



INVICTUS ACADEMY
OF RICHMOND

Welcome to College Access Night

College Access Night

March 30, 2023

**Build a Competitive 4-Year
College Application Now!**



Some of the factors 4- year colleges consider when looking at students are:

- Grades/ GPA
- Course rigor
- Standardized test scores
- Extracurricular activities
- Awards/ Accomplishments
- Essays



Grades/ GPA:



Grades/ GPA:

Grades are the most significant factor in a college's admission decisions.

The better your grades →

The higher your GPA →

The more college options you have/ the better chances you have of being accepted



Grades/ GPA:

Colleges do not like to see student's fail classes (get D's or F's).

For many schools there are certain classes that you must pass (get grade of C or better).

- Example: for the UCs/ CSUs you need to take and pass 4 years of English, 3 of math, 3 of history, 2 of science, 2 of a foreign language, and 1 year of art.



Minimum GPA requirements

There are minimum GPA requirements to consider.

- **CSUs** (CSU East Bay, Sonoma State, Sacramento State, CSU Chico, SF State, etc.) have a **2.5 minimum GPA** requirement.
- **UCs** (UC Berkeley, UCLA, UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz, etc.) have a **3.0 minimum GPA** requirement.

Though it's important to know that meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee you will be accepted.



Average GPA

To get a better idea of your chances of being accepted, look at a colleges average GPA for accepted students.

Here are some examples:

UC Berkeley	4.15
Stanford	3.95
UC Santa Cruz	3.76
Sacramento State University	3.42
San Francisco State University	3.26
Lincoln University (in Oakland)	2.60



GPA

Again, GPA is the most significant factor when colleges make admissions decisions so make sure to encourage your students to do their best.

Students, take your grades seriously! I know that as middle school, 9th, and 10th graders college may seem really far away, but it's closer than you think and colleges will be looking at all of your high school grades.



Course Rigor



Course Rigor

Colleges want to see that you are taking difficult classes (like AP classes or college classes). This shows colleges that you are able to handle more challenging work.

Make sure that you take AP or college classes that you think you will be successful in. It does not help to take harder classes if you do not pass.



Standardized Tests



Standardized Tests

There are two tests colleges consider, but only one is necessary. Students would register, pay for (unless they are eligible for the fee waiver), and take these test in their junior year.



SAT[®]



Standardized Test Policies

Not all colleges require standardized test scores anymore. There are colleges that are:

- Test required- you must take the SAT and/or ACT and submit scores as part of your application or you will not be considered
- Test optional- if you submit your scores, they will consider it for admissions (this is great if you have a strong score that can give your application a boost)
- Test blind- the college will NOT consider your scores for admissions even if you submit them.



Standardized Tests

You and your child can investigate colleges testing policies online or even call colleges admissions office to see if they require the SAT/ACT.

If you do want to take the SAT/ACT because colleges you are interested in are “test required” or “test optional” make sure to do your very best. There are free practice materials at invictusofrichmond.org/college-corner that you can start anytime!

Quick Resources

[SCHOLARSHIP LIST](#)

[SUMMER PROGRAM LIST](#)

[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES LIST](#)

[FREE SAT PRACTICE](#)

[FREE ACT PRACTICE](#)

[EXTRACURRICULAR LOG](#)

[BRAG SHEET](#)

Extracurricular Activities



Extracurricular Activities

Many colleges want well-rounded students on their campus, who are involved in activities outside of academics. Things that count as extracurricular activities are:

- clubs / organizations (in and out of school)
- sports (in and out of school)
- summer programs
- volunteer work/ community service
- Internships/ paid work



Extracurricular Activities

Through extracurricular activities colleges want to see:

- A student's commitment
 - It is not necessary to be involved in a ton of different activities, instead colleges want to see you do a few things well and be more involved.
- Their interests/ passions
 - Take part in activities that are interesting to you. It can be exploring hobbies/interests or exploring possible career paths.
- Leadership
 - If opportunities to become a leader/ take on more responsibility is possible, take it! Colleges want leaders.



Extracurricular Activities

Get involved ASAP!

If you have not joined a club/ organization, played a sport, done volunteer work, participated in a summer program, or taken part in an internship start looking for these opportunities now.



Clubs/ Organizations

You can join clubs/organization on campus or in your community.

On campus:

- GSA
- Student Council
- Cooking Matters Club

In your community:

- Church groups/ organizations
- Girl Scouts
- Cultural/ non-cultural dance groups (baile folklórico, ballet, hip hop dance, etc.)
- Students can even create their own groups! (running club, stargazers club, book club, hiking club, etc.)



Sports

You can join sports teams on campus or in your community.

