

THE RIGHT COLLEGE

1990



THE RIGHT COLLEGE

1990

*College Research Group of
Concord, Massachusetts*



**Arco
New York**

including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form

Simon & Schuster, Inc.
Gulf + Western Building
One Gulf + Western Plaza
New York, NY 10023

DISTRIBUTED BY PRENTICE HALL

Manufactured in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ISBN: 0-13-281238-8 (paper)

0-13-281250-5 (hardcover)

12214 0899-1388

009-371-508

0091157



THE RIGHT COLLEGE

Copyright © 1989 by Arco Publishing,
a division of Simon & Schuster, Inc.
All rights reserved
including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form



ARCO

Simon & Schuster, Inc.
Gulf + Western Building
One Gulf + Western Plaza
New York, NY 10023

DISTRIBUTED BY PRENTICE HALL TRADE SALES

Manufactured in the United States of America

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ISBN: 0-13-781238-8 (paper)

0-13-781220-5 (hardcover)

ISSN 0899-1588

ARCO
New York

Which is *your* right college?

- ✓ Which colleges have your major and course interest?
- ✓ Which have extracurricular activities that interest you?
- ✓ Which colleges do you fit into socially?
- ✓ Do any provide special facilities or services?
- ✓ Do you meet the admissions requirements?
- ✓ What financial assistance is available?
- ✓ What college trends in 1990 do you need to know before deciding?

Make the *right* choice with *The Right College 1990*.

Containing more information than any other individual college guide on the market, *The Right College 1990* helps you make an informed and satisfying choice of the right college for you.

"The book will be an excellent addition to my resource library."

Laraine Canzonetta, Guidance Counselor
Orange H.S., Pepper Pike, Ohio

"The Right College...is tremendous!...As a college admissions and scholarship counselor, I am delighted to have this book."

Joyce D. Winkler, Counselor
Phoenix H.S., Phoenix, Oregon

"We have highly recommended it to our colleagues and urged them to purchase their copies immediately."

Christine Fath, Counselor
Sierra Vista H.S., Baldwin Park, California

Preface

Arco's The Right College 1990 was developed to help students, parents, and counselors arrive at the right choice of a college by furnishing them the "right" information with which to make their choice. Although there is a great deal of published information for college-bound students today, much of it is outdated, or not relevant for those needing accurate, timely, and complete answers to their questions regarding the choice of the "right" college.

Arco has selected College Research Group (CRG) to compile the information presented in this book. Since 1938, CRG and its predecessor, Educational Research Corporation, a nonprofit organization established by members of the faculty of Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, have been conducting research in the area of college admissions. Over the past fifty years both groups have been supplying college profiles on an annual basis to major book publishers, computer software developers, industrial firms, and educational organizations.

CRG's database is the most complete and up-to-date information source on American colleges available today. All college information stored in CRG's computer system has been furnished by the colleges' admissions staffs and supplemented with information supplied by representative students.

The CRG data-gathering and analysis cycle is extensive and thorough. Each year every four-year college in the U.S. (and selected, accredited Canadian, Mexican, and European colleges) completes a comprehensive questionnaire as soon as the college's programs and activities for the coming year are finalized. This information is analyzed by CRG's research and editorial staff; it is then entered into the CRG computer's database. In the spring of each year, tuition update forms are sent to every college for reporting of tuition, room, board, and fees for the coming fall semester as soon as they are established. Colleges who fail to respond by mail are telephoned by an editor before going to press with the final version of the college's description.

Once all college information has been updated in CRG's database computer, it is transferred to an electronic publishing system that quickly generates the completed book in a form ready for printing. With this advanced publishing system, it is possible to furnish finished books to college-bound students within weeks of the receipt of information from the colleges. This assures students, parents, counselors, and librarians of having the very latest and most complete data available on four-year colleges.

Because of its advantages over conventional publishing procedures, Arco selected CRG's electronic publishing system to produce the college entries and indexes included in this book. The user will quickly discover the value of this in-depth and relevant information in seeking out the "right" college for his or her education.

We'd like to acknowledge the diligent efforts of our editors, Susan Harris, Peggy Liversidge, Joan Rolfe, and Nicole Wieber, database programmer Harry K. Otaguro, and Jennifer Chalupa.

Allan B. Corderman
President,
College Research Group

Rebecca A. Basch
Managing Editor-Publications,
College Research Group

Linnea Meyer
Managing Editor-Database,
College Research Group

Choosing and Applying to College

by Karen Clagett, Lecturer in English, Boston College

Selecting a College

"How can I possibly choose?" you probably ask despairingly when you realize that there are over 1,500 four-year colleges and universities in the U.S., each with its own individual character. Yet, by the fall of your senior year, your counselor has told you, you will need a list of between one and six colleges to which you will apply.

How can you do this? First, it helps to remember that high school students tackle this challenge every year, that many people experienced in college admissions stand ready to help you, and that most students are successful in gaining admission to their favorite college and very happy with the choices they do make. The College Board publication *College Times* reported that data from the American Council on Education and UCLA show that about 76 percent of 1986 college freshmen were attending their institution of first choice and another 24 percent were attending their second choice institution. Even many of the top-ranked, selective colleges admit 40 percent of those who apply. Second, remember that every seemingly complicated process can be broken down into smaller steps you can take on one at a time – that's what this section is all about. It will show you what to do and when, and tell you why you should do it.

Most important piece of advice: *No one college is the only one for you.* Think of what you want from "ideal" colleges; don't have any one or two real institutions in mind. You have to be open to the exploration of lots of possibilities and you have to be willing to make compromises and set priorities. Please remember that what is an excellent choice for you may be a poor choice for your closest friend, or may have been a poor choice for a parent or older sibling. You've got to begin by considering yourself.

By all means, listen to what people have to say about colleges and collect information on colleges throughout high school. Early groundwork avoids later panic. But, before you can make a good match between you and one of those schools, you must consider what kind of person you are and what you would like to be and do in the future. *Throughout this whole process, it is essential to be honest with yourself and others.*

To ponder in all those spare moments between algebra tests and basketball games:

1. What do I like to do? What am I good at?

Do you like to work with people, ideas, machines, your hands, facts and figures?

Do you want to be involved with the arts? business? law? medicine? selling?

What do you like best in school? Least? Why?

Do you enjoy being out-of-doors?

What extracurricular interests do you wish to continue? to begin?

What frustrates you? worries you?

What do you look forward to?

2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of my character and personality and how might they affect my choices?

Are you organized, impulsive, aggressive, reserved, a leader, a follower?

Are you a self-starter or do you need structure?

Are you comfortable with new people and tasks or do you enjoy routine?

