



**HOLLAND HALL**

# **College Counseling Handbook**

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# Welcome to College Counseling

Dear Holland Hall Families,

When I was 12, my father bought me an Oakland Athletics cap, a treasonous act in the New York Yankee-pinstripe-clad Tri-State Area. That green and gold A's cap was an invigorating change from my insipid, boyhood Yankees cap, which I wore everywhere. I began collecting Minor League Baseball caps with zany logos: the Lehigh Valley IronPigs, the Montgomery Biscuits, and many more. My father reassured me it's OK to seek what suits me best, even if it means going against conventions.

Raised in the county that inspired Carole King to satirize suburban conformity with "[Pleasant Valley Sunday](#)," I attended a public high school where students clamored over the same colleges. We obsessed over the Ivies and schools with vaunted football or basketball teams. There was no college counselor to break this cycle. I looked at liberal arts colleges employing heralded historians, knowing they could teach me how to tell gripping stories that would renew interest in bygone figures and events. I enrolled at Lafayette College, the home of my favorite historian, Donald L. Miller. I took two classes with Miller, who helped hone my writing skills. Lafayette was the right choice for me.

Every student has a compelling story. There are colleges, many unfamiliar to Holland Hall students, that will embrace students' narratives and cultivate their aspirations. Mrs. Lowry, Mrs. McNeese, and I assist students with self-reflection and identifying and applying to colleges with which they'll share a mutual appreciation. And we couldn't do it without the indefatigable Mrs. Vance. If the proverbial Yankees cap is right for you, you'll choose it after critical evaluation; you won't default to it (admittedly, I'm still a Yankees fan). You might just don a Biscuits cap instead.

May this handbook be a perennial guide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ben Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ben Brown  
Director of College Counseling

# College Counseling Contacts

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## About the College Counseling Department

The College Counseling Department is located next to the Upper School Commons, centralizing all three counselors and the administrative assistant in one easy-to-find-location.

The College Counseling Department has reference books covering a wide array of topics related to college search and selection. These books may be checked out. Also be sure to visit the College Counseling section of Holland Hall's web page for useful and timely information.

## The Four-Year College Planning Guideline

### Freshman Year

- Adjust to the Upper School.
- Grades are important! The first semester counts. Your GPA begins DAY ONE.
- Get to know your teachers and your academic advisor.
- Choose an appropriate college preparatory course load.
- Make a four-year course plan in Freshmen Wellness.
- Set goals for the future.
- Look for opportunities to develop your leadership.
- Get involved in school *and* community activities.
- Attend meetings and/or virtual meetings with college representatives if you are not in class.
- Parents attend the Deans' & Directors' Event program each spring.
- Call or visit the college counseling office when you have questions.
- Do your best on the October Pre-ACT.

### Sophomore Year

- Attend meetings and/or virtual meetings with college representatives if you are not in class, or with teacher permission.

- Work with your advisor and choose an appropriate college preparatory course load.
- Attend Sophomore Seminar each cycle during the spring semester: See example below.  
**Students must register their visit in SCOIR.**
- Do your best on the October PSAT for practice.
- Participate in meaningful extracurricular activities at school.
- Serve in leadership positions.
- Parents attend the Deans' & Directors' Event program each spring.
- Visit colleges when travel plans place you in the vicinity.
- Be involved in community service, a job, or other productive activities.
- Attend any College Fairs in the area.
- Register with the N.C.A.A., if needed.

### Junior Year

- Do your best on the October *actual* PSAT: The test for National Merit qualification.
- Attend meetings and/or virtual meetings with college representatives visiting Holland Hall.  
**Students must register their visit in SCOIR.**
- Attend College Seminar each cycle during the spring semester: See example below.
- Begin college entrance exam (ACT or SAT) testing in the spring.
- Take SAT Subject Tests in May or June, if necessary.
- Make preliminary college visits. *Plan to utilize Experiential Learning Days each fall semester to visit colleges further afield.*
- Students return Academic & Leadership Questionnaire (electronic).
- Parents return the Junior Parent Questionnaire (electronic).
- Parents attend Financial Aid Night. This is a good time for families to have serious conversations regarding college finances, expectations, and limitations.
- Parents attend the Deans' & Directors' Event program each spring.
- In the spring semester, parents and students meet with their college counselor to discuss the college process and define the family's individual search criteria.
- Research colleges of interest by using College Counseling resources and the Internet.
- Attend any College Fairs in the area.
- Choose an appropriate course load for senior year.
- Contact coaches and schools of interest if you are a prospective athlete.
- Enroll in SAT/ACT preparation courses as needed.
- Register with the N.C.A.A., if needed.

