

Alternative Admission

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RANDOM HOUSE NEW YORK

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 90-23298

ISBN 0-679-73140-7

Manufactured in the United States of America

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

First Edition

Design by Susan Hood

SN9304/2 (英6-2/123) (0-679-73140-7)(41.68)

Stacy Needle, M. S. ED.

**The Other Route into
College**

Random House 1991 240p. 20开 16.50

通向大学的其它途径

本书是一部非常实用的美国大学升学指南用书。书中详细介绍了学生如何选报专业,了解有关院校的专业设置、收费情况、各校的录取标准以及成绩达不到标准分数线时,如何通过其它途径进入大学接受高等教育。

本书对我国赴美求学人员,了解美国各大学研究生招收名额,寻找临时工作等均有帮助。

读者对象:教师、学生和中级英语水平者。

***The Other Route into College:
Alternative Admission***

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

While writing *The Other Route into College: Alternative Admission* has been a great pleasure for me, I have never lost sight of the fact that the contributions of others have enriched it and certainly, in a large way, made it possible.

My agent, Carole Abel, deserves special recognition. She supported this book from the very moment I approached her with the idea.

Charlotte Mayerson, my editor at Random House, is a true professional, whose intelligence, support, and thoroughness improved the book immeasurably.

My sincere thanks to the hundreds of college administrators who provided information for this book.

I am fortunate to have had the very special help of an experienced writer, Joseph Bilby. His contributions were crucial and I am deeply grateful.

This book could not have been produced without the assistance of Elizabeth Cooner. I genuinely appreciate her efforts.

I wish to acknowledge, with deep gratitude, Joan Isaac Mohr, Vice President for Enrollment and Dean of Admissions at Hofstra University, for writing the Foreword.

Deborah Izzo is to be thanked for spending countless hours typing the manuscripts.

A major contribution was made by Michael Fine, who gave generously of his time.

Martha O'Connell, Nancy Rothschild, and Joan Rudinski have indirectly contributed to this book. Through the years, they have served as an inspiration to me, both personally and professionally. Working with them was a special joy.

My last word of appreciation is to Steve, whose optimism and encouragement kept me going even when my own faltered. Thank you, Steve Needle, for believing in my dream.

FOREWORD

Dear Student, Parent, Counselor, or Individual interested in the college admission process:

If you've studied the college admission process, you've quickly discovered that each college seems unique in its requirements, deadlines, programs, and fees, among other things. To add to the confusion, the very mention of "admission standards" conjures up all sorts of half-truths and anxieties about SAT scores, rank in class, grade point average, and prior academic records. The confusion further deepens when you learn that colleges may use other admission criteria, such as financial need, legacies, extracurricular activities, special talents, recommendations, and the dreaded essay. For a student or parent, it seems like an unmanageable task.

Is there one college that is right for a particular student? No. There are numerous schools that would be a good match for the student. I often talk with high school juniors and their parents who will face this formidable task within a year. I assure them that applying to college is really a process, not a crisis. If you do the research, and put time and effort into the decisions you need to make, you will make good choices. Ultimately, you'll reach a decision about which college to attend. The task at hand is to identify some of the colleges that have caught your interest—and make a final decision based on the information you have gathered over a period of time.

But first, a gentle word of caution. Few students—no matter how strong their academic or extracurricular record—are likely to be admitted to all the schools to which they have applied. A great deal depends on the academic profile of the institution. Students may be above, equal to, or below the "typical" applicant pool of the colleges that interest them.

To accommodate the various types of applications, many colleges and universities have developed several admissions policies. These "alternative admission programs" are designed on behalf of students who do not meet regular admission standards, but have the potential to perform better in college than their high school record and test scores may indicate. If you are accepted through an alternative program or policy, you may be certain that the college believes that you have what it takes to succeed in an undergraduate program. Remember: Colleges are not in the business of admitting students whom they expect to fail. They *are* in the business of helping students to do well and of providing the support needed to encourage strengths and overcome weaknesses.

This book covers alternative programs that augment the regular admission process at close to 240 colleges and universities in 47 states. It does not, however, cover programs specifically for students with learning disabilities.

Many students need an alternative program when applying to college. They need the extra support or program that will assist them in succeeding at a particular college or university. This assistance may take many forms. For example, a student may simply be limited in the number of courses that she or he may register for in the first year. Assistance may involve a tutoring program, special summer study just before the freshman year, or a complete separate class program during the student's first year or two of college. The offerings are as varied as the number of institutions in this volume.