Are you a perfectionist? Do you need some control over your environment?

3. Why do I want to go to college? What might be alternatives?

Do you want to go to college because you want to learn to think critically and to analyze, to gain cultural perspective and historical information, to get a good job (personally satisfying, well-paying or both?), to have fun, to meet new people and make contacts, to participate in extracurricular activities, to please your parents, to do what everybody else is doing?

4. What kind of environment do I wish to live in for the next few years?

Are you comfortable in a small or large area? Should students be culturally, religiously, and economically homogenous? heterogeneous? Do you want to be near a city? in the country? near home? far away?

5. What are my goals? And (realistically) what careers will be best suited to them?

How highly do you value fame, fortune, creativity, intellectual challenge, security, helping others? How well do you know what kind of preparation leads to various careers? Which careers interest you now? How can you find out more about what careers mean in terms of lifestyle?

Answering these questions isn't easy. Your answers will change over the next few years and probably throughout your life. Many answers will involve a combination of ideas and reactions, but you might want to try to list your strengths and weaknesses and ask others to make a list for you and compare. Discuss these ideas with parents, teachers, peers. Think about the people you admire. Why do you respect them?

This self-assessment will help you decide such specific questions as whether you wish to attend a small liberal arts college or a large, research-oriented university. You will need to match what you learn about yourself with what you discover about the environment of the institutions you consider attending. You might learn that

you would benefit from a year off to study abroad or work before college. You might want to explore vocational schools or the military. Almost anything you might choose to do, from applying to college to filling out job applications, will require that you present yourself, and to do that you have to have a sense of who you are. The grappling you do with these admittedly difficult questions will help you in such specific tasks as interviewing and essay writing where a good knowledge of yourself is invaluable.

Of course, you know that you can't spend your four years of high school solely on philosophical considerations. What else should you do to prepare for application to college? What you also need to do—and the earlier in high school you start the better—falls into two areas. One specifically concerns research on colleges and universities, taking standardized tests, and writing applications. The other is what you can do as a student to enlarge your options by becoming the strongest possible candidate.

Let's take the second first. What can you do *right now* to make yourself a better applicant and your application a successful one?

1. Make certain that your high school courses are challenging and appropriate.

Sample a variety of courses, but be sure that reading and writing courses are an important part of your curriculum. Colleges know that success in further education requires good skills in these areas. And, don't forget math. Lots of career possibilities depend on confidence and ability in mathematics. Remember you will need to show to admissions officers that you are willing to take academic chances and to stretch your mind. A "B" grade in a demanding honors course, if you have been working hard, is better than an "A" in a less challenging class. If your interest and talent lie in one area—say the sciences or foreign languages—take additional courses. Work for a balanced program, however, that involves you in most disciplines. Be sure to follow through; don't stop a sequence of courses in a discipline you may later continue. Be aware, too, that colleges have minimum requirements. Your counselor and college catalogues can help you discover what they are. When you do well in a course for which there is an achievement test or an advanced placement examination, arrange to take that test as near as possible to completion of the course. Check with your college counselor for the best date.

2. Keep your best work—whether done in or out of the classroom.

Fantastic photographs, scorching editorials, prize-winning flower collections should all be documented. Some college applications will offer you a chance to submit supplementary material that demonstrates your achievement, and almost all admissions interviewers will be happy to discuss areas of real interest to you. Some colleges are now even requiring you to submit an essay you have written for a high school course. Be prepared.

3. Read.

If you like reading—you're off to a great start. Try to

expand areas of knowledge by consciously making the effort to read about ideas and subjects that are new to you. Stay in touch with current events through newspapers and magazines. Take out and read a 19th-century British novel or two; there is no better way of enlarging your vocabulary to prepare for the rigors of college reading or for the vocabulary sections of the SAT's.

If you think you don't like to read, don't despair. Reading is habit-forming. You need only the discipline to set up a reading plan. Start small. Begin by reading for fifteen or twenty minutes *every day* something that really interests you. There are magazines for almost every hobby and talent. Whether it is fashion or sports, photography or romance that interests you, with a little effort you can find reading material. As soon as you feel that you've established a pattern of reading, move to new fields. Weekly news magazines offer a variety of articles, have good vocabulary, and allow you to improve your general knowledge while you work on reading skills.

4. Establish good study habits now.

If you find it is difficult to get homework done with Mom supervising and daily quizzes threatening, imagine how tough it will be when your only check on you is yourself and that one exam at the end of the semester. If you are not an organized person, begin to use lists and assignment books to get on top of things. Look ahead a week or more to prepare for tests and papers, keep neat and informative notebooks, and go to teachers for help before they come after you. *Ask questions.* You are responsible for your education. Asking good questions involves you in the class, makes it more interesting, helps you understand and remember what is going on, and impresses teachers favorably.

5. Find time (somehow) for that one thing you do well or like best and pursue it.

Colleges often have tons of "well-rounded" applicants, but someone who can play the French horn in the orchestra, direct a student performance, run for a touchdown, or organize campus events really adds to the college community—and admissions officers know it. Devotion to and achievement in one special activity demonstrate your self-discipline and your ability for sustained effort.

What is great about this list is that following it pays off twice. You'll get a better education and be a stronger applicant. Now, what do you need to do about that college list?

A Calendar for Selecting and Applying to College

Freshman and Sophomore years (and beyond)

1. Begin by getting to know your teachers and counselors well.

You needn't be teacher's pet or loiter around the Guidance Office, but, let's face it, teachers and counsel-

ors are busy people. You need to make the effort so that communication is easier, so you'll be able to ask for help easily. The better others know you, the more they can help you, and, it must be remembered, the more fully they can write about you on recommendation forms. Always ask questions about anything that confuses you in the process of applying to college and try to anticipate problems. For example, an important question would be "Can I take every achievement test every time the tests are offered?" The answer is "No." If you want to take an achievement test in German or Hebrew or a number of other subjects, you need to know when they are given.

2. Be a collector of all information about colleges.

Talk with relatives, friends, alums of your school. Attend college nights and college fairs. Use football games or art shows or plays as an excuse to get on local campuses. Even if you want to attend college far away from home, a visit to a nearby campus can bring such issues as the best campus size, location, and curriculum offerings into perspective for you. Always keep in mind the source of your information; not everyone is objective or shares your concerns. Read newspaper and magazine articles on issues of higher education. Look at campus publications. Learn what resources your guidance office offers—computer software, catalogues, videos, viewbooks. Begin flipping through the pages on specific colleges and universities in this guide.

Junior Year

If you're reading this as a junior, you just have to work a little harder and more quickly. Don't neglect the suggestions under Freshman and Sophomore years.