On campus:

Volleyball (girls)	Basketball (boys)
Soccer (boys & girls)	Cheer (co-ed)
Track (co-ed)	

In your community:

- Club teams



Volunteer/ Community Service

There are tons of opportunities you can find in your community (shelters, food banks, libraries, YMCA, community centers, thrift stores, non-profits, clinics/hospitals, and many more). You can go in/call and ask if they have volunteer opportunities available. Sharing a bit about yourself and why you are interested in volunteering there helps!

You can also find opportunities at “College Corner” on Invictus Website.

Quick Resources

[SCHOLARSHIP LIST](#)

[FREE SAT PRACTICE](#)

[EXTRACURRICULAR LOG](#)

[SUMMER PROGRAM LIST](#)

[FREE ACT PRACTICE](#)

[BRAG SHEET](#)

[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES LIST](#)



Summer Programs

Summer programs can focus on variety of topics:

- Some help students explore career paths (i.e. medicine, journalism, engineering, coding, law, art, and many more)
- Leadership
- Helping students prepare for college

You can find opportunities at “College Corner” on Invictus Website.

Quick Resources

[SCHOLARSHIP LIST](#)

[SUMMER PROGRAM LIST](#)

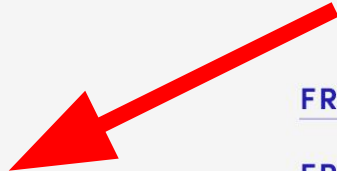
[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES LIST](#)

[FREE SAT PRACTICE](#)

[FREE ACT PRACTICE](#)

[EXTRACURRICULAR LOG](#)

[BRAG SHEET](#)



Extracurriculars

9th-11th graders- if you have not gotten involved in extracurricular activities yet, start now ASAP!

If you have already started getting involved...

9th graders- This is the time to explore. Try different things and find the ones that interest you the most, that you want to continue and devote more time to.

10th graders- Find those extracurriculars that you are most excited about and start to look for leadership opportunities. It can be an actual formal role you take on, or just added responsibilities.

11th graders- Continue to take in part in those extracurriculars, take on those leadership roles, and continue to build good relationships with the adults supervising you (they can be great options for letters of recommendation).



Track your Extracurriculars!

You will be filling out college applications your senior year. In order to remember all the activities you participated in since 9th grade, keep an extracurricular log!

You can find a template on the invictus website, under “College Corner”.

Quick Resources

[SCHOLARSHIP LIST](#)

[SUMMER PROGRAM LIST](#)

[VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES LIST](#)

[FREE SAT PRACTICE](#)

[FREE ACT PRACTICE](#)

[EXTRACURRICULAR LOG](#)

[BRAG SHEET](#)



Track your Extracurriculars!

The more details you add now, the better off you will be senior year!

Include dates, titles, descriptions, supervisor names and contact info!

My Extracurricular Activities Log

Instructions:

For each activity, include:

- Name of the Activity/ Organization
- Your title (if you have one). For example: President, VP, Captain, volunteer, cashier
- The dates you participated
- A description of what you do

School Activities (Examples: Student government, school clubs, etc.)

Community Clubs/ Organizations (Examples: Church groups, Boy/Girl Scout, etc.)

Sports (Examples: school sports, club sports, community sports)

Volunteer Work

Work Experience

Special Talents (Examples: playing an instrument, singing, dancing, drawing, etc.)

Awards, honors, or other achievements

Awards & Accomplishments



Awards/ Accomplishments

While not hugely important, they can help you tell a story. Awards and accomplishments demonstrate what you are putting your time, effort, and energies into.

For example: If you are interested in becoming a writer and enter a national short story writing competition and win an award this shows that you are already putting your time and effort towards this goal. Colleges love to see that!

The more competitive the award the better it looks.



Awards/ Accomplishments

Similar to extracurriculars, track the awards you've received! Use the extracurricular log.

Some examples of awards at Invictus that you can include on your college application:

- Student of semester
- School Values award (Positivity, Purpose, Growth, Kindness, etc.)
- Student of the week
- Changemaker Award

My Extracurricular Activities Log

Instructions:

For each activity, include:

- Name of the Activity/ Organization
- Your title (if you have one). For example: President, VP, Captain, volunteer, cashier
- The dates you participated
- A description of what you do

School Activities (Examples: Student government, school clubs, etc.)

Community Clubs/ Organizations (Examples: Church groups, Boy/Girl Scout, etc.)

Sports (Examples: school sports, club sports, community sports)

Volunteer Work

Work Experience

Special Talents (Examples: playing an instrument, singing, dancing, drawing, etc.)

Awards, honors, or other achievements



College Essays



Essays

They are a great opportunity to tell colleges more about yourself. You can share things about yourself that didn't get shared in the rest of the application or elaborate on things you feel need more explanation.

The UC's require that you answer 4 out of 8 of their Personal Insight questions.

If you are applying to a college through the common app, you will have to write a personal essay (choose 1 out of 7 prompts)



Essays

How can you prepare for the essays now?

