically can submit an application by November and receive a decision by mid-December. The student is not required to enroll if accepted. Some colleges now specify whether a student may apply to more than one college Early Action. If they are not allowed to do so, this is referred to as Single Choice Early Action or Restrictive Early Action.

Early Decision: A program whereby a student can apply to a first-choice college early in the fall of the senior year and receive a decision by mid-December. Upon making an Early Decision application, the student agrees to enroll if accepted and to withdraw other applications immediately if admitted. Students deferred under Early Decision are reconsidered with the regular-decision applicants.

ETS: Educational Testing Service. This is the organization based in Princeton, New Jersey that the College Board utilizes to write and administer its tests. ETS also administers a number of other tests such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

Expected Family Contribution: The amount of money that a family can reasonably be expected to pay toward a student's education as determined by a standardized needs analysis form. This is usually denoted by EFC and it is calculated by FAFSA and the CSS Profile.

FAFSA: Free Application for Federal Student Aid. This form is required by all colleges in the USA to determine the student's need for federally funded financial aid programs. This form applies only to U.S. citizens.

Financial Aid Package: Colleges award financial aid on the basis of need and the student's projected contribution to the school community or EFC (Expected Family Contribution). Aid can come in the form of scholarships, grants, loans and work/study; the financial aid package can have any combination of these. In addition to Federal financial aid, some states have specific financial aid programs. Forms and processes will be state-specific.

Gap Year: A period of generally one year between high school and college in which a student

explores some alternative form of education. Gap years require permission from the university in which the student wishes to matriculate.

General Education Requirements: Also called breadth or distribution requirements, or core curriculum courses, they are required by all majors for the bachelor's degree at a particular institution. The number and specificity of these course requirements vary greatly from institution to institution.

Greek System: The social fraternities and sororities on a university campus.

Honors program: Any special program for very skilled students offering the opportunity for educational enrichment, independent study, acceleration, or some combination of these.

IELTS: The International English Language Testing System (IELTS) measures the language proficiency of people who want to study or work where English is used as a language of communication. It uses a nine-band scale to clearly identify levels of proficiency, from non-user (band score 1) through to expert (band score 9). Universities usually require the Academic English Test, which consists of four sections: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, writing, and speaking.

I-20: The form issued by the university to international students. The students then take the I-20 form to the US Embassy in order to obtain their F-1 student visa.

Internship: Any short-term, supervised work experience usually related to a student's major field, for which the student earns academic credit. The work can be full-or part-time, on-or off-campus, paid, or unpaid.

Legacy: A college applicant who is a son or daughter (or sometimes a more distant relative) of an alumna/us.

Liberal Arts and Sciences: A breadth of intellectual inquiry that broadens the student's knowledge and awareness in each of the major areas of human knowledge: arts, sciences, and humanities. A liberal arts education prepares one to communicate thoughts and ideas clearly and efficiently and to understand a wide variety of perspectives and values, to appreciate civilization, beauty and natural processes, and to continually discover with sincere curiosity the world around us. The liberal arts college offers a four-year course of study, leading to the B.S. or B.A. degree and any graduate or professional program.

3-2 Liberal Arts and Career Combination: A program in which a student earns undergraduate degrees in two separate fields, (most often in a general/liberal arts major and a professional or specialized major) in 5 years of study, whether on-campus or through cross-registration.

MaiaLearning: MaiaLearning is a college and career readiness platform focused on student engagement, planning, and well-being. Platform used by schools and universities to manage the application processes for more than 5,000 universities in 46 countries. It allows students to take five assessments (Interest Profiler, Work Values, and Personality). It also allows searching for university options, sending grades, forms, and letters of recommendation as well as monitoring the process and tracking the receipt of documents by universities and the students' results.

Major: The field of specialization or concentration for a college undergraduate. The student normally does from a quarter to a third of the total undergraduate work in his/her major field. Most often the student is asked to declare a major by the end of the sophomore year.

Minor: A secondary area of academic concentration, which may or may not be required by an institution.

Need-Based Aid: Money awarded to the student for tuition, fees or room and board, solely on the basis of financial need.

Need-Blind Admissions: The policy of a university to consider an applicant for admissions without considering the student's ability to cover the cost of enrollment. Often applies to US citizens only.

NMSQT: National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test sponsored by the United States government and several hundred private corporations and colleges and taken by high school students in the fall of their junior year. Scoring well on this test is the first step toward recognition in the National Merit Scholarship competition. National Merit Semi-Finalists are those students who score in the top 1% of all students in their state. The NMSQT index is the sum of the verbal, math, and writing scores.