1. Make an appointment with your guidance counselor for your parents and you.

You will want to discuss what you must do to improve your preparation for both college and college selection.

2. Get a social security number.

You'll need it to apply for college, financial aid, and jobs.

3. Work conscientiously on your self-assessment.

4. List the college features you value. Consider:

A. In what kind of environment are you comfortable, challenged?

o **Size** (small – under 2,500, medium – 2,500 to 8,000, large – 8,000 to 15,000, jumbo – over 15,000). Do you value individual attention or do you want a vast variety of course offerings? How important is it to you to know many of your fellow students? to have access to faculty? to have a sense of control over your environment? Do you enjoy working with vastly different kinds of people? Is it important to keep an almost family-like atmosphere in your dorm or do you long for autonomy?

o **What about location?** Is this your chance for the big city? Big cities mean excitement, lots of cultural and sports events, job opportunities. They also mean distractions from study and campus life (if indeed there is a campus), noise, and dirt.

Green pastures? Rural environments make outdoor clubs, ski trips, agricultural study easier. It may also be a long drive to another college for a date. Suburbia? Do you want to put some distance between you and home or do you want to get home on weekends?

B. Do you want to attend a liberal arts college, a business college, a university, a college for the performing arts, etc.? Have you chosen what you wish to study or do you need the more exploratory approach of liberal arts colleges? Does a core curriculum with course requirements make sense to you or do you want free choice of all classes?

C. Will you consider a *single-sex institution*—what are the advantages and disadvantages? (You might wish to talk with alumni/ae here.)

D. What *sports and other extracurricular activities* do you want to find? What special programs (such as junior year abroad) are attractive? Do you wish to participate in co-op education where you work and study at the same time? Do internships in government or business interest you?

E. How important is *financial aid*? Are the colleges you are interested in "need-blind"? Can they find the students they want? How many students receive some kind of aid?

F. How *selective* a college do you want and are you qualified to attend? Be both frank and realistic with yourself here and encourage counselors, teachers, and admissions officers to be the same. Read "How Competitive Colleges Select From Among Applicants" to help you here. Make lists and take notes.

5. Make a note of the tests (PSAT – Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test, SAT or ACT, achievements, etc.) that you should take and when they will be given so family activities may be planned accordingly.

Your counselor may have this information and registration details and deadlines already gathered together for you. Be certain to find out from teachers and counselors when it would be best for you to take specific achievement tests. Remember if you are considering applying Early Decision or Early Action to a college, you will need to take tests early. Fill out the Student Descriptive Questionnaire on the SAT form so that you'll be able to receive information from colleges and so searches by colleges interested in you will find you.

6. Write away for college catalogues and viewbooks when you become interested in an institution.

A simple postcard is fine. This is the time to ask for specifics on financial aid or on majors and programs that are of interest to you. Take a box or a drawer of your desk and buy file folders for it. Use a folder for each college and for special topics such as "Deadlines" or "Financial Aid."

7. In the spring develop a preliminary list of colleges.

Write or call for information from any that are new to your list. Think about visiting colleges for viewing and interviewing in the summer—especially if you are con-

sidering colleges that are far from home. Write ahead to schedule interviews—popular colleges become booked early. You won't have much time to spare next year and high schools frown on absences due to college visiting. Visit and interview now even if you later decide not to apply.

8. Consider participation in one of the many summer study programs and locate a summer job if you need to make money to help with college costs.

Try to make the most of your summer through an interesting job, travel with an academic program, or summer study. This is a chance for you to do something that will distinguish you from the rest.

9. If you think you may be an Early Decision or Early Action candidate, or if you are graduating early, you must have all required tests completed by July.

10. Know your grade point average and class rank.

Try to get a realistic picture of yourself as a candidate. Have a good talk about this with your college counselor.

Senior Year

Let's assume you've followed through with the calendar. (If not, you need to review earlier years and do some quick catching up.)

1. Remember that the first semester of your senior year is seen by many colleges as the most current and best indicator of the type of student you will be in college. You will be busy this semester, but do not neglect your school work.

2. In early fall, narrow your list of colleges to between five and ten. One way of narrowing your list is to think about applying to one college that is a "reach" for you in its selectivity but that offers what you really want, one or two colleges at which you have a 50-50 chance of acceptance, and one "safety." Remember that one way you

can "stretch" your options is to consider institutions outside of your geographical area. You should be happy to attend every college to which you apply, including your "safety." Your counselor can help here. Be sure you have application forms and all other materials for each. If you have not visited colleges on the list and it is at all possible to do so without missing too much school, call and make appointments. Call early.

3. Familiarize yourself with all applications and forms. Make a note of all important deadlines (for tests, registrations, applications, interviews, etc.). You will probably have to write at least one essay for each application. Jot down topics and begin to think about ideas. Separate school report forms and teacher recommendation forms from the pile of material you will keep. Give report forms to your counselor when you have your final list. (Occasionally a university may ask for the whole application to be submitted together, and you will need to take your part to school to be sent with your transcript and recommendations.) Select those teachers who know you and your work best and for whom you have done well, and ask them to complete teacher recommendation forms. Supply teachers with a list of your interests, activities, and accomplishments. Give teachers addressed, stamped envelopes for recommendations. Keep track of who is writing where, and be sure to note deadlines on the recommendations. Send thank-you notes to teachers.

4. Keep track of which colleges will be sending representatives to your school and make arrangements to meet with those from institutions in which you are interested.

5. Through your own thoughts, and discussion with counselors, parents, and others, get your list into final form and begin filling out applications.

How to Complete the Application Process

Standardized Tests You Will Take

The words "SAT scores" loom large in the world of high school juniors and seniors. To a student, the idea of being compared with thousands of others, ranked and "quantified" is more than scary. The scores sometimes seem a measure of his worth. Parents can do a great deal to alleviate the counterproductive anxiety that surrounds these tests by understanding this and by refraining from adding, however subtly, to the already considerable pressure.

It may help to know that while standardized tests are taken into account by most admissions offices, they can be low on the list of factors that determine admission. What they do is provide a measure of a student's ability

and achievement, but that reading must be given greater dimension by a knowledge of the student's environment and his school record. Usually tests are used in conjunction with a student's transcript to determine whether he is an overachiever (low scores, high grades—often good) or an underachiever (high scores, low grades—generally bad). An 800 score on a Math SAT can be damning if you are receiving a D in mathematics. A 550 in English coupled with a teacher recommendation that points to significant accomplishment and improvement, can demonstrate your motivation and grit. This does not mean that a student should not try to do his very best on the exam.

You do need to know what tests you will take, when you will take them, and how to prepare for them.

