



Dear Sophomores,

Some people say the college process is the biggest shopping trip you'll ever go on. Some people say choosing a college is like a picking a spouse. Indeed, there are a lot of opinions about the college process out there. At SI, we believe that choosing a college is about finding the college that is *the best fit for you*. What does that mean? It means that knowing yourself is the key to finding the college you'll be most happy attending. Deciding which colleges to apply to and which one to attend is about matching your interests, talents, values, and goals to colleges that best reflect these important parts of yourself.

If the college process seems overwhelming, don't worry. You are right where you are supposed to be- at the very beginning of the college process. In fact, there is not too much college stuff to be concerned with sophomore year. We've designed this booklet to help you get started thinking about the journey towards college admission. From what standardized tests you'll need to take, to what to look for in a college, you've got the bare essentials right here!

Later this semester, you'll meet with your counselor to fill out together the worksheet at the end of the booklet. Please read this booklet carefully before then and definitely share it with your parents!

Thank you,

The SI Counseling Staff



Getting Started...

How do you even go about looking at colleges that might be a good match for you? The most popular ways to access information about colleges are by searching the internet (individual college websites and college search sites), books (college guides and catalogs), talking to people (family, friends and of course, your counselor!), and visiting college campuses (take a tour!!).

Now you know where to look, but what should you look for?

Geographic Location:

Envision all the places you have traveled to. Where would you like to spend more time? Think about distance from home and what is comfortable for you. Next time you travel (yes, anywhere!) find out what colleges are nearby and stop for a tour just to see what college campuses are like.

Size:

How did you feel about the size of SI when you started here as a freshmen? Lost in the crowd? Finally able to relax with less attention focused on you? What do you think it would be like to attend a school twice as big? Five times as big? 30 times as big? Colleges generally fall into three categories: Small (under 2000), Medium (2000 - 12,000), Large (over 12,000).

Majors:

What is a college major? It is an area of study that a student chooses to focus his/her attention on during college. Imagine arriving at college and discovering that creative writing, your intended major, is not offered at your college! Do your research on majors that interest you and which colleges offer them. Most colleges do not require you choose a major when you apply and 'undecided' is a perfectly acceptable option as an entering college freshman. 'Undecided' means that you need more time while in college to choose a major. It gives you a chance to take classes in a variety of subjects to discover your interests.

Before making a decision about what you want to major in, the best way to begin is to consider the subjects you enjoy in high school. Are you a strong math student? A good writer? Enjoy languages? After all, college majors should work well with your academic strengths - something you are seriously interested in learning more about. Don't worry about whether a specific major relates directly to a career (unless there's a career out there that you've already selected!). Just get to know the options.

By the way, you don't have to major in anything specific to go to medical school, law school or business school! You could be a philosophy or English or Physics major (or anything else you can find) and still go on to become a doctor, lawyer, business person - just to name a few careers. Start asking the adults in your life what they do (as a career) and what they majored in. You might also ask where they went to college for more feedback!

There are exceptions - nursing and engineering students in particular find they are better off starting right away. But if you aren't sure, then don't box yourself in. Start general with your major choice and get specific later on in college!

Athletic Programs/Activities:

Consider the activities your involved in at SI and whether you envision continuing them in college. What new activities might you want to pursue? (Ie. debate, TV/radio, drama, journalism, social justice?). All colleges proudly advertise the activities they offer. If you are interested in playing sports in college, set up an appointment with SI's Athletic Advisor, Ted Turkington. Email him at tturkington@siprep.org for more information.

Cost:

Try not to worry too much about the cost of college yet, but know that talking about the cost of college with your parents is important. Private schools tend to be more costly, while public schools are generally less expensive. Having a general idea of the importance of cost to your family will be very helpful as you become more serious about choosing colleges to apply to as a senior.

Here are some useful college search websites:

www.petersons.com

www.campustours.com

www.princetonreview.com

Here are some useful websites to search information about majors and careers:

www.collegeboard.com/apps/careers

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/research/majors/majorSearch.asp>