PSAT: Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (see also NMSQT). A test of scholastic aptitude administered to high school juniors throughout the country. Sophomores also take this test for practice. Scores are given for verbal, quantitative and writing aptitude in two-digit figures (multiply by ten to approximate SAT equivalents).

Postgraduate (more commonly referred to as "graduate"): In reference to a student, postgraduate describes one who is working beyond the bachelor's degree; in reference to a school, post-graduate describes an institution that trains in a specific professional field and grants a post-undergraduate degree.

Quarter: A college term of ten to twelve weeks. Some colleges divide the calendar year into four approximately equal portions, or into three terms (trimesters: fall, winter, and spring), plus a slightly shorter summer term. In schools using either

the quarter or the trimester system, the student normally studies fewer subjects at one time and changes his/her schedule more frequently than a student at a school using the semester system.

Rolling Admissions: A system of admissions decision notification whereby a college informs the applicant of his/her status within a short time (usually four to six weeks) after the application is complete. Most public universities employ this admissions practice.

SAT Reasoning Test: A multiple-choice test made up of verbal and math sections designed to measure abilities that are related to college success. Each section is scored on a scale of 200 to 800. The SAT Reasoning Test does not measure other factors and abilities such as creativity, special talents, and motivation that may also help you do well in college.

Scholarship: Money or aid for an academically talented student. Some scholarships are based on need. Corporations, professional organizations, civic organizations, or religious groups give many such funds away. Each scholarship opportunity has different eligibility criteria.

Selectivity: A term used by admissions offices to describe the ratio of admitted applicants to total applicants at a given institution.

Semester: Half of the normal school year. The usual college year has two semesters (fall and spring), each 15 to 17 weeks.

Transcript: The official complete copy of a student's academic record including courses and grades. In the college admissions process, this document is traditionally given the most weight.

TOEFL iBT: TOEFL® Internet-based Test (iBT) The Internet-based Test of English as a Foreign

Language (TOEFL® iBT) measures the ability to use and understand English as read, written, heard, and spoken in universities.

Tuition: The price that institutions charge for the student's registration. Tuition does not include all charges such as the cost of books, additional costs, room, and board. Tuition costs vary from one university to another and depend on factors such as residence, the level of classes enrolled, and whether the institution is publicly or privately funded. The tuition is usually published through the institution's websites or brochures.

Undergraduate: A college student who is a candidate for a bachelor's degree; a program of study leading to a bachelor's degree.

University: An institution of higher learning comprising several colleges. An undergraduate division confers bachelor's degrees and provides facilities for learning to take place through teaching. This undergraduate division may include a College of Arts & Sciences, a College of Engineering, a College of Business, a College of Nursing, and/ or others. A graduate division confers master and doctoral degrees and provides facilities for learning to take place through research as well as through teaching.

Waitlist: List of students who meet the admission requirements but will only be offered a place in the class if space becomes available. Most offers of admission from the waitlist are made prior to the end of the school year. Most waitlists are not ranked; instead, they will admit students based on the college's needs and student interest.

Yield: The percentage of students admitted to a college who ultimately attend that college. The yield is often extremely high at selective colleges.

Suggested Readings and Videos

I. List of Suggested Readings

- “Dear Parent I Can’t Promise You Ivy” by Joyce Slayton Mitchell
- “Does It Matter Where You Go to College? You Might Be Surprised” by Tim Jordan. Available at <https://drtimjordan.com/2016/02/does-it-matter-where-you-go-to-college/>
- “The Pain of College Rejection” by David Nyhan. Available at http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/03/10/the_college_rejection_letter/

II. List of Suggested Videos

- A Holistic Review, Johns Hopkins University Admissions: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Y75Qy76UFM>
- What Is Holistic Review? Freshman Admissions 101, UMass, Amherst: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQNTJH_vI8c

Appendix 1

I. 22 Questions About Yourself

Your goals and values

1. What aspects of your high school years have you enjoyed the most? If you could live this period over again, would you do anything differently?
2. What values are most important to you? What do you care most about? What concerns occupy most of your energy, effort, and thoughts?
3. How do you define success? Are you satisfied with your accomplishments to date? What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
4. What kind of person would you like to become? Of your unique gifts and strengths, which would you most like to develop? What would you most like to change about yourself?
5. Is there anything you have ever secretly wanted to do or be? If you had a year to go anywhere and do whatever you wanted, how would you spend that year?
6. What events or experiences have shaped your growth and way of thinking?