Students are given standardized tests throughout their school careers, but the following tests are specif-

ically related to the college admissions process. For all tests mentioned below, registration materials and sample test questions are available through high school counselors. The tests are listed in the order in which most students will take them.

1. PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test). This test is given in October of each year. Some students take the test only as juniors. Other students take the test for practice as sophomores. The test functions as a trial run for the SAT, and junior-year PSAT scores are used as qualification for National Merit Scholarships. Black and Hispanic students can use the test to qualify for other scholarships. The test has verbal and mathematical sections. A booklet that accompanies test results helps students interpret their scores.

2. and 3. SAT or ACT? Most American students take the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test). Some midwestern and southern universities and colleges require the ACT (American College Testing Assessment). Check with your counselor about which tests you should take.

The SAT. This is given a number of times throughout the year. Your counselor will let you know the dates it will be given at your school or in your area. Most students take the examination in late spring of their junior year and in autumn of their senior year. Some students also take the test early in the junior year for additional preparation. The SAT is a two-and-one-half-hour, multiple-choice exam measuring verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities. Vocabulary, verbal reasoning, and comprehension of reading material are tested in the English sections; arithmetic, elementary algebra, and geometry are covered in the math sections. The test is scored on a scale of 200 to 800, and a booklet useful in score interpretation accompanies the results.

The Test of Standard Written English (TSWE) is given at the same time as the SAT. It is a 30-minute, multiple-choice test that evaluates your knowledge of good grammar and correct expression.

The ACT. This test combines the ability orientation of the SAT with the accomplishment orientation of the achievement tests. The ACT measures educational development in English, mathematics, social studies, and the natural sciences. It tests a student's ability to reason and solve problems. It is a multiple-choice examination, and scores are reported on a scale of 1 to 36, 36 being the highest.

Achievement Tests. If you take the SAT, you will probably have to take several achievement tests, given in many disciplines. Some achievement tests evaluate disciplines not generally taught in high schools, e.g. Hebrew. If you have a special area of academic achievement, check for an examination covering it. The tests are one-hour, multiple-choice exams that measure knowledge in such areas as English, foreign languages, the sciences, history, and mathematics. To determine which and how many tests to take, you should consult the catalogues of the colleges in which you are interested for their specific requirements. You should also

check with your subject teachers especially in foreign languages and mathematics to be certain you are making the best decision. You will need, for example, to decide whether to take Mathematics Level One or Level Two and whether the number of years you have studied a foreign language makes the achievement test in that discipline a good choice for you. Your guidance or college counselor can also help here. Achievement tests are given more than once a year, and your counselor can advise you as to the appropriate date. You may wish to take a test in one discipline twice for practice. Some tests are given only *once* a year. Often a series of achievement tests are taken twice. *If you complete a course for which there is an achievement test—say biology in the 10th grade—you should arrange to take the test as near as possible to the date you completed the course.*

You will be given an opportunity to fill out the Student Descriptive Questionnaire when you take the SAT. Completing this will insure that you receive mail from colleges.

Scores for these tests are reported on the same 200 to 800 scale as the SAT.

4. AP (Advanced Placement). The AP examinations given each year in May allow able students who do well on the tests to receive college credit and/or advanced standing for work done while in high school. The examinations are given in many fields, and a student's school does not have to have an established AP course for students to take the test. While the exams vary from discipline to discipline, most involve both objective and essay sections and are several hours long. The test is scored from 1 to 5, with 5 the highest. Each institution treats the examinations differently, but many will grant college credit for scores from 3 to 5.

5. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). You will need to take this test if you have been in the U.S. only a few years and if English is not your native language. Consult your counselor for dates and information about this test.

6. CLEP (College-Level Exam Program). This series of examinations is designed to test knowledge gained by students through life experience as well as academic study. It involves a series of five examinations on general topics and several on specific subjects. Students and nonstudents interested in finding out more about these tests which allow college credit to those with demonstrated competency should check with the counselor at the nearest high school.

Students are given sample test questions with registration for all of these tests. Don't forget to read through them carefully.

“Can I Prepare for Standardized Tests?”

A conscientious, sustained effort through your school years supplemented by extensive reading is the most effective preparation for a test designed, like the

SAT, to gauge general abilities. Many evaluators of the scores of standardized tests say that the test separates readers from nonreaders, with the scores of readers significantly higher.

There are many prep courses for takers of the SAT. These courses can alleviate the anxiety and uncertainty centering around the test. By introducing you to the format of the test, giving you the basic strategies involved in analyzing and answering the different types of questions, they help to allay fears of the unknown. The drill offered in such courses can increase your speed and facility in dealing with the test through creating a familiarity with its structure and limits.

You can also improve your own skills by a self-directed program of drill, study, and practice testing. The College Board publishes *Taking the SAT*, given to you when you register for the test. Arco's Test Preparation books provide a complete course of review and reinforcement for all facets of standardized test taking. Learning analytical and study techniques may sharpen your awareness and understanding of the nature and structure of the tests. Sample exams allow you to develop reflexive, automatic skills through repetition and to analyze your strengths and weaknesses through explained answers. See reading list below for relevant titles.

Whether to take a preparation course is a purely personal decision. Do *not*, however, take an SAT course in place of a school English or other academic course. College admissions officers frown on such tactics.

For the Achievement Tests, the ACT, the AP, and the CLEP (all of which examine knowledge rather than ability), methodical, structured review will be very helpful. You will do best by planning out your review over a period of time. This will permit you to cover each phase of the material in some depth. For help in implementing your own study program, see the list below, and don't forget to use the samples given out when you register for the tests.

Reading List.

Following are a number of books published by Arco that cover all facets of the standardized tests taken by college-bound students. They may be ordered from Simon & Schuster, Inc., 200 Old Tappan Road, Old Tappan, New Jersey 07675.

Preparation for the SAT - Scholastic Aptitude Test, Seventh Edition, Deptula. *Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test*, Seventh Edition, Steinberg, M.A. *Verbal Workbook for the SAT*, Miller, Morse-Cluley, Freedman, Haller. *Vocabulary Builder for the SAT*, Deptula, Martinson, Fazzone. *Mathematics Workbook for the ACT*, Saunders, et al. *American College Testing Program (ACT)*, Steinberg, M.A. *Verbal Workbook for the ACT*, Lakritz. *Mathematics Workbook for the ACT*, Saunders, et al. *CLEP College-Level Examination Program*, Lieberman, Ph.D., et al. *Advanced Placement Examination in English: Composition and Literature*, Rozakis. *Advanced Placement Examination*

in Biology, Heller. *Advanced Placement Examination in Mathematics*, Smith, Griffin. *Advanced Placement Examination in American History*, Crum. *Advanced Placement Examination in Computer Science*, Schulman, Austin, Page.