### Junior Year, Summer

- Visit colleges, tour campuses and interview if possible.
- Narrow your college list.
- Prospective artists, musicians and stage performers should contact schools to schedule fall auditions and find out portfolio requirements.
- Be involved in community service, a job, summer programs or other productive activities.

### Senior Year, Fall

- Attend meetings and/or virtual meetings with college representatives visiting Holland Hall.  
**Students must register their visit in SCOIR.**
- Meet once per cycle with your college counselor.
- Schedule college visits.

- Finalize your high school resume, if needed, with your college counselor.
- Narrow your college application list to those in which you are sincerely interested.
- Decide if you are applying Early Action or Early Decision to any schools.
- Make a grid of your college application deadlines.
- Submit the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) forms online after October 1 at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov).
- Take careful note of deadlines. Your first application should be filed no later than November 1<sup>st</sup>, and in some cases, earlier. Establish a schedule for filling out and submitting college applications.
- Attend arts and performance auditions as required.
- Contact coaches and schedule visits for prospective athletes.
- Take final SAT and/or ACT tests in *early* fall. Students who apply Early Action or Early Decision should complete all standardized tests by November. Take note of fall sports and arts schedules!  
If required, notify testing services, SAT and ACT, to send official reports to the colleges to which you are applying.  
*\*Note: Holland Hall College Counseling **DOES NOT** send test scores.*
- Parents attend Financial Aid Night .

#### Senior Year, Winter:

- Pay attention to colleges which also require the CSS Profile.
- Search for scholarships and submit completed forms to the College Counseling Office.
- Update your resume. Send any new information to colleges to update your application file.
- Submit additional applications as needed.

#### Senior Year, Spring:

- Receive notification of decisions on college applications and financial aid/scholarship.
- **Submit printed copies of all college acceptances and scholarship offers to your counselor.**
- Make last visits to colleges if you have not decided where to attend.
- Reply by May 1 to the college/university you plan to attend – you are to submit an enrollment deposit to one school only! Only ONE final transcript will be submitted by the College Counseling Department to the college you decide to attend.
- Reply to those colleges where you have been accepted, but do not plan to attend.

# College Seminar

This course meets during the Spring semester of the Junior year. Example abbreviated syllabus:

## Cycle 1:

### **Introduction: College Freshman Guest Panel**

The importance of the College Academic/Leadership Questionnaire

Homework Assignment: Complete and return the questionnaire

## Cycle 2:

### **College Admissions Testing**

The facts about ACT, SAT I & II

Early Decision, Early Action, Regular and Rolling Admissions, the College Counseling website, Internet resources and scholarship searches

Homework Assignment: Turn in an ACT or SAT proof of registration ticket

## Cycle 3:

### **The Common Application**

An introduction to the Common Application, its importance, and how it is used

### **Resume / Activities List Construction**

A polished high school resume or activities list is a great help to college admission offices

Homework Assignment: Construct and complete your high school resume in Naviance

## Cycle 4:

### **Introduction to Naviance and/or SCOIR**

Naviance can be used to do multiple things, from signing up for a rep visit at HH to researching colleges and taking career interest & personality assessments. SCOIR is a new college application management system.

Homework Assignment: Career Interest Profiler

## Cycle 5:

### **Writing Your Personal Statement(s)**

Tips, Topics and Techniques

Homework Assignment: Choose 1 question from the Common Application

Note: 300-word minimum

## Cycle 6:

### **Individual Meetings with your College Counselor**

Assignment: You and your parents attend Deans' Night.

## Cycle 7:

### **Case Studies and the Life of a College Application**

We study and evaluate real college application files

## Cycle 8:

### **Round Table Discussions**

Q&A and the discussion of the senior-year timeline. Current seniors talk about their application experience.

## Sophomore Seminar / Wellness

This course meets during the Spring of the Sophomore year and is shared between College Counseling and the Sophomore Wellness Team.

We introduce personality assessments, YouScience in SCOIR, review course selections, work on developing and building a high school resume, discuss summer plans and activities, and review actual college applications in a college case study.

