

9th Grade Workshop January 2009

The Main Things to Think About:

1. Academic Transcript
2. Extra-Curricular Activities
3. SAT I or ACT Test (PSAT/PLAN)
4. SAT II-Subject Tests
5. Praise Sheets/Teacher Recommendations
6. College Folder

Academic Transcript

The *Academic Transcript* is the most important component in the college process.

- This shows your progress over a long range of time and growth.
- **An upward trend to grades is always a positive thing.**
- It is never too late to improve your grades.
- Your Attendance Record matters.

Extra-Curricular Activities/Summer Programs

At this point in your high school career, you should begin to identify some clubs, sports, and programs that you are interested in. If you haven't already, this is the time to get involved in the life of Hunter. However, if you are more active outside of school, that is okay too! Just make sure you are participating in activities that go beyond your academic responsibilities.

The following are some suggestions:

- Music (Orchestra, Jazz Band, Chorus)
- Cultural Clubs (ACS, AACCS, Hola, JCS)
- General Organization (G.O.)
- Term Council
- Sports Teams
- Newspapers and/or Literary Magazines (The Observer, What's What, Argus)
- Clubs (F-Stop, Hunter Against Hunter)
- Debate Team

It is important to find something to do over the summer. My motto is "It doesn't really matter what you do, as long as you are doing something!" Some examples:

- Job/Employment
- Camper/Counselor-n-Training
- Academic Program (Columbia Science, Johns Hopkins, etc.)
- Art Program (FIT/Pratt)
- Travel/Reading
- Sports Activities
- Internships (These are usually more available when you are in the older grades)
- **Community Service** (*This is a good time to fulfill your Hunter Community Service Graduation Requirement of 75 hours)

SAT I and/or ACT Test

Most colleges, but not all, require the SAT I or ACT test for admissions.

- The SAT I Test is a 3 hour, 45 minute test composed of three sections: writing, critical reading and math. Each test is scored on a 200-800 scale. Registration is available at www.collegeboard.com

- You are advised to take the SAT I test close to your senior year (usually in the spring of junior year) when you can achieve the best score possible.
- There is a preliminary test to the SAT called the PSAT, which is taken in the fall of your junior year. This test determines your eligibility for the National Merit Scholarship Program. While you may take a practice PSAT in 10th grade, your score will not be counted towards the scholarship competition until you take it in 11th Grade.
- The ACT is a curriculum-based test where questions are directly related to what students learn in English, mathematics and science courses.
- The ACT without the Writing Test, including administration and breaks takes just over four hours. English: 45 minutes, Math: 60 Minutes, Reading: 35 minutes, Science: 35 minutes. The highest possible score is 36.

SAT II: SUBJECT TESTS

The SAT II: Subject Tests are an additional evaluation tool used in college admissions.

- These tests are an hour long and subject specific in such areas as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Literature, US History, World History, Spanish, French, Math IC, Math IIC, etc.
- SAT II Subject tests are typically taken at the end of a course of study that coincides with the material on a test.
- Colleges use these test scores to assess your areas of competency and strength. It is recommended that you focus on tests that you feel particularly confident about.
- It is possible for some of you to choose to take the Biology SAT Subject Test this spring. If you feel particularly strong and/or interested in biology, this may be a good chance to get a subject test out of the way. I suggest that you take some practice tests and talk to your biology teacher to see if this might be a good idea for you. The best test date would be either May 2, 2009 or June 6, 2009. Sign up at www.collegeboard.com.
- Remember, some colleges will require 2 subject tests while a few require 3. And some schools do not require any. As you get closer to the college process, it is important to identify which schools need what tests as you plan your testing schedule. You will most likely need a math and/or science test if you are applying to a pre-medical or engineering program.

SAT Score Choice: This option returned in 2009. This gives students the option of choosing what scores they want sent to colleges. Please note, you cannot mix and match scores from different test dates.

Praise Sheets/Teacher Recommendations

“Praise Sheets” are recommendation forms, available from the counseling office (or on the Hunter website), that you can give to your teachers, club advisors, coaches, employers, clergy, or any adult who knows you well. These help your college counselor write a more comprehensive recommendation for you. These are private and confidential letters and are seen only by your counselor.

- It is important to remember that developing relationships with teachers at Hunter is an integral part of the college process. You will need 2 teachers (typically from your junior year) to write on your behalf as part of the admissions process and establishing those relationships now can prove very useful.

The College Folder

Beginning now, you will be building your “college folder.” We use this folder in the college process to help us get a better picture of your personality and accomplishments over the years. This confidential folder is kept in my office and you are welcome to add things to it as much as you like. Some examples are:

- Newspaper articles
- Copy of a favorite essay
- Program from a performance you were in (with your name highlighted)
- Award Certificates, etc.