The Campus Visit and Personal Interview

The interview is one of the scariest aspects of the college process. Many students feel shy speaking about themselves or unsure about what questions they should ask. The interview may even come relatively early in the selection process, before you are really set to think about college. It doesn't have to be horrific, however, and may be useful and fun if you follow a few suggestions.

As is said about so much in the college selection process, start early. Otherwise, if you are interested in highly competitive colleges, you may not even obtain an interview. Whenever possible, make arrangements by letter or phone *several months* before you plan to visit. Many colleges will arrange for you to spend a night in the dorms and attend classes if you ask well ahead of your visit. Try to get as much as possible of your campus visiting and interviewing done in the summer between junior and senior year. Senior year is a hectic round of academic responsibilities, extracurricular activities, and college application duties. It is hard to do much traveling then. You must also learn your school's policy about absence from classes for visiting colleges. Many schools discourage such absences during the fall of your important senior year. Abide by the rules; adhering to policy will save you and everyone else a lot of hassle. If you visit in the summer and a campus doesn't seem very lively or if you simply want to check it out again, there is the possibility of a return visit. Get started early.

Some colleges seem too far away for a visit. This may be true, but there are a few points you should consider before you give up the idea of a campus visit. First, would you buy a \$50,000 car without a test drive? That's what many four-year colleges will cost. Maybe you should get on that campus, somehow. It is extremely difficult to discover the character and personality of an institution without a visit. Second, if it is really impossible to visit, at least arrange for an alumni/ae interview. Most colleges and universities have alums in all areas of the country and will set up an interview for you. Second-hand information is better than none, but do consider whether the alumnus attended the institution recently or is up-to-date about it.

When you make your appointment, find out if the interview will be *evaluative* or *informative*. The first is a part of the admissions selection process and will be used to help determine how good a candidate you are. The second provides an opportunity for you to learn about the institution and is *not* a part of the selection process. You should know how the interview will be used before it begins.

How important is the interview? Well, as you can see, interviews are used differently by different colleges. In general, however, an evaluative interview that goes well will help keep you in the mind of the interviewer when decisions are made in the spring. Often interviews that do not go well are not held against students. Admissions officers are aware of the pressures involved and the natural tendency to be nervous. Still, it is obviously to your advantage to do as well as you can.

How can you have a good interview? Know something about yourself and about the institution before you arrive. Think about your strengths and weaknesses, your accomplishments and interests. Try to present yourself as confident, but not overly aggressive. Ask interesting questions (questions that do not cover material answered in the college's catalogue!). Dress neatly, but don't overdress. Sit up, show you are interested and interesting, and look your interviewer in the eye. This is not the time to hold back; you want to show who you are. Do not try to "psych out" the interviewer and give him what he wants to hear. He is a professional who interviews many students a day during the interview season. He will quickly see through any facade you present. Instead, try to encourage a real conversation. Colleges are looking for students who have a sense of themselves and where they may be heading. Through their selections, college admissions officers must create the community for the college. They need to feel you will contribute to and benefit from their institution so you should consider what makes each college and university you visit unique.

Questions you may encounter at an interview. You might like to practice answering some of these in a mock interview with a friend or parent who can offer an evaluation of the clarity, enthusiasm, and substance of your response.

1. Describe yourself. Do you think others see you as different from the way you see yourself? Why?
2. If you could change something about yourself, what would you change? Why?
3. How would you like to be remembered after you leave your college campus? at the end of your life?
4. What is your most important characteristic? Why?
5. Tell about a book, movie, television program, experience you have read, seen, had recently. Why did it have an impact on you?
6. Whom do you admire? Why?
7. Tell about your family and describe your relationships with family members.
8. What new areas of interest do you want to explore in college?
9. What especially attracts you to this institution?
10. What will you miss most when you leave your home and community?

When you go for your visit—Take a tour before your interview so that you'll be in a better position to ask questions and understand your interviewer's comments. Try to see as much as possible. Check out student facilities such as sports arenas, dining halls, bookstores, and pubs. Can you imagine yourself in these places? Does the size

of the campus seem comfortable? Are the facilities appropriate for pursuing your major interests? Eavesdrop on student conversations, and don't be shy about asking students questions. Most students will be flattered to be asked their opinions. They've been through the visiting process, too. Visit classes if possible. Try to evaluate the atmosphere of the campus. Friendly? Sophisticated? Hard-working? Fun-loving? Use your notebook or folders on colleges in which to record impressions. If your parents and friends are along, discuss impressions but try to do so after you have formed your own.

Other considerations in evaluating a college or university include the availability of internships, foreign study, intercampus exchanges, and independent study. How many students opt for these and how difficult are they to incorporate into a required program? How much flexibility in your choice of curriculum is there? Will you be required to take core courses or are you free to elect all courses? When do you need to decide on a major? Are double majors possible? Interdisciplinary, self-constructed majors? How many classes are you likely to have with under 20 students? over 50 or 75? What is the mix of commuter and residential students? Is the academic year based on semesters? trimesters? What is the geographical and socioeconomic diversity of the student body? What kind of access will you have to computers? labs? studios? Many of these questions will be answered in catalogues. If they are not, they are good questions to ask as part of your visit.

Arrive on time for your interview and take, if possible, a copy of your school transcript, or at least, a record of the courses you have taken. You may also want to provide a list of your activities and interests. While colleges and universities are academic institutions, don't think everything you say has to involve school, reading, or academic achievements. Try to leave a sense of the total you. Record the name of your interviewer. You may wish to follow up with a thank-you note. And, if you have any questions later, or if something special, such as an award, happens to you between application time and when you are notified of the admissions decision, you may want to contact him. Your interviewer of the summer may also arrive at your high school in the fall as the visiting representative from his college, and it would be nice to remember who he is!

Near the end of your interview, it is entirely appropriate for you to ask the interviewer how he sees you as a candidate for admission to his institution. His answer will help you plan more successfully as you make the many decisions ahead.

The Application

Before you actually write your application, you should read carefully "How Competitive Colleges Select from Among Applicants." It will give you an understanding of why colleges ask what they do and how best to complete the application.

Although applications differ from college to college, most consist of: 1) your part (data to be supplied, a personal essay, and the application fee); 2) your high school's part (a secondary report form for grades and information about the school and a mid-year report form to keep you honest and keep you from coasting); 3) a part for teachers' recommendations.