There are many paths leading to a college education. Choose the one that best fits your needs and goals, has the type of program and environment that meets your needs, and, above all, is a school in which you are comfortable.

No two of us are alike. When reading admission applications, we see that there are no two students with the same credentials, background, or needs. Yet a college may be the home of a very diverse student body exposing individuals to a broad array of ideas, topics, and intellectual tools.

Best wishes as you use this resource to help in your decision process.

Joan Isaac Mohr
*Assistant Vice President for Enrollment
Management and Dean of Admissions
Hofstra University*

ALL ABOUT ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION

Michael graduated from a New Jersey college with a 3.0 grade point average (GPA). President of several student organizations and active in many others, a member of student government and resident adviser, Michael received the college's Outstanding Student award in recognition of his overall achievement and contributions to the community.

Lainie's admission as a freshman at a major New England university fulfilled a longtime dream. Her ambition and determination led to academic success and personal fulfillment in her college career.

Robert, who received superior grades in his high school science and mathematics courses, was accepted by an upstate New York technical college and finished his sophomore year with a 3.4 GPA.

On the surface these appear to be typical stories of today's success-oriented college generation. *They are not.* Motivation came late to Michael, Lainie, and Robert. All three had high school records and/or Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores that seemed to destine them to academic oblivion. But they got a second chance—a chance provided by alternative admissions to the colleges they attended.

Michael, who graduated from high school with a 1.94 GPA and combined SAT scores of 840, says that "almost any college would have rejected me." A special college program gave him his "opportunity to excel." Lainie, an indifferent student in high school, maintains that, if it were not for the alternative freshman year program she enrolled in, she would never have been able to attend the institution of her choice and might have ended up, like a number of her friends, attending no college at all. Robert's excellence in high school mathematics was not matched by his written and oral communication skills, and he needed assistance in filling out his college applications. Successful completion of an inten-

sive ten-week summer program demonstrated his potential for college-level work, however, and enabled him to attend a competitive school that otherwise would not have accepted him.

WHAT IS ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION?

Alternative admission policies and programs provide enrollment opportunities for high school or college transfer applicants who do not meet the regular admissions requirements of many colleges and universities. Although most prospective college students are unaware of alternative admission programs, they are offered by hundreds of schools across the United States.

There are no national alternative admission standards, however, and each policy or program is unique to the individual institution. In general, the ideal alternative admission candidate is a student who has the ability to complete his or her studies for a college degree, but whose high school record and/or Scholastic Aptitude Test/American College Test (SAT/ACT) scores do not reflect that ability.

Alternative admission benefits a wide spectrum of potential college students. Although some alternative admission opportunities are directed at specific target groups, including minorities or older students, most are open to anyone with the motivation and desire to succeed in college. It is important for a college applicant to evaluate carefully various offerings and determine which ones meet his or her particular needs. This book provides the information needed to make such an evaluation.

WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION?

- It can mean the difference between acceptance and nonacceptance to college!
- It can mean acceptance to the college of your choice even if you do not meet the regular admissions standards!
- It can mean attendance at a more competitive college than you otherwise would have been accepted by!
- It can provide you with the opportunity to transfer to the college of your choice!
- It can provide the chance to establish a sound academic record before transferring to a more competitive college!
- It can provide you with the opportunity to transfer to a college which will provide the support services you need to succeed!
- It can provide students already enrolled in two-year colleges an opportunity to enter a four-year degree program!

- It can provide the skills and confidence needed to let you ultimately succeed in your college career—and beyond!

WHAT IS AN ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION POLICY OR PROGRAM?

Although all alternative admission policies and programs strive to offer opportunities to those students who do not meet ordinary admissions criteria, they vary in the means used to achieve that goal. There are two basic offerings: alternative policies and structured alternative programs.

A school with an alternative admission policy may require separate freshman orientation and also require its alternative students to complete certain courses. It may also offer some support services, but not a special alternative faculty or curriculum. Policy schools generally do not charge alternative students additional fees.

Colleges with structured alternative admission programs generally require alternative students to complete a certain curriculum over a specified period of time (usually a summer, or one or two semesters) and offer extensive support services. Programs may be offered in the summer preceding freshman year or during the regular academic year, and must be successfully completed in order for the student to matriculate. Program faculty are sometimes specially trained to deal with the needs of alternative students. Participation may involve additional cost to the student, although financial aid is often available.