Your education

7. What are your academic interests? Which courses have you enjoyed most? Which courses have been most difficult for you?
8. What do you choose to learn when you can learn on your own? (Consider interests pursued beyond class assignments: topics chosen for research papers, lab reports, independent projects; independent reading; school activities; job or volunteer work.) What do your choices show about your interests and the way you like to learn?
9. How do you learn best? What methods of teaching and style of teaching engage your interest and effort the most?
10. How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues, and exchange ideas?
What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience in recent years?
11. What is the greatest intellectual risk you have taken? Do you have an intellectual passion?
12. How well has CLN prepared you for college? In what areas of skill or knowledge do you feel confident or inadequately prepared for college study? Have you been challenged by your courses?
13. Have you worked up to your potential in high school? Is your academic record an accurate measure of your

ability and potential? What do you consider the best measures of your potential for college work?

Your activities and interests

14. What activities do you most enjoy outside of the daily routine of school and other responsibilities? Which activities have meant the most to you? Looking back, would you have made different choices?
15. Do your activities show any pattern of commitment, competence, or contribution?
16. How would others describe your role in your school or home community? What do you consider is your most significant contribution?

The world around you

17. How would you describe your school, family, and hometown? How has your environment influenced your way of thinking? How have your interests and abilities been acknowledged or limited by your school and home?
18. What do your parents and friends expect of you? How have their expectations influenced the goals and standards you set for yourself? What pressures have you felt to conform?
19. Have you ever encountered people who thought and acted differently from

the way you did? What viewpoints have challenged you the most? How did you respond? What did you learn about yourself and others?

Your personality and relationships with others

20. How would people who know you well describe you: Your finest qualities? Your most conspicuous shortcomings? Would you agree with their assessments? How have you grown or changed during your high school years?
21. Which relationships are most important to you and why? Describe the people who you consider your best friends? Your best critics? Your best advocates? In what ways are they similar to or different from you?
22. How do you feel about choices and making decisions for yourself? What are the best decisions you have made recently? How much do you rely on direction, advice, or guidance from others? Have you ever chosen anything because it was new or interesting?

Source: *College Counselling Handbook*, Colegio Nueva Granada, 2016

Appendix 2

I. Questions for University Reps and Alumni

- What academic programs are most popular?
- I'm interested in _____. What does your school offer in that area?
- Are classes taught by full professors or do you have teaching assistants?
- Is teaching or research the emphasis of your institution?
- What is your largest class? What is your average class size for freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years?
- Are most classes structured as lectures or discussions?
- Describe the social life on campus. What do students do for fun?
- If you could change something about your school, what would it be?
- Do you have an honor code? Does it truly work and why?
- What is your retention rate?
- What is the nature of the academic pressure at your school?

- What are the three most common complaints heard from students over the past year and what is being done to address these complaints?
- Do most students live on campus?
- Describe the residence halls and their different options.
- Describe the support systems and programs for students.
- What makes _____ distinctive from other schools of its size and caliber?
- What was your acceptance rate last year?
- Please give a profile of the freshman class.
- Do you have merit-based scholarships? If so, how do I apply?
- Describe the diversity of your student body. What is the ethnic breakdown?
- Do you have special customs or traditions on your campus?

Furthermore, finding current students studying in your university of choice can also give you a more in-depth but subjective view of the specific institution or program. There are many CLN alumni studying abroad that will always be willing to help you in your search. Do not hesitate to contact them or ask us for their contact information. Here you can find some sample questions you could ask them:

- Why did you choose_____?
- What would you change about the college?
- What would you fight to keep unchanged at your college?
- What do you think makes your school distinctive?
- What are the major campus issues?
- Have you been challenged in your coursework?
- How large were your classes freshman year? How large are they now?
- What do students do on the weekend?
- How effective is the faculty advising system?

- How is the relationship between the students and the surrounding community?
- How important is the Greek system?
- Does the student body have a voice in the university?
- Have you ever met the college president?
- If you had to select a college from the start, would you make the same choice?
- How many years will it take to earn your degree?

Source: *College Counselling Handbook*, Colegio Nueva Granada, 2016



COLEGIO LOS NOGALES

College Counseling Handbook

Ver. 03 / 01 /2023