The first section of your part of the application usually asks for specific information on your personal and school life. You may need to include your social security number, your class rank, and your school's College Board Code number. Often you must state whether you plan to live on campus, whether you are applying for financial aid, and what your tentative plans for a major and an occupation are. (Colleges don't require you to have your life completely planned, but want to have a sense of how many English majors or pre-med students they may have on campus. Don't feel you have to commit yourself to an area but do indicate any genuine interests.) There is a place to list the names of your parents and siblings. A request is often made for the names of colleges and universities they have attended.

Colleges want the names of all the schools you have attended during your high school years, including summer school. Besides providing a place for the schools' names and addresses, colleges may want you to arrange for a copy of your transcript from *each* institution to be forwarded. Colleges often ask for the names of the teachers who will submit a teacher's recommendation for you, so that if a recommendation is delayed, you and the teacher can be easily notified. There is usually a place for SAT, ACT, achievement tests, Advanced Placement Tests, and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores. Some colleges will ask whether you have ever been suspended or expelled and provide an opportunity for you to explain the circumstances.

You may often have a chance to list academic and non-academic honors and to record extracurricular, summer, and employment experiences in this part of the application. The application may ask questions about community service, your travel experience, and your foreign language abilities. Remember, when you have been given the opportunity to include lists of honors, sports teams, or countries visited, do not repeat your lists as part of your essay. Instead, treat one experience or activity in detail.

Institutions are, of course, interested in what you have learned. You may be asked to list books you have read, or to comment on your reading, and/or to evaluate an important educational experience. Colleges want to see that you are an interested and receptive student. Take care with such questions. Think and plan before you answer them.

Finally, you may be asked whether you wish to waive your right under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 to see interview notes and recommendations should you matriculate.

Each application is somewhat different from all others. The information above should, however, give you an

idea of an application's basic elements and prepare the way for the first time you stare at that formal application. The second part of the application you must complete is the personal essay. Not all institutions require an essay, but most do, and it is a very important way of presenting yourself. Because it is so important and because it is often the most intimidating task for students, there is a special article devoted to suggestions on how to write it. See page xvii.

A few, simple suggestions concerning the whole application procedure are in order here:

1. Apply early. Many colleges and universities make their decisions as student applications are received. You don't want to risk having the freshman class filled when your application is received. Even at institutions that do not use a kind of rolling admission, applications are often read in the order in which they are completed. It is better to be early than late or even just on time!
2. Write your application yourself or type it yourself. Do *not* have it professionally typed. Colleges want to feel that students are willing to take the time and care to do their own applications. The typing skills of your father's secretary do not impress them. Your application should present you as clearly and as *personally* as possible. Be certain, of course, that all information is as clear, accurate, and complete as possible.
3. Standardized test scores. These are often requested. You should keep your scores handy, but it is also your responsibility to have official scores sent to each college. You can do this when you take the tests or later. It is best to use the spaces provided on the tests and to obtain Additional Report Forms from your counselor only when needed. Remember, you must write your name and address exactly the same way each time you take a test, or your scores will not be combined.
4. Ask teachers well in advance for recommendations. They are time-consuming and a labor of love. Appreciate the work done. Teachers may certainly write one letter of recommendation that is appropriate for a number of colleges and that can be xeroxed and sent to each. It is better to ask the one teacher who knows you best to send off six copies than to ask six different teachers. Supply stamped, addressed envelopes for each recommendation. A list of your activities, accomplishments, and interests is often helpful to the teacher. Be sure to underline or point out the deadline for the submission of each recommendation. Keep a record of who writes which recommendations and send thank-you notes to teachers.
5. You may want to send supporting material - photographs, drawing, tapes - if you are especially talented in one area. Be honest, but not too critical when you assess how helpful these materials may be.
6. Additional recommendations from others, outside of school, who know you (not your mom or dad) well may be included, but don't overload.
7. You may be able to use your essay for several applications, but be certain that it is well-suited to each.

8. There is a Common Application that many colleges accept that allows you to take a shortcut and avoid so many different applications. If the colleges to which you are applying also have their own applications, you may want, however, to use the individual applications which are tailored to the institution.

9. If a college to which you are applying does not provide a school report form, you should ask your counselor to send a transcript, school profile, and school letter of recommendation anyway. If a college does not require a teacher recommendation, but you feel that you will have a good one, arrange for a copy to be sent to the college.

A short glossary of terms that pertain to the applications process follows. There is a more extensive glossary for other college terms located on page xxxviii of this book.

Application Glossary

Deferred Admission. This is a term used to indicate that many colleges will allow an admitted student to postpone matriculation for a year for a number of reasons (financial, to be a foreign exchange student, etc.).

Early Action. The name of an admissions program that allows a candidate who applies by a certain date, usually in the autumn, to receive early notification of the admissions decision. If a student is accepted under an Early Action Program, the student is *not obligated* to attend that institution.

Early Admission. A policy that allows extremely well-qualified students to enter college before graduation from high school.

Early Decision. This is similar to Early Action. An admissions decision is usually given in December for November 1 application deadlines. If a student is accepted under Early Decision, that student is *obligated* to accept no other institution.

Early Entrance. This is similar to Early Admission. A student matriculates at an institution without having graduated from high school. This type of admission is reserved for very few, extremely well-qualified students.

Early Evaluation. This provides an opportunity for students who apply by a specified date to be told whether their admission to a particular college is "likely," "not likely," or "possible." Knowing your chances helps in planning whether you will apply to other colleges, to how many others you will apply, and of what degree of selectivity they should be.

Rolling Admission. Under this type of admissions system, colleges and universities admit students at various times in the year depending on the date of application and the qualifications of the student. When the upcoming freshman class is filled, admissions close. It is naturally to your advantage to apply early to such institutions.

The Essay

Just how do you show your talent, intelligence, humor, creativity, and writing ability in one short essay? Well, no one will say that it's easy. But, college isn't easy either and that is where a good essay will get you. The answer, though not easy, is simple: *You must be courageous enough to be you.*

Why courageous? Most of us feel our lives are too insignificant to appeal to someone else without window dressing. We're tempted to incorporate the thoughts of others, to take on earth-shattering issues—to do anything in short to make us seem better than we think we are. Unfortunately (fortunately?) a college admissions officer isn't interested in the ideas of your parents, counselors, or friends. Nor is he interested in what you think he will want to hear; don't second-guess. He does not need to read another seventeen-year-old's solution to nuclear war. *He wants to get to know the student whose essay is in front of him—you.*

Everyone has in his life the stuff of excellent college essays; the trick is to find it. And, how do you locate this "stuff" and use it to show your best self? By thinking about the specific essay questions posed, by studying all other directions carefully, by reflecting on your own experiences, and by responding in clear, honest, and direct prose.