## Thoughts On College Admission

The keys to staying on top of your college search process are to invest time and energy in the game, be organized, and anticipate issues and deadlines. Also, keep in mind that you are searching for and choosing a school that is right for you –not one that is right for your best friend, or your great uncle or one that a magazine says is this year’s “best.” Fit is the key – academic, social, financial, etc. – find schools where you will be motivated, comfortable and appropriately challenged. Your goal should be to identify a short list of schools at which you would be happy and successful. Our goal is to empower and advise you to make educated decisions toward that end. The following tips and strategy points will help you stay on top of your college search and application process and keep your senior year in perspective.

### Application Tips

- Prioritize your college search – make it important! Roll up your sleeves and take ownership of this process. The more you invest in your search now, the better will be the fit with your college. The longer you wait to get started, the more options will pass you by. This should be an adventure...not a chore.
- Avoid the trap of familiarity and explore the wonderful palette of schools out there. Be open to suggestions and willing to investigate.
- Avoid the college admission rat race. Be leery of rankings and the year’s “hot school” list. Do not confuse admit rates with quality.
- Keep it all in perspective. You are not an SAT or ACT number. Many colleges are now test optional. Talk with your counselor about options.
- Avoid the myth of the perfect school. Think in terms of four to five schools, all of which you would be happy and successful.
- Being denied by a college is not the end of the world. If you receive a letter of rejection, pick up and move on. If you have followed a sound strategy, you will have other great options from which to choose.



## Application Strategies

- Apply to a few schools with a wide range of selectivity. Think 6 to 8.
- All students should submit at least one application by November 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Explore early action (non-binding) and early decision (binding) options. Discuss your options with your counselor.
- Visit the colleges that are high on your list. Many offices of admission keep track of student visits as well as communications such as phone calls and e-mails.
- Recruited athletes should submit an application early. Be sure to explore options at the Division II, III and NAIA levels as well.
- Prospective art students should follow the same advice. Consider applying to a comprehensive university with a strong art department as well as art schools.

## The College Counseling Office Will Do The Following:

- Meet with and counsel students and parents and compile initial prospective college lists as a starting point, for consideration.
- Announce College Admission Reps who are visiting Holland Hall either in person or virtually. The list of upcoming visits can be found in SCOR.
- Educate students and parents through special events like 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Parent College Chat, 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent College Chat, Senior Parent Orientation for College Counseling, Deans' Event, Financial Aid Information Night, FAFSA Workshop, NCAA Information Night, college fairs, and other special programs (vary).
- Announce in Morning Meeting SAT/ACT test registration deadlines and post on the college counseling website and in Dutch Weekly.
- Write an official school counselor evaluation letter.
- Proofread student essays and review each student's application and submit in a timely manner.
- Submit completed applications, transcripts, school profile, curriculum, and letter(s) of evaluation to colleges as requested by the student. Also, we will submit an updated 7<sup>th</sup> semester transcript with fall grades in January to all schools to which you have applied, plus one final transcript to the college at which the student will matriculate. Students may take an unofficial transcript on college visits. Official transcripts must be mailed/submitted by the College Counseling Office.

- Provide ongoing advice and support to students and parents.

***Note: The College Counseling Office does not keep track of application and/or scholarship deadlines for students.***

## Responsibilities of Students and Families

- Do preliminary research on colleges, read college catalogs and view books, visit with college representatives, talk with your College Counselor, and attend special events.
- Register for all required testing – ACT and/or SAT. Please have all test scores sent to Holland Hall.
- Arrange and register for college visits and possible interviews.
- Decide which colleges you plan to apply. Applying to no more than 10 colleges is advised.
- Attain official transcripts from other high schools attended before Holland Hall.
- Submit all applications to the College Counseling assistant approximately three weeks before the college deadline. An application folder is required for every college application, specific scholarship application, and /or summer program application. These folders can only be distributed by a college counselor.
- Request teachers to write evaluations at least three weeks in advance of the date they are needed. You must check out a request form from Mrs. Vance in the college office.
- Have your personal application essay proofread by someone, but remember that this is your application to college. You need to ethically and responsibly write your personal statement and / or essays yourself.
- Notify ACT and/or SAT to send your official scores to colleges to which you are applying, if required. Again, make sure you have sent all scores to Holland Hall.
- Search for and complete scholarship and financial aid forms.
- Schedule and prepare for music or drama auditions and/or all required art portfolios/DVDs/etc.
- Complete NCAA Clearinghouse forms if you are a prospective athlete.
- Once you have decided where you are going to college, you must notify all other colleges to which you have been accepted of your decision to attend elsewhere.