Since the vast majority of schools listed in this guide offer formal programs, that term will be used henceforth to define alternative admissions. Most programs share some or all of the following characteristics:

COURSES

Mainstream: Students who “mainstream” are not enrolled in special classes, but usually take a reduced credit load within the college’s normal curriculum, attending classes with the rest of the student body.

Separate Classes: Many programs require that alternative students take classes together, rather than with the rest of the student body, during the duration of the program. These classes are often taught by special faculty.

Remedial Classes: These classes, often not credit-bearing, prepare academically deficient students before they are admitted to regular classes. Remedial classes are most often offered in basic subjects, like mathematics or English.

Required Courses: Alternative students are sometimes required to take special courses, including freshman-orientation seminars, study skills courses, and so forth.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE

Special Faculty: These faculty members instruct only alternative students. In some cases these teachers are trained to meet the special needs of alternative students.

Tutors: Such instructors, sometimes professional ones or sometimes students' peers, instruct and assist students in one-on-one or small-group situations as a supplement to classroom instruction.

Support Services: These special counselors are trained to deal with the needs of alternative admission students and are often available for help with academic and personal problems. There may be study technique workshops, which focus on improving a student's study habits; academic skills centers, which help a student in specific academic areas; and testing facilities.

Special New-Student Orientation: Colleges usually conduct special orientation programs to acquaint the new alternative student with the range of courses and support services available, as well as program requirements.

WHO IS A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR ALTERNATIVE ADMISSION?

- The high school student who has average grades with above-average SAT or ACT scores. This student has good academic potential, but is not working to capacity for any number of reasons, possibly including lack of motivation.
- The high school student who has above-average grades with low SAT or ACT scores. This student, who does well in the classroom, may lack the necessary background in test-taking, reading comprehension, or basic verbal or mathematical skills.
- The high school student who has both low grades and low standardized tests but is motivated highly enough to convince the program that he or she will succeed.
- The high school student who had previously done good work but whose performance has been affected by family problems, a lack of educational continuity due to frequent moving, or other problems.
- The high school student who may fit into several of the above categories.

- The college student who has established a satisfactory academic record at a junior or community college offering extensive student support services and wishes to transfer and obtain his or her bachelor's degree at a four-year college offering similar services.
- The college student who wishes to transfer from a two-year or four-year college that does not offer the necessary support services (i.e., testing, small class size, and personal contact with faculty) the student needs in order to excel in school.

WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR

In considering freshman alternative admission candidates, colleges may consider some or all of the following criteria. In addition, the alternative candidate's level of motivation and maturity, as well as significant academic improvement in the last year of high school, are particularly important:

- SAT or ACT scores
- High school grade point average
- High school class rank
- Type of high school attended
- Difficulty of high school courses
- Extracurricular activities
- Community service and volunteer work
- Interview with admissions counselor
- Essay/personal statement
- Letters of recommendation
- Minority status
- Age of applicant
- State residence

Considerations for Transfer Students: All or some of the criteria listed below are considered by admissions personnel when considering alternative admission applicants transferring from another college or university. As with applicants for the freshman class, demonstrations of maturity, motivation, and academic improvement are particularly important for alternative transfer candidates.

- Grade point average at previous institution
- Difficulty of coursework
- Type of college attended

- Number of credits completed (often must be less than 30 credits)
- Community service or volunteer work
- Interview with admissions counselor
- Essay/personal statement
- Letters of recommendation
- Minority status
- Age of applicant
- State residence

MATCHING THE COLLEGE TO THE STUDENT

After deciding that you would like to try the alternative admission route to college, consider what kind of school you are looking for. We have listed first the general considerations *any* student considering a school would keep in mind. The second category includes specific issues for alternative admission:

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

- What is the school's geographic location?
- What is the campus setting—urban, suburban, or rural?
- What is the size and composition of the school's student population?
- Is the school coeducational or single sex?
- Is the school public, or does it have a private or religious affiliation?
- What is the tuition?
- What is the cost of room and board and the meal plan?
- What are the most common undergraduate academic majors?
- What types of social life and extracurricular activities are available?
- What is the composition and size of the student body?