- Do your English/ History assignments!
 - This is the first impression a college will have about you, make sure that you are articulating yourself as best you can and demonstrating your best writing skills.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities
 - Many of the prompts will be easier to tackle if you are involved in extracurricular activities. They often set you up perfectly to discuss these experiences.



Essay Prompts (UC PIQS)

- Describe an example of your leadership experience in which you have positively influenced others, helped resolve disputes or contributed to group efforts over time.
- Every person has a creative side, and it can be expressed in many ways: problem solving, original and innovative thinking, and artistically, to name a few. Describe how you express your creative side.
- What would you say is your greatest talent or skill? How have you developed and demonstrated that talent over time?
- Describe how you have taken advantage of a significant educational opportunity or worked to overcome an educational barrier you have faced.



Essay Prompts (UC PIQS) continue

- Describe the most significant challenge you have faced and the steps you have taken to overcome this challenge. How has this challenge affected your academic achievement?
- Think about an academic subject that inspires you. Describe how you have furthered this interest inside and/or outside of the classroom.
- What have you done to make your school or your community a better place?
- Beyond what has already been shared in your application, what do you believe makes you a strong candidate for admissions to the University of California?



Essay

11th grade students-something you can start doing now to prepare is to start your first draft of college essays!

If you are applying to UC's start your first draft PIQS.
If you are applying through common app start your first draft personal essay.

The sooner you start, the more time you have to edit and have others review your essay. This is a very important part of the application and should NOT be left to the last minute.



Letters of Recommendation



Letters of Recommendation

Some colleges are interested in learning more about students through the lens of adults in their life (that they are NOT related to), like teachers, mentors, counselors, coaches, supervisors, etc.

You will not need to ask for a letter until senior year, when you are completing the college application. But for now, what you can do is build relationships with adults around you!

Make sure that by the time you get to senior year, you will have 2-3 teachers/ coaches/ mentors/ etc. that you think can write you a great letter of recommendation.



Holistic Review



Holistic review means that colleges look at the whole student. They take into consideration their GPA, class schedule, extracurriculars, essays, etc.

What that means is that if you are not as strong as you'd like in one area, you can make up for it in other areas!

- Perhaps you are already giving it your all in classes but your grades are still not where you want them to be... take on some leadership in your extracurriculars and put in a lot of effort into your essays.
- Or perhaps you can't get as involved with activities as you'd like to be for personal/family reasons...make sure to keep your grades up as much as possible and work to develop good relationships with your teachers for strong letters of recommendation.



This does not mean that you can let your grades slip and try to make up for it in other ways, because grades are still the most important factors colleges look at.

But it means that you do not have to be perfect in all areas of your application.



Invictus Staff Experiences

What factor(s) do you think made you stand out?



Ms. Silva

Colleges (accepted to):

Georgetown University, UCLA,
UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz,
Fresno State, Stanislaus State,
and 2 other CSU.

What helped me: Grades &
Extracurricular Involvement



Ms. Silva



- GPA: 4.2
- Not great SAT & ACT scores
- Extracurricular: Community service (volunteer at a thrift store), Key Club, Rotary Club, Khi-Rho (Church youth group with heavy emphasis on volunteering), CLYLP summer program



Ms. Garcia

Colleges (accepted to):

UC Berkeley, St. John's University, Mount St. Mary's, UC Davis, Cal State: Northridge, Los Angeles and San Bernardino.

What helped me:

Personal statement and extracurricular activities



Ms. Garcia



- GPA: 3.92
- ACT Composite Score: 15
- Extracurricular: NHS member, Student Council (member & President), Cheer club, tutoring.
- Internships: Homies Unidos & Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital
- Jobs: Subway



Ms. Martino

Colleges (accepted to):

Stanford, UC Berkeley,
UCLA, USC, Columbia,
Cornell, Harvard, MIT,
WVU, WV Wesleyan,
Tulane, Washington
University in St. Louis,
Johns Hopkins

What helped me:

Personal Statement



Ms. Rahlson

Colleges (accepted to):

University of Pennsylvania,
University of Virginia, Boston
College, Tufts University, Elon
University, Rutgers University

What helped me:

Extracurriculars &
Relationship with Admissions
Rep



It is important to know that these are what many **4 year colleges** look at. Another option is community colleges, which requires a lot less.

They only require that a student have a High School Diploma and be a California resident, then they are automatically accepted.

Students will be unable to get a Bachelor's degree there, but they can get an associates, training for a vocational career, and/or apply to transfer to a 4 year college to finish off their studies and get a BA/BS from the 4 year college.



College Access Newsletter

Monthly newsletter sharing college related events happening on and off campus, college advice, great opportunities for students to get involved, and scholarships.

If you are not already receiving the College Access Newsletter sign up using QR code!



SCAN ME

Questions?

¿Preguntas?

Future questions:

Email vsilva@invictusofrichmond.org