- Make certain your acceptance deposit is sent to your final college of choice by the May 1 deadline. If a separate housing deposit is required, be sure to meet that deadline.

## Application Policies and Procedures

The following steps are required to submit an application to the College Counseling Office:

Step 1: Complete the online application. Save your work but do not submit.

Step 2: Print a copy of the online application you've just completed and bring it to your college counselor for review.

Step 3: Make any necessary revisions based upon the advice of your college counselor. Save your work and submit your application online in the presence of your college counselor.

Step 4: Obtain an application folder from your counselor. Complete the "Student Section" on the folder. Place the hard copy of your application in the folder and give it to Mrs. Vance. The receipt of an application folder alerts Mrs. Vance that an application has been submitted to a college.

### Transcripts

A transcript is an **official** and **certified document**, which is a record of a student's academic performance at Holland Hall. All courses taken at Holland Hall are included on the transcript and all semester and year-end grades. Holland Hall transcripts contain only Holland Hall courses and grades. Holland Hall does **NOT** merge transcripts, GPA's or grades. See the "Student Handbook" for policies related to failing grades, dropped courses, repeat courses, etc.

### Letters of Evaluation

Letters of evaluation in support of the student generated by the College Counseling Office are confidential and are only released to offices of admission or scholarship organizations to which the student is applying. Letters of evaluation written by teachers are considered confidential communication between the teacher and the college admission office.

On evaluation forms and counselor forms, students have the option to waive their right of access. While this is a choice, we encourage students to waive their right of access. *Admission offices will weigh more seriously what writers say if the student has waived his/her rights.*

### Test Scores

It is the student's responsibility to send the official SAT, ACT, and/or AP test scores to the particular college/university.

# Example of the College Counseling Office's Application & Scholarship Deadlines:

## College Application Due Date On or Before:

October 1  
October 15  
November 1  
November 15  
December 1  
December 15  
January 1  
January 15  
February 1  
February 15  
March 1

## Must be in the College Counseling Office no later than:

September 11  
September 25  
October 9  
October 25  
November 7  
November 27  
December 1  
December 11  
January 10  
January 25  
February 8

*\*After a deadline, your application will be processed in the order in which it is received.*

*\*Note: These deadlines are subject to change.*

## The College Search and Selection

The steps listed below can be used as a checklist as you initiate your college search. They pose very broad questions that will start you down the path of your individual search. Please remember that your search will be unique to you and you should not compare your thoughts, plans and decisions with your peers that have their own unique search criteria. Your college counselor will help you with several of these steps. Most of the work however, must be done by the student. Students, in particular, should take ownership of this process.

- Consider why you are thinking about going to college. What do you really want to accomplish in college? What factors are influencing you? Family? Friends? What do you want out of the experience?
- Consider the kind of work you would like to do after college. Have you formulated any career goals? What college majors are related to those goals? Is the kind of college education you are thinking about relevant to these goals? Which colleges are outstanding in preparing you for your career choice?

- Assess how well prepared you are for college coursework. What are your academic strengths and weaknesses? How well have you done in school? How do your abilities compare to those of other college bound students in your class, your state, and the nation? How well are you likely to do at the colleges you are considering?
- Determine which college characteristics are most important to you. Cost? Size? Program? Campus atmosphere and kind of students? Try to set your priorities before you think about choosing a specific college. The following section will help you.
- Collect information about the colleges you are considering. Check on-line and in the College Counseling Office for reference materials. Visit campuses, if possible, and talk to enrolled students. Attend meetings with college representatives as they visit Holland Hall throughout the year. Attend all college fairs in the area.
- Determine college costs and the ways you will meet them. Add up the costs of tuition fees, room and board, transportation, supplies and books, and personal expenses at each college. What are your financial resources? Will you need financial assistance? If so, check the aid application procedures and deadlines required by the colleges of your choice.
- Know admission procedures and timelines. Check application deadlines, procedures, and fees. Which tests are required for admission? Determine whether you meet the admission requirements at your college choices.
- Keep rethinking your plans and weighing your options and your resources. Talk to your parents, teachers and friends. Your feelings and thoughts about college might change dramatically between now and the time you apply next fall.
- Work closely with your college counselor throughout this process.