Overview of College Systems

| <u>University of California (UC)</u> | <u>California State University (CSU)</u> | <u>California Community Colleges (CCC)</u> | <u>Out of State Public Colleges</u> | <u>Private Colleges</u> |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions | www.csumentor.edu | www.cccco.edu | Examples: www.oregonstate.edu www.asu.edu www.colostate.edu | CA private colleges: www.AICCMentor.org All private colleges have their own websites |
| 9 Undergraduate campuses: Berkeley, San Diego, Los Angeles, Davis, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, Irvine and Merced. | 23 Undergraduate Campuses including San Francisco State, Sonoma State, San Diego State, Chico State. (Campuses vary in size) | 109 campuses throughout the state of California | Each State has its own system primarily created to meet the needs of students in that particular state. | There are a wide variety of private school options around the country. Choices depend largely upon personal preference: location, majors, extracurricular options, to name only a few! |
| Minimum Requirements to Apply: Students must meet the criteria in the "UC eligibility index". To be considered eligible, students must have a minimum 3.0 GPA from courses taken in 10 th and 11 th grade as well as an accompanying minimum test score total (SAT or ACT and 2 SAT subject tests - in different subjects). | Minimum Requirements to Apply: Students must meet the minimum criteria in the "CSU eligibility index" which is based on GPA and SAT or ACT scores. No SAT subject tests are required. | Minimum Requirements to Apply: Students with high school diplomas are accepted. Community College can be a good option both financially as well as broadening transfer options. This usually requires a two year commitment-particularly for those who want to transfer to UC/CSU. | Minimum Requirements to Apply: Vary according to each state. | Minimum Requirements to Apply: Eligibility depends upon the specific college. Some schools are significantly more selective than others. Typically Students are evaluated using the same criteria but their specific requirements are different. <u>Considerations:</u> GPA Courses Taken Standardized Test Scores Essay(s) Extracurricular Activities Letters of Recommendation Personal History |



Types of Colleges

Liberal Arts College: A traditional, classical undergraduate college experience that emphasizes the humanities and sciences.

University: A broad term for an institution that has two or more schools or colleges within it. For example, a university might have a School of Business and a College of Arts and Sciences.

Engineering or Technical College: An institution whose main focus is on engineering and applied sciences.

Professional School: A college that emphasizes education geared towards entry into a particular profession such as architecture or nursing.

U.S. Military Academy: Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marines.

Music Conservatory/Art College: A school that specializes in music, fine arts, and performing arts. Generally, two-thirds of the course work is dedicated to studio classes and one-third to academic courses.

Colleges to which SI Students Have Recently Been Accepted

CALIFORNIA PRIVATE

Claremont McKenna
Dominican U.
Harvey Mudd
Pepperdine U.
Occidental College
Pitzer College
Pomona College
Scripps College
St. Mary's College
Stanford University
The Art Institute of CA
U. of San Diego
U. of Southern CA
U. of the Pacific

CALIFORNIA STATE U.

Cal Poly Pomona
Cal Poly St. U.: San Luis Obispo
CSU: Chico
CSU: East Bay
CSU: Long Beach
CSU: Monterey Bay
CSU: Sacramento
Humboldt State
San Diego State U.
San Francisco State U.
San Jose State U.
Sonoma State U.

UNIVERSITY OF CA

UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UC Irvine
UC Los Angeles
UC Merced
UC San Diego
UC Santa Barbara
UC Santa Cruz

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

City College of San Francisco
College of Marin
College of San Mateo
Shasta College
Skyline College

OUT OF STATE

PRIVATE/PUBLIC

Arizona State U.
Boston U.
Brown U.
Bucknell U.
Cabrini College
Colgate U.
College of Holy Cross
College of William & Mary
Colorado State U.
Columbia U.
Cornell U.
Dartmouth U.
De Paul U.
Denison U.
Duke U.
Emory
Eugene Lang College
Fairfield U.
Guilford College
Harvard College
Haverford College
Hofstra University
Howard U.
Lawrence U.
New York U.
Northeastern U.
Northwestern U.
Notre Dame de Namur U.
Oberlin College
Philadelphia U.
Princeton U.
Reed College
Rice U.
Southern Methodist U.
St. John's University
The George Washington U.
The University of Chicago
Trinity College
U.S. Naval Academy
U. of Arizona
U. of Colorado at Boulder
U. of Denver
U. of Hawaii at Manoa
U. of Kansas
U. of Michigan
U. of Oregon
U. of Pennsylvania

U. of Portland
U. of Puget Sound
U. of Virginia
U. of Washington
Vanderbilt University
Villanova U.
Virginia Polytechnic Inst.
Washington U. St. Louis
Wellesley College
Wheaton College
Whitman College
Williams College
Yale U.

