


U-PREP 101

Practical Guidelines for College Preparation

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Outline

- Preparing Academically
 - Courses
 - Testing
- The Application Process
- The Campus Visit
- Selecting a School
- Paying for College
- Christ-Centered Higher Education: Is it for me?



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When Should I start to think about College?

- Transcript sent to college is from 9th grade to 12th grade
- Course selection matters
 - Advanced Placement (AP) Courses
 - Honors Courses
 - Most College will un weight courses


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Which courses should I take?

- 4 Years of English/Grammar
- 3-4 Years of Science (Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry)
- 3-4 Years of Math: (Algebra I, II, Geometry, Trigonometry/Calculus)
- 3-4 Years of History (US History, World History, Government/Economics)
- Foreign Language: Check with Colleges (Usually 2-3 years of the same foreign language)

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MYTH: Any "A" is better than a "B"




- Admissions officers understand the difference between an A in an easy class and a B in a hard one.
- Admissions staff sometimes use class rank to determine a student's level of academic excellence, not just his grade point average.

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Keep in Mind...

- These "College Prep" courses not only prepare you for the rigors of college study, they also prepare you for the PSAT, ACT, and SAT standardized testing...



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What about Standardized Tests?

"Taking the SAT is like going to the doctor. It scares the willies out of you, but once you get there it's really not that bad, and in the end it's all for the best."

Author Unknown



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The PSAT

- PSAT: Juniors usually take at high school during a school day
- Used to determine semi-finalists and finalists in the National Merit Competition
- Usually not the sole basis of scholarship and admissions decisions

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The SAT

- SAT: Made up of three sections
 - Math
 - Critical Reading
 - Writing
- Each section worth 800 points
- National Average around 900-950 (Math and Reading Sections only)
- Penalized for Guessing
- Cost \$45

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The ACT

- Made up of Four Sections
 - Math
 - Critical Reading
 - Natural Science
 - English
- Writing (Optional Section)
- Composite score ranges from 1-36
- National Average = 19-20 Composite
- Not penalized for "guessing"
- \$31 plus writing (\$15) = \$46

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When Should I take them?

- Junior Year: Take Both!
- Retake in the fall of Senior Year
- Average student raises their ACT composite score 2 points by taking it a 2nd time
- Average student raises their SAT between 50-80 points taking it a 2nd time.

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Testing Suggestions

- STUDY!
 - Princeton Review
 - Kaplan
 - Barrons
- Get a good night's rest
- Eat a good breakfast
- Relax...you know this stuff!



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Evening News

$\Sigma = \frac{71}{100}$

Of students surveyed, 64% prefer English and 32% prefer math. The fact that these numbers do not add up to 100 may help explain why.

Senior Year in High School

- September - November: Apply for admission
- December: Obtain FAFSA from high school or college (online)
- January: Complete and submit FAFSA after January 1
- March - April: Receive notification of financial aid from college/universities
- May 1st: Deposit to School of Choice



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The Application Process

- Know the Terminology:
 - Early Admission
 - Early Action
 - Rolling Admission
- Know Deadlines
 - Fee Waiver
 - Application Deadline
- Know Timeline for decision



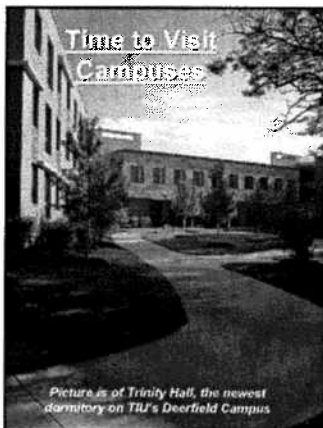
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What Does the Admissions Committee look at?

- Well-rounded students
 - Quality Academics
 - Extracurricular Activities
- A Strong Writing Sample
 - ACT/SAT Writing Sample
 - Essay

The committee is most concerned with whether or not the student admitted will thrive in their educational and social environment.