## Questions to Consider As You Begin Visiting Colleges

There are over three thousand colleges and universities in the United States today and many wonderful schools in other countries as well. Holland Hall students attend colleges throughout the nation and occasionally cross borders into foreign countries to earn their degree. While we do not expect you to explore every option available, we strongly encourage you to invest in the search process and explore the many exciting and wonderful options before you. Please keep in mind that you will determine your own success and happiness wherever you decide to attend college.

You should reflect on many issues as you begin in earnest to define your college search. The following questions will help you think through some of the important factors. Some of these issues will be more important to you than others. Take time to write down your thoughts. Do not be surprised if your thinking changes over the course of your college search. Once you have started to define your own search, use any of the useful tools available today to find colleges that match your interests. Your college counselor will be one of your most valuable resources in this part of the process. The following items are not prioritized.

- Size: Large, medium or small enrollment? Will it make a difference to you? Be leery of stereotypes associated with school size – both small and large schools offer many advantages.
- Area of Study: Is your major choice available there? Is the college outstanding in particular areas? Will you be able to get all the courses you will need? Can you combine majors?
- Admission Selectivity: How competitive is admission? What is the school's admit rate? Is the school likely to admit you? What are the median SAT or ACT scores? What GPA is required?
- Expenses: What will it cost? Tuition, room, board, fees, books? What additional travel costs will be involved? Is it within the range that you have discussed with your parents?
- Financial Resources: Is the school generous with financial assistance? Will you likely qualify for scholarships? How much money is available from your family? What financial assistance — scholarship, loans, and jobs are available?
- Location and Climate: What areas of the United States are attractive to you? Do you want a large city or a college town? In-state or out-of-state? Primarily warm or cold climates or distinct seasonal changes?
- Coed or Single-Sex: Are you interested in a women's/men's college? What are the advantages? Would it make a significant difference to you?
- Accreditation: Is the school fully accredited by a regional accrediting agency and/or approved by appropriate professional associations?
- Tests Required: Is the SAT or ACT required? What are the median scores? Is the college Test-Optional?
- Deadlines: When must applications, testing, etc. be complete?
- Application Options: When are admission decisions made and announced? Does the college have Early Action? Early Decision? Rolling Admission? (Explanations of these terms are included in the Glossary.)
- Prestige and Recognition: What is the college's local and national reputation? Who are the distinguished alumni? For what fields is it particularly noted?
- Special Programs: What honors programs, courses, area studies, student exchanges, study abroad, and internship programs are available?
- Rigor: How difficult will a particular college be? Is it easy to get into but hard to get out of? Would you be "in over your head?" Will you be appropriately challenged?

- Calendar: Does it make a difference if the college follows a two-semester, trimester or quarter system? Does it have an interim semester or another system unlike any other college?
- Student Life: What goes on at the college during the weekends? Are there fraternities or sororities? Are they important? What are the social regulations? What social opportunities are available on campus or nearby? Is the campus overwhelmingly conservative or liberal?
- Drop Out Rate: Is there a high freshman drop out rate? Why? Do the majority who enter also graduate? Does the school offer an orientation or transition program for freshmen?
- Proportion of Students Going to Graduate or Professional School: Who goes to graduate or professional school? Where? What is their acceptance rate for graduates?
- Religious Affiliation: Is the college associated with a particular religious group? Are there religious requirements? Are churches of your faith available on or near the campus?
- Faculty and Method of Instruction: Who teaches...professors or graduate students? Are audio-visual presentations utilized heavily? Is independent study available? What percentage of faculty has a doctorate degree? What is the faculty relationship with the students? Are there special programs for those having learning problems, and if so, who qualifies?
- Technology: Is the campus up to date with current technology? Are the dorms wired? Wireless? Are laptops required? How many computer labs are on campus? What are their hours?
- Character or Tone: What is the “psychological environment” of the place? Are the students serious, indifferent, carefree? Are courses rigorous? Are students friendly? Is the campus deserted on the weekends? Is the environment competitive? Do students spend out-of-class time studying or carousing? What gives the college its distinctive flavor?
- Cultural Opportunities: What speakers, concerts, films, plays, etc. are available? Are museums, theaters and concert halls available in the area? Is the place culturally isolated or rich? Must the campus produce all cultural opportunities?
- Career Counseling and Post-Graduate Job Placement: What services does the college offer in this area? Who hires the graduates? Where do the graduates go to live?
- Athletics: If you are interested in playing interscholastic sports, does this college’s program fit your talent level? What kind of intramural program is available? Are there “big time” college sports on campus? Does that matter to you?
- Housing: Is it available to all students? Is it coed? What are the off-campus housing alternatives?