JESUIT

Boston College
Fordham U.
Georgetown U.
Gonzaga U.
Loyola Marymount U.
Loyola Chicago U.
Santa Clara U.
Seattle U.
St. Joseph's University
St. Louis University
U. of San Francisco

FOREIGN UNIVERSITY

University of British Columbia
McGill University

* This is not an all inclusive list



Standardized Testing Guide

PLAN

A *practice* ACT exam (see below). Administered to all sophomore students on October 18th, 2006. This test also includes a career interest inventory. **PLAN scores are NOT sent to or seen by colleges.** Students do not need to prepare for this exam unless they would like to answer some practice questions at www.planstudent.org

PSAT

A practice for the SAT Reasoning test. Administered to all students in the fall of their Junior Year. The test is a shorter version of the SAT Reasoning test and does not include a written essay. www.collegeboard.com

SAT Reasoning Test (SAT 1)

A three and one half hour test that measures Critical Reading, Math, and Writing Skills. The "New SAT" Includes a writing sample. www.collegeboard.com

SAT Subject Tests (SAT II)

Hour long tests that measure achievement in specific academic subject areas. The University of California requires students to take two tests in two subjects (in addition to the SAT Reasoning Test). Some colleges require three Subject Tests. www.collegeboard.com

ACT and ACT Assessment with Writing

A test that measures skills and achievement in English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning. Can be used in place of the SAT if the student chooses to take the optional Writing section. www.act.org

GENERAL HIGH SCHOOL TIMELINE

Sophomore year

| | |
|--------|---|
| Fall | PLAN administered to all sophomores (October 18 th , 2006) |
| Spring | SAT Subject Test(s) (only if applicable, most students will be ready junior year) |

Junior year

| | |
|--------|---|
| Fall | PSAT administered to all juniors |
| Spring | SAT Reasoning Test, SAT Subject Tests(s) (if applicable), ACT (if applicable) |

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Each Time you take an SAT test, the score goes on the record that will be sent to colleges.
- You should work with your Counselor to plan a testing schedule that works for you.
- The school will register you for the PLAN and the PSAT. You must register for the SAT and ACT.
- Colleges will usually consider only your highest scores.

SAT vs. ACT

What is the difference between SAT and ACT? They're both standardized tests and they both factor into the college admission process. Take a side by side glance at these important exams. Just last year (2005) both tests were changed somewhat- take note!

SAT

March 2005

Paragraph length critical reading passages, an essay, and more challenging math (some Algebra 2 questions). No more analogies or quantitative comparisons.

Seven times per year

10 Section Exam:
3 Critical Reading, 3 Math, 3 Writing and 1 Experimental. The Experimental section is masked to look like a regular section

Math: Up to 9th grade basic geometry and algebra 2.

Science: None

Reading: Sentence completions, short and long critical reading passages, reading comprehension.

Stresses vocabulary: More questions testing grammar, usage, and word choice.

Yes

200-800 per section, added together for a combined score. A 2400 is the highest possible combined score.

Yes. If a student requests a score report be sent to specific colleges, the report will include the scores the student received on every SAT taken

vs.

When did it change?

What were the changes?

When is it administered?

What is the test structure?

What is the test content?

Is there a penalty for wrong answers?

How is the test scored?

Are all scores sent to colleges?

ACT

February 2005

Addition of an optional writing test (essay)

Six times a year

4 Section Exam:
English, Math, Reading and Science Reasoning. An Experimental section is added to tests on certain dates only and is clearly experimental.

Math: Up to trigonometry.

Science: Charts, graphs, conflicting viewpoints.

Reading: Four passages; one each of prose fiction, social science, humanities and natural science.

Stresses grammar.

No

1-36 for each subject, averaged for a composite score. A 36 is the highest possible composite score.

No. There us a 'Score Choice' option. Students can choose which colleges will receive their scores and which scores the colleges will see.



Frequently Asked Questions About the SAT Subject Tests

Please note, most students will begin taking SAT Subject Tests their Junior year. Consult the guide on the following page to help you consider what tests to take and when.

What are the SAT Subject Tests?

- SAT Subject Tests are one hour subject exams designed to measure specific knowledge. Tests are offered in subject areas of history/social science, English literature, mathematics, laboratory science, or language other than English.

When Should I Take Them?

- It is best to take the tests as close as possible to the completion of a particular course in school. (For example take the U.S. History test in June of your junior year.)

Who Requires the SAT Subject Tests?

- Most selective private colleges and the University of California require the SAT Subject Tests.
- The University of California system is requiring applicants to take 2 SAT Subject Tests in 2 different subject areas of the student's choice. (For example, English Literature and a science SAT Subject Test.)
- Students should contact each college directly for their Subject Test requirements. Many colleges are requiring 3 SAT Subject Tests.

Which Tests Do I Take?