Essays too often sound exactly the same. Think of your reader. An admissions officer may be faced with fifty application folders to read in a day; certainly he will read thousands before the end of the admissions season. Stay away from traditional treatments of traditional topics; it's hard to grab an admissions officer's attention and interest with the twentieth travelogue of his day, a biography that begins, "I was born . . .," or the hundredth piece he has read in a week on "Why I would like to attend your college."

Instead of listing the countries you visited on a trip abroad or the pavilions at the World's Fair, select one experience that really had an impact on you and explore that experience in depth. Explain how it changed you and why. Don't try to impress, but do try to interest. And one of the best ways of interesting someone else is to be interested in what you are writing yourself.

Your essay is your chance to show who you are. Try to be spontaneous and imaginative. Look for original approaches or viewpoints. For example, a failure that is well-described, has clearly shown your ability to cope, and pinpoints what you have learned from it is really more impressive than a list of ten accomplishments. In fact, problems, difficulties, or fears can often lead to interesting discussions. Think about all that has happened to you in your family, with friends, at school, in activities. Locate turning points in your life, analyze important relationships, consider family crises. Remember your subject should be a vehicle for showing your values and beliefs. Don't be afraid to be personal—that's what it's all

about. You want to remain in the mind of your reader as a distinctive individual.

To find the best topic for you and to write well about it you will need time. Some can be gained by planning ahead. Some by disciplining yourself to cut out the agony; many students spend hours on the telephone commiserating with friends who are also struggling. This is counterproductive; it wastes valuable time and postpones your thinking about your purpose. To keep the bother to a minimum, start small. Jot down a few possible topics. Try to develop each. Look for the connections and conclusions that can be made. Try out a few paragraphs on what seem the likeliest topics. Remember, with enough time you can scrap one idea for another. Explore. When you are satisfied that your topic is personal, character-revealing, and interesting, write your rough draft. Let it sit for awhile and then try to revise it objectively, but don't water it down to rob it of spontaneity. Be sure to check for spelling errors and other problems with "mechanics." Colleges are not interested in sloppy efforts. Be certain you have followed all directions.

Here is a checklist that you can use to evaluate your essay. You may also want to ask someone else to check your essay against it after reading what you have written.

1. Is this interesting? Will it stand out because it shows who I really am? Is it about something that is important to me?
2. Do I analyze, conclude, offer observations, present theories? In other words, do I show I can think? Do I get every bit that is possible out of my issue, experience, story?
3. Is my presentation logical? Do I support my contentions?
4. Is there good transition between ideas?
5. Do I have a conclusion rather than a summary at the end?
6. Is all the information relevant? Is everything stated as clearly and effectively as possible?

If you ask for the opinions of others, be certain it is you who do the rewriting and devise solutions to problems. You are ultimately responsible for your essay's vision and revision. Decide whether you will type or write out the final copy. Be as neat as possible. Mail your essay off on time. Take a deep breath and give yourself a hand.

Additional Reading: *College Application Essays*, Williams, Arco Press.

Applying for Financial Aid

When financial aid is an important consideration in your acceptance of a college—and these days it is for just about everyone—please remember to consider the

"award package" (which consists of loans, student work, and scholarships) can vary greatly from college to college. This means that you must consider the award in relation to the cost of each college. You may find that the small expensive college you thought you could never afford is well endowed and can offer you far more aid than a state university, making the smaller college actually cheaper! This is one of the reasons why, though aid or the lack of it may determine your final college decision, you shouldn't allow concerns over money issues to keep you from considering colleges in the beginning. You just have no way of knowing what may happen; hence, work to keep money worries apart from the initial decisions.

Federal Financial Aid—Most federal financial aid is based on your financial need as determined by subtracting what you (and your parents, if you are dependent) can reasonably be expected to contribute toward your educational costs (known as the Expected Family Contribution, or EFC) from the cost of attendance at a specific school. Probably the most important part of this simple-looking formula is the calculation of your EFC. This is done by completing one of several need-analysis forms. These include, but are not limited to, the Financial Aid Form, the Family Financial Statement, and the Application for Federal Student Aid. To find out which one you should use, contact the financial aid office at the school or schools you are considering attending. Once you have the right form, fill it out completely and carefully. Errors can cause delays in the financial aid process.

Although these forms ask many different questions, the most important ones relate to income, and require specific information directly from your or your parents' federal tax returns. After you have completed the form, mail it as soon as possible—deadlines are important throughout the entire financial aid process! You should try to apply for financial aid in January or February preceding the next academic year, but you may apply at any time. Be sure to make a photocopy of your application and have copies ready of any of the documents you used to complete your application, in the event your financial aid administrator requests them. Do not send them with your application.

The completion of one need-analysis form is usually enough to have your need determined for all the federal aid programs; however, the colleges to which you are applying may have supplemental forms that you will need to complete as well.

If you or your family have special circumstances that are not covered by the questions on the form, be sure to explain those circumstances fully and clearly in the appropriate section or provide a separate statement directly to the financial aid administrator. He or she will then be able to make a much more accurate assessment of your need for financial aid. Note that all information used in determining need will be kept confidential by the financial aid office.

While all the details of applying for student financial aid seem to be a bother, the rewards—in terms of the assistance you receive—can be great. If you read and fol-

low all application instructions, meet deadlines, and provide additional documentation when necessary, the application process is easier than it may first appear. However, don't get lazy and assume that your financial aid is taking care of itself. The result can be disastrous. When you have any doubts or questions, contact a professional financial aid administrator for assistance. He or she will be happy to help you.

State Financial Aid—After federal aid, the second most commonly known type of assistance comes from your state. Generally, you must be a resident of the state in which you are enrolled in school to qualify for these funds, however, some states have reciprocal agreements which allow you to use the funds outside your home state. To inquire about this, as well as how to apply, you need to contact the appropriate agency for your state.

Merit Scholarships—While many colleges do earmark the largest percentage of scholarship money to needy students, merit scholarships are having a resurgence. Greater competition among colleges means that some are trying to attract good candidates through financial incentives. If you are a good student, be sure to inquire about the possibility of merit scholarships at each of the institutions to which you apply. Read the section on Cooperative Education below.

Co-op Education—Check out the possibility of entering a co-op (cooperative education) program. Schools that have such programs, and there are many, allow you to work while you study. The financial and career benefits are great, though you may need some extra time to earn your degree.

Local and Employment-related Awards—Almost every community, service organization, and large company has special scholarships available. Check with your school counselor, employers (yours, your parents'), personnel offices, churches, etc. Look in your local newspapers for announcements of application dates for community scholarships and competitions.