# How Colleges Evaluate Applications

The process of reading and evaluating applications is complex and difficult to grasp. It frequently has been described as more of an art than a science. Those looking for simple equations or tangible checklists leading to success in the process will usually be frustrated. The following list identifies many of the criteria that colleges will use to evaluate your application.

- Proven Academic Achievement (Grade Point Average): As demonstrated on the school transcript, by course selection and grades. Trends in grade performance are important.
- Course Load: Rigor, depth, quality, and number of courses.
- SAT and/or ACT Scores
- School Evaluation: Written by your College Counselor.
- Teacher Evaluations: Primarily address the student's engagement and ability in the classroom.
- A Student's Activities and Interests: Includes use of time in and out of school, ideas, social concern, non-scholastic potential.
- Personal Interviews: Are generally helpful. Some colleges require an interview. Most do not.
- Application: Colleges consider and evaluate the time and thought you put into your applications. They also consider the date of the application. You don't want to appear last-minute or up against the deadline.
- Individual Flavor and Unusual Achievements: Admission committees seek uniqueness in your admission credentials...a different, or uncommon consideration which may set you apart from the other candidates and may produce a favorable decision for you.
- Goals: As demonstrated by your motivation for a particular course of study or long term commitment through activities.
- Physical Health and Attendance Record.
- Legacy Applicants: Receive attention at a few colleges. At best, such candidates can expect to be given "closer look."
- Correspondence: Initiated by you, not by your parents, shows maturity and interest.
- Visits: A visit to a school shows genuine interest. Be sure to contact the Office of Admission 2-3 weeks before you arrive.



- Special Talents: Any qualities the school may need for that particular year-athletes, musicians, etc.

## College Financial Aid

Financial aid for college education is available from a variety of sources. Awards are principally based upon need as determined by filing the FAFSA and sometimes the CSS PROFILE. The person best qualified to give information and answer questions is the financial aid officer of the college to which you are applying. We strongly suggest you should establish a working relationship with the financial aid office at the college(s) in which you are most interested.

Financial aid usually comes in a variety of forms and may include:

- Grants: “Free” money, i.e., money that the student does not have to pay back. Typically awarded based on need.
- Loans: Money that has to be paid back, but usually has a low interest rate and may not have to be repaid until the student graduates.
- College Work-Study: Campus employment offered because of the student’s financial need.
- Scholarships: Merit-based awards that do not have to be paid back.
  - o General: determined on the basis of merit—high school record, standardized tests, scores, etc. These may emphasize leadership, community service or other specific areas of excellence.
  - o Departmental: determined on the basis of merit and academic record in certain fields.
  - o Performance: determined on the basis of merit and demonstrated talent in the area considered, e.g., band, art, theater, etc. On-campus audition, audition DVD or a portfolio may be required.
  - o Athletic: Determined on the basis of merit and demonstrated performance. NCAA Division I and II, NAIA only. Division III is non-scholarship.
  - o Private/Corporate/Organizational: determined on the basis of merit. Sponsored by private and public organizations outside of the university and may emphasize leadership, community service, minority status, etc.

## The FAFSA and the CSS PROFILE

The two primary applications for financial aid that are required by colleges are the *Free Application for Federal Student* (FAFSA) and the *Profile* (which is administered by the College Board). Before being considered for scholarships and financial aid, most schools will require that students submit one form or the other. Most liberal arts institutions will require the completion of a school specific financial aid supplement. Please check the Office of Financial Aid to find out which form to submit.

**FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)** This application is available online October 1st, of the student's senior year. You are encouraged to file early.

The FAFSA can be found at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

Telephone: 1-800-433-3243 (Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. e.s.t.).

**CSS PROFILE** – Some colleges/universities require the FAFSA and the PROFILE in determining the awarding of non-federal student aid funds.

Visit <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. Click on PROFILE Online page

Telephone: 1-305-829-9793.

## Athletics: The NCAA & The NAIA

Prospective athletes should work closely with their coaches to explore all opportunities for participation in collegiate athletics. Students should communicate their interests to their coaches and counselors early in the process and actively work to promote themselves to the colleges in which they are interested. While coaches at Holland Hall are eager and willing to assist you in your search, the primary responsibility for contacting college coaches and following up lies with the student-athlete.