ALTERNATIVE ADMISSIONS CONSIDERATIONS

- Is alternative admission a policy or a structured program? If a program, how structured is it?
- Do alternative students attend mainstream classes or classes composed entirely of alternative students?
- Is there a limited course load for alternative students?
- What is the student-faculty ratio?

- What academic and personal support services are available?
- Do alternative students have access to special faculty members trained to deal with their special problems?
- Is tutoring available? Is it required or voluntary?

THE COLLEGE VISIT

THE ADMISSIONS INTERVIEW

When you have narrowed your choices to the schools that appear to meet your needs best, you should arrange visits to the campuses. The admissions interview gives the interviewer a chance to assess you personally as a potential alternative admission student; it is the centerpiece of the campus visit.

The interviewer will carefully examine your motivation and assess your level of maturity. Because of the importance of these characteristics in alternative admission, the interview is often more important than it would be to the applicant for regular admission. Review probable questions beforehand so that you enter the interview feeling relaxed. The following list of potential questions will help you prepare:

- Why are you interested in this college?
- Why do you think alternative admission is appropriate for you?
- What are your academic and social goals?
- How do you feel your academic performance in high school reflects your potential?
- What do you expect from an alternative admission program?
- What is your best method of preparing for exams?
- How would you prepare to do a term paper?
- What do you expect from the college in the way of support?
- What are the traits that make you stand out and show why you should be accepted over hundreds of other applicants?
- Why do you feel a college degree is important?
- What is your philosophy toward education?

The interview is also *your* chance to learn about alternative admission in more detail. There are some key questions you can ask the interviewer to help you decide if a school's alternative admission policy or program is right for you. Asking perceptive questions will give you the information you need, and will also indicate to the interviewer that you are a mature person. The following sample questions will give you an idea of what to

ask. Others will occur to you as you read the individual college entries. Don't ask so many questions, however, that you take too much of the interviewer's time:

- What are the requirements for alternative admission?
- How many alternative admission students are accepted each year?
- If alternative admission is a separate program, do alternative admission students take the same courses as other students?
- Do the courses taken by alternative students earn credits toward a degree?
- What is the average class size for alternative students?
- Are tutorial services available? Are available tutors faculty members, students, or both? Is there an additional fee for tutoring?
- What will happen if I do not do well the first semester?
- What percentage of alternative students eventually complete their degrees?
- Does completion of the alternative admission program mean automatic admission into a regular program?
- Is there a college skills center? If so, is it available on a walk-in basis?
- Do the professors hold regular office hours for consultation?
- Will I have a faculty adviser?
- Is a summer program required prior to fall enrollment?
- Am I expected to choose a major while I am still in the program?
- Is skills-building part of the program?

THE CAMPUS TOUR

Another feature of the college visit is the campus tour. The tour should include the school's academic buildings, study skills center, and counseling center. Ask your student guide enough questions so that you get a student's perspective on alternative admissions and the school. The decision you make is important. You want to be sure that you and the college are well matched.

HOW TO READ THE GUIDE

This section contains profiles of 239 colleges and universities offering alternative admission. Each entry presents pertinent information about the school in a standard format. The categories include institutional summary, alternative admission summary, academic coursework and related features, required courses, profile of alternative admission stu-

dents, other features and accommodations, and deadlines. Should one of these categories not apply to a given institution, it doesn't appear in the profile. The following list details the type of information to be found in each section:

Institutional Summary: This section provides general information about an individual college or university. It includes, where applicable, the following details about each school:

- Name
- Address
- Admissions phone number
- Tuition, room, and meal plan costs during the 1989-90 academic year
- Number of full-time and part-time undergraduates
- Student/faculty ratio
- Percentage of students enrolled in largest academic program
- Date founded
- Public or private
- Religious affiliation
- Coed or single sex
- Location
- Campus size
- Campus setting

Alternative Admission Summary: This section outlines alternative admission requirements, policies, and programs. Although some schools only have policies, you will find that most offerings are structured, with a specified coursework schedule for a specified length of time. Included in this section, where applicable, are the following:

- Contact person and his or her phone number
- Title of program
- Duration of program
- Additional cost of program
- Percentage of students who complete the program within the allotted time span
- Degree received at completion of program

Academic Coursework and Related Features: This section describes general alternative admission academic information, including the following:

- Availability of support services, including all or some of the following: special freshman orientation, college survival-skills classes, academic counseling, drug/alcohol coun-