Private Sources of Financial Aid—The merit, local, and employment-related awards mentioned above are really a part of this broader category of student financial aid. Because individual programs are too numerous to mention, we will simply point you in the right direction so that you may research these alternative sources of assistance if you wish. While there are firms that will do this type of research for you (for a fee), you will generally have as great a success or better by going to the public library and doing the work yourself. You will find many reference books that list these private sources. You need to determine the specific programs for which you may qualify, request any application materials, and complete them accurately within required deadlines. Funds from these sources may generally be used in combination with any aid you receive from state or federal sources, or may be an alternative if you do not qualify for need-based financial aid. Like any research project, searching for these funds is time-consuming, but the payoff can be just what it takes to cover any remaining need you have that

is not met by aid from another source. It's worth looking into.

While financial aid is intended to help you cover your educational costs, remember that the government still maintains that the primary responsibility to pay for an education lies with the student and family. If you find that all of your need has not been met, review what you feel you and your family can contribute to be certain you have planned to contribute your full share. If a gap still exists, contact the college of your choice. Some help may be available. Once you matriculate, changing financial situations can usually be accommodated; once an institution has invested time and money already in you, it wants to keep you. Help may involve a regular payment plan, or counseling to take fewer courses to reduce your costs. After all, "sticking it out" is better than wasting the time you've already invested. So, be a good student aid consumer, seek help when you have problems, and financial aid will help you achieve your educational goals.

Cooperative Education: Financial Aid Alternative

When financial aid is not enough to pay spiraling college costs, an important option you should consider is using a cooperative education program. In fact, because advantages of "co-op education" go well beyond allowing you to finance your college education while receiving it, students for whom financial considerations are not a factor might also do well participating in a co-op.

Cooperative education is the name given to a variety of plans in 900 colleges and universities in the United States and Canada which allow students to integrate academic study with work experience. Students have the opportunity while still in college to earn money, test career options, gain work experience, and participate fully in the "working world." Institutions offering co-op plans vary in admissions selectivity and include both four-year and two-year colleges. Cooperative programs can be found in the fields of agriculture, arts, business, computer sciences, education, engineering, health professions, humanities, natural sciences, behavioral sciences, and vocational arts. Not all participating colleges and universities offer co-op in all fields, however, so you should ask about the possibility of combining work and study in your areas of interest when you make preliminary inquiries.

Some institutions offer parallel study and work programs while others alternate several months of classes with work opportunities. Student commitments to athletics and other interests can often be accommodated by local placements. There is usually a chance for several different placements during your college career should you wish to experiment with career possibilities. Campus Cooperative Education Coordinators help locate

positions, provide counseling, and monitor student performance.

The National Commission for Cooperative Education offers a sampling of previous co-op assignments: library assistant at the Library of Congress, copy person at the *New York Times*, shuttle resources assistant for NASA, physical therapy aid at a Denver hospital, assistant to the General Director of Banque Franco-Portugaise in Paris, accounting assistant for Arthur Andersen & Company, traffic analyst for Continental Forest Industries, programmer for an observatory in Northern Ireland, nursing assistant at Johns Hopkins, and industrial engineering analyst. Even such a short list suggests the great variety of opportunities, here and abroad, and the potential for valuable entrees into professional fields.

Some 200,000 students are now a part of cooperative education programs with a combined wage of one billion dollars a year. Statistics on career decisions and job placement for co-op students are impressive. According to the Commission for Co-op Education, 40 percent of students continue to work for their co-op employers after graduation, 40 percent upon graduation find work in their field of interest, and 15 percent decide to remain in school to earn professional degrees.

For free information concerning co-op education and a comprehensive list of participating colleges and universities including the areas in which each institution participates in co-op, write The National Commission for Cooperative Education, 360 Huntington Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts 02115.

After Acceptance

Notices of acceptance may arrive as early as the autumn of your senior year if you apply to some colleges with rolling admissions or as late as the summer after graduation if you are admitted from a college's wait list. A few, extremely well-qualified and mature students may even be admitted a year early (Early Acceptance). In general, however, here's what to expect.

If you are an Early Decision (E.D.) candidate or an Early Action (E.A.) candidate who has submitted an application by December 1, you should hear from the college in the third or fourth week of December. (A few colleges have a second, slightly later E.D. date. If you apply later, of course, you will be notified of the admissions decision later.) If you are admitted as an E.D. candidate, you are obligated to attend that college and may wish to send your deposit as soon as possible so you can sit back and relax (about admission not about school, for your record throughout your senior year will be reported to the college and should be consistent with your earlier record). If you are accepted as an E.A. candidate, you are free to apply to other colleges and are under no obligation to make an immediate response in order to save your place. You may find that your application has been

deferred for consideration with the regular admissions pool later in the spring. While this is disappointing, be assured that your desire to attend that college has been made clear by your choice to apply E.D. or E.A., and that knowledge of this desire will certainly not hurt you.

A rolling admissions candidate may hear almost anytime during the senior year, depending on the date of the submission of the application. A few colleges even offer the option of immediate acceptance based on interview or audition. Most candidates for regular admissions, however, will receive notification from colleges in March and April.

Whenever you are accepted, you need to know that colleges have agreed to abide by the *Candidates Reply Date of May 1*. This means that you should not have to respond to an offer of admission until you have heard from all colleges or universities to which you have applied or by May 1, whichever comes earlier. **Important:** If you receive pressure from colleges for a decision before you have heard from all of those to which you applied, tactfully remind them of this policy. Athletes and other students whose abilities and talents make them prime candidates may receive this kind of pressure from coaches or admissions offices. If the college or university is unwilling to cooperate, contact your school counselor for help and ask him to notify the president of your state or regional Association of College Admissions Counselors.

Wait lists. You may find that a college is not able immediately to offer you a place, but puts your name on a "wait list." These lists are used when students who have received an offer of admission decline that offer and a position in the freshman class is thus open. If you are "wait listed" and do not hear from that college by May 1, you must accept another offer and send a deposit. If you are then notified of an opening from the wait list, you may change your mind, but will have to forfeit your deposit.

Be considerate. Once you have made your decision, notify all colleges and universities *immediately*. If you accept one offer and turn down four, four places at colleges will be available to others. If someone else is considerate, you may get a place off a wait list even before May 1.

Visits. In the period between mailing out decisions and May 1, many colleges sponsor days on campus to bring students to the college for one final look. If you are at all undecided, take advantage of this opportunity, and if no formal visiting day exists, ask to visit on your own. Making your final decision is obviously important; go about it wisely.

Financial aid. Occasionally you will be notified of acceptance before the financial aid packages are finished. If you do not have full information, notify those colleges in which you are most interested that you need more time. Getting more time is usually not a problem. If the financial aid offer from the college you are most interested in is not what you feel you need, it might be worth asking for a reconsideration. You may not get it, but if