NOTE: The 16 core credits necessary for NCAA Initial Eligibility approval MUST be taken within the first eight semesters of high school. Any student who repeats a grade is in danger of not meeting this requirement. Any prospective college athlete MUST be in a different English class each year.

### Levels of Participation

- DIVISION I – Typically larger schools with highly competitive sports; scholarships available.
- DIVISION II – Traditionally medium size schools with more regional orientation; scholarships may be available.
- DIVISION III – Smaller schools; no athletic scholarships awarded.
- NAIA – Smaller schools, athletic scholarships may be available.

### NCAA Initial Eligibility

During the Sophomore or Junior year, it is recommended that prospective athletes register with the NCAA Initial Eligibility Center in order to determine initial eligibility. The NCAA will evaluate transcripts and test scores to determine if each recruited athlete meets minimum eligibility requirements (listed on the next page). Register online at [www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.net](http://www.ncaaeligibilitycenter.net) Phone: 1-877-262-1492

## Planning College Visits & College Rep Visits to Holland Hall

Visiting prospective colleges can be a big help in your decision-making. A visit provides a first-hand impression for you and your family about people, programs and facilities. The exchange of information and the impressions gained on both sides should be meaningful.

IMPORTANT: BEFORE a college visit can be counted as an excused absence, a student must complete and submit the College Visit Permission Form available in the Attendance Office. The form requires signatures from a parent, all teachers, and a college counselor. A phone call to the Attendance Office, from a parent, is also required in advance of the visit.

- Register 2-3 weeks in advance for an appointment. Check the website or call.
- Learn everything you can about the college from its website before you visit.
- Ask if the college requires an evaluative interview.
- Take along an unofficial copy of your transcript.
- Allow enough time to get the feel of the campus.
- Take pictures.
- Make notes of your reactions and impressions.
- It is highly recommended that you visit a college BEFORE you apply.
- Thank everyone you met during your visit by writing hand-written notes of appreciation.
- Inform your college counselor of the outcome of your college visit.

#### **Guidelines for Visiting with College Representatives At Holland Hall**

- With written teacher permission, juniors and seniors are allowed to miss classes for college representative visits on the Holland Hall campus. **Students must also reserve their seat in the meeting through their SCOIR account.**
- Sophomores and freshmen are encouraged to attend college representative visits but only if they do not have a class, or they receive written teacher permission.
- \*Yellow permission slips for attending a college rep visit are located in the College Counseling Office.

## **Holland Hall Testing Policy**

Holland Hall observes the following policies in regard to testing.

#### **RECOMMENDED:**

- Pre-ACT - October of the Freshman year. This is a practice ACT. Holland Hall registers all freshmen students for this test.

- PSAT/NMSQT – October of Sophomore and Junior years. Holland Hall registers all students for this exam. This is a practice SAT. Only scores from the junior year are used in the National Merit Scholarship search.
- SAT – Second semester or summer following junior year and October or November of Senior year.
- ACT – Second semester or summer following Junior year and October or December of the Senior year.
- Students have "Selective Choice" when submitting their ACT/SAT scores. For this reason, Holland Hall does not submit test scores to the colleges. Students must contact the appropriate testing agency to have their scores sent to colleges.

Students who have a psychoeducational evaluation, which qualifies them for test accommodations, should contact Mrs. Dee Laskey in Support Services at Ext. 4752. Both SAT (College Board) and ACT require students to complete an application to *request* test accommodations. **The SAT request is typically made during a student's sophomore year. ACT will not consider a request for accommodations until the student has registered and paid to take a test, which is usually done during the second semester of the junior year.**

All requests for accommodations must include a parent signature giving permission to release confidential information to the testing services.

**Students may register online for both the ACT and SAT. Please refer to the web sites below for current test dates and registration information:**

**SAT:** [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

To register, send your score reports, to receive your score over the phone, or to change your test center or test date, call: Customer Service: Toll Free: 1-866-756-7346. Hours: Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. CST

**ACT:** [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)

To register, send your score reports, to receive your score over the phone, or to change your test center or test date, call: Customer Service: 1-319-337-1270. Hours: Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. CST

## Glossary of College Terms

**ACT** - American College Test

The test is composed of four 35-50 minute sections in English usage, mathematics, reading and natural science reasoning plus an optional writing test. It tests both reasoning ability and knowledge of specific subject matter. Use of calculators is allowed on the mathematics portion of the exam. Again, please register for the ACT *with* the optional writing portion of the test.