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Checklist for Campus Visit:

- Meet with an Admissions Counselor
- Verify admission requirements
- Determine actual college costs
- Ask about financial aid opportunities
- Take a campus tour

Checklist Continued

- Investigate your academic program(s)
- Attend a class
- Talk with students and faculty
- Discuss your chances for success:
 - Admission
 - Graduation
 - Placement



Students after Chapel at Trinity International University

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Other Visit Reminders

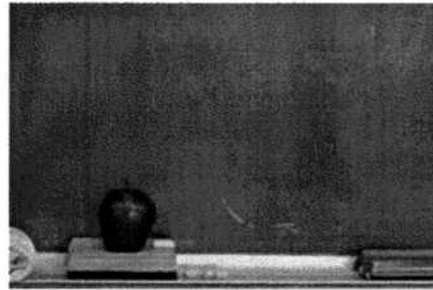
- Schedule Visit through Admissions Office
- Be as specific as possible
- Know if your visit is personalized or "mass produced"



A.T. Olsen Chapel
Trinity International University

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Selecting a School



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Types of Colleges

- Commercial/Technical
- Bible
- Comprehensive/Major Univ.
- Community
- Liberal Arts
- Online
- Christian/Secular

The question every family should ask themselves before the search begins is "What things do we value?"

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Collect Information From:

- College Website
- Secondary Websites
- College fairs and representatives
- Current students, parents, or alumni
- Church or school staff members*
- Directories/Guides

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Explore Other College Characteristics

- Programs offered
- College/program accreditation
- Cost and financial aid
- Out of class opportunities
- Support services
- Location and size

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Financial Aid: How do I pay for this?



"I can't find a job. Can I write off the cost of my education as a tax loss?"

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Used with Permission



The Investment of College

- "Investing" in a college education is one of the most important investments you can make.
- Financial Aid is E\$SENTIAL to the overwhelming majority of families when making a college decision.
- Financing a private education is frequently a partnership.



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The Partnership

- Government contribution
- School contribution
- Family contribution
- Student loans and/or work



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FAFSA: How it all begins!

- Let's start with the free money!
- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after January 1, 2010. www.fafsa.ed.gov
- It is FREE!!!
- You will receive a Student Aid Report, with an Expected Family Contribution (EFC). This number does not necessarily mean how much you will pay for college.
- The FAFSA is the starting point for almost all financial aid.



Government Contribution

- Based on EFC, students with the highest level of need may receive a Federal Pell Grant and SEOG grant (for as much as \$6000 combined). May also receive Academic Competitiveness Grant.
- Illinois residents, attending a college or university in Illinois, with a fairly high level of need may receive an Illinois Monetary Award Program (MAP) grant for up to \$4900.
- As a general rule, this is the only "free" money from the government.



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School contribution



- Varies by school
- Academic scholarships
 - Usually based on ACT/SAT Scores and GPA
- Talent scholarships (e.g. athletic, music)
- Entitlements (based on church/denomination, parents, siblings, state, etc.)
- Need-based grants from school
- Typically, school funding should not decrease in subsequent years.

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Family contribution

- Consider at least four sources:
- Outside scholarships www.fastweb.com
church, service clubs, parents work etc.
NEVER pay for a scholarship search!!!
- Savings
- Monthly payment plan
- Loans
- You are strongly encouraged to explore the first three options fully before taking out a loan.



Loans

- Know the types:
 - Stafford Loan
 - Freshman Year: \$3,500
 - Sophomore: \$4,500
 - Junior & Senior Year: \$5,500
 - UPDATE: Now an additional \$2,000 available to students (Unsubsidized)
 - Perkins Loan
 - Parents PLUS Loan



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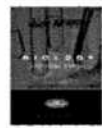
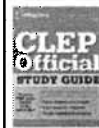
Special Conditions

- Tuition at private school
- Death/disability of parent
- Ten weeks or more of unemployment
- Reduction/termination of untaxed income

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Other Cost Cutters

- Advanced Placement college courses at high school
- Credit by exam: College Level Examination Program (CLEP)
- Accelerated degree programs