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Are you fluent in Hebrew, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Latin, Korean, or Spanish?
 - Consider taking a language Subject Test.
- Are you interested in Engineering as a major?
 - Consider taking Math Level 2. Many engineering programs require Math Level 2 in addition to a Science Subject Test. Contact colleges that interest you for their requirements.
- Are you interested in the Pre-Medical field as a major?
 - Consider taking a Science Subject Test. Contact colleges that interest you for their requirements.

How Do I Prepare for Each Test?

- All Junior SI students are prepared to take the SAT U.S. History Subject Test.
 - Discuss your readiness in a particular subject with your teacher and/or counselor.
 - You can purchase individual SAT Subject Test prep books at any bookstore or pick up a free booklet called 'SAT Subject Tests Preparation Booklet' in the College Resource Center.
- For more info take a look at www.collegeboard.com

GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING THE BEST SAT SUBJECT TESTS FOR YOU

| | <u>SAT SUBJECT TESTS</u> | <u>RECOMMENDED COMPLETED COURSEWORK</u> | <u>BEST DATE TO TAKE TEST</u> | <u>TEST DESCRIPTION</u> | <u>COMMENTS</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| L I T. | Literature | 3.0 years of English | June of Junior year &/or Nov. or Dec. Senior year | Literary analysis of short reading passages. | |
| | U.S. History | AP American History or American History | June Junior year | Factual U. S. History questions. | |
| H I S T O R Y | World History | World History 2 | Dec. or June of Sophomore year. | Factual World History questions. | Consult with teacher if considering. Offered in June & December only. |
| | French | French 3 Honors AP French or French 4 | June Junior year Oct. or Dec. of Senior year | Read in French & answer multiple choice questions. | |
| L A N G U A G E | French with Listening | AP French or French 4 | November of Senior year | In addition to reading portion, includes listening in French & answering multiple choice questions. | Offered in November only. Bring portable cassette player with ear phones. |
| | Japanese with Listening | Japanese 4 | November of Senior year | Wide-ranging knowledge of the language. | Offered in November only. Bring portable cassette player with ear phones. |
| | Latin | Latin 3 Honors | June Junior year | Wide-ranging knowledge of the language. | Offered in June & December only. |
| | | AP Latin or Latin 4 | December of Senior year | | |
| | Spanish | Spanish 3 Honors | June Junior year | Read in Spanish & answer multiple choice questions. | OK for strong students in Spanish 3. |
| | | AP Spanish or Spanish 4 | Oct. or Dec. of Senior yr | | |
| Spanish with Listening | AP Spanish or Spanish 4 | November of Senior year | In addition to reading portion, includes listening in Spanish & answering multiple choice questions. | Offered in November only. Bring portable cassette player with ear phones. | |

Continued on back

| | <u>SAT SUBJECT TESTS</u> | <u>RECOMMENDED COMPLETED COURSEWORK</u> | <u>BEST DATE TO TAKE TEST</u> | <u>TEST DESCRIPTION</u> | <u>COMMENTS</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---|-------------------------------|--|--|
| M A T H | Math Level 1 | | | | NOT accepted by the University of California. |
| | Math Level 2 | PreCalculus A H or B H | June Junior year | Algebra 1 & 2, geometry, & elementary functions (precalculus) and/or trigonometry | Some Engineering programs require Math Level 2. |
| | | PreCalculus/Math Analysis | Nov. or Dec. Senior year | | |
| S C I E N C E | Biology Molecular | AP Biology | Nov. or Dec. Senior Year | Organize & interpret results by observation, experimentation & draw conclusions or make inferences from experimental data. Need to be familiar with metric system. | Some Engineering or Pre-medical programs require a science SAT II. |
| | Biology Ecological | | | | |
| | Chemistry | AP Chemistry or Chemistry Honors | June Junior Year | Organize & interpret results. Draw conclusions from experimental data. Simple algebraic relationships. Direct, inverse proportions, exponents, scientific notations. Need to be familiar with metric system. | |
| | Physics | Physics Honors | June Junior Year | Apply physical principles to solve problems. Knowledge of algebraic, trigonometric, ratio & proportion & how to apply to physics problems. Need to be familiar with metric system. | |
| AP Physics | | Nov. or Dec. Senior Year | | | |



"Counselor Conversation"

Initial thoughts on college...

Name: _____

Date: _____

Looking back, what were you most proud of during your freshmen year?

- _____
- _____

What are your goals for sophomore year? Think about academics, activities, friendships, etc.

- _____
- _____
- _____

College characteristics that might be important to me:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Colleges I might look at:

Average GPA

My cumulative GPA

- _____
- _____
- _____