**AP TESTS** – Advanced Placement Tests are given at the end of AP coursework each spring. High scores can earn advanced standing in colleges, with or without college credit.

**CALENDAR PLAN** – This describes the number and length of terms per year: semester (2 terms), trimester (3 terms), quarter (4 terms), and various other plans such as “4-1-4” (a 4-month term, followed by a 1 month term, followed by a final 4-month term).

**CANDIDATE’S REPLY DATE** – A college may require an applicant to notify the college by this date as to the intentions of the applicant to enroll in that college. The national reply date is May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**CONSORTIUM**–A group of institutions which have joint educational programs and which have joined together to promote their institutions.

**E.T.S.** – Educational Testing Service. Phone: 609-921-9000. The center is in Princeton, New Jersey and handles all of the registration and score reports for the College Board Tests-SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP exams.

**F.A.F.S.A.** – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. (Form used to apply for need-based financial aid from Federal Student financial aid programs offered by the U. S. Department of Education.) The FAFSA form is available on line at FAFSA.ed.gov. after January 1 of the student’s senior year.

**CSS PROFILE** – The Financial Aid PROFILE Service (PROFILE for short) is offered by the College Scholarship Service (CSS). CSS is the financial aid division of the College Board, a national, non-for-profit association of colleges, universities, high schools, state agencies, and educational associations. The PROFILE Service is used by selected colleges, universities, and scholarship programs to award their own private funds. Check with a college’s financial aid department or consult its website to see if the college requires the CSS PROFILE.

**SAT** - The test includes two twenty-five minute and one twenty minute critical reading (old verbal) sections, two twenty-five minute and one twenty minute math sections, one twenty-five minute and one ten minute multiple choice writing section and one twenty-five minute essay. Special administration of this test for students physically impaired or with documented learning disabilities is possible. Contact the Upper School Learning Specialist, Mrs. Debbie Brokaw at X 752.

## Definitions of Admission Options

See the chart below for additional clarification.

**DEFERRED** – Candidates not accepted during Early Action or Early Decision Admission may be reconsidered along with the Regular Decision applicants.

**EARLY ACTION** – Initiated in 1976-77 by the Ivy League colleges. This plan involves a **non-binding** commitment between the student and the college. The admission committee will

review the student's application earlier than those of students applying under regular decision, and will inform the student of its decision usually during December.

**EARLY ACTION-SINGLE CHOICE** – A recently developed plan offered by a few select colleges, Early Action-Single Choice applicants enter a non-binding agreement similar to Early Action but agree not to file any other early action applications.

**EARLY DECISION** – This plan involves a **binding** commitment between the student and the college. The admission committee will review the student's application earlier than those of students applying for Regular Decision, and the committee will inform the student of its decision before April 15 (usually during December). In turn, the student, if accepted, is ethically committed to attending the college and to canceling (or not submitting) applications to any other colleges. Obviously, a student can submit an Early Decision application to only one college. Colleges act on an Early Decision application in one of three ways: accept, defer, or deny. If an Early Decision student is deferred, he/she is no longer ethically committed to the particular institution.

**REGULAR ADMISSION** – Most colleges have a particular deadline for the receipt of applications which may be from January 1 on. In this type of admission plan, the college informs applications about admissions on a specific date, anytime before April 15, and the student is asked to respond to an acceptance notification by May 1.

**ROLLING ADMISSIONS (EARLY NOTIFICATION)** – Applications are considered as soon as all required materials (application form, fees, transcript, evaluations, test scores) are received by the college. It is important not to apply too early if you feel that your fall test scores and/or your 7<sup>th</sup> semester grades will place you in a better position for acceptance. Students are notified as soon as the decisions are made, usually from four to six weeks after completion of the application.

**WAIT LIST** – The college admission committee has favorably considered your application but is over subscribed. Your application will be reconsidered, likely in late spring or early summer, depending on space available. It is the student's responsibility to inform the college that he/she would like to remain on the waitlist. There is often a specific process for remaining on a waitlist.

*Holland Hall, in compliance with all applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, does not discriminate against qualified individuals on the bases of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, sexual orientation or disability in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This includes but is not limited to admission, financial aid, and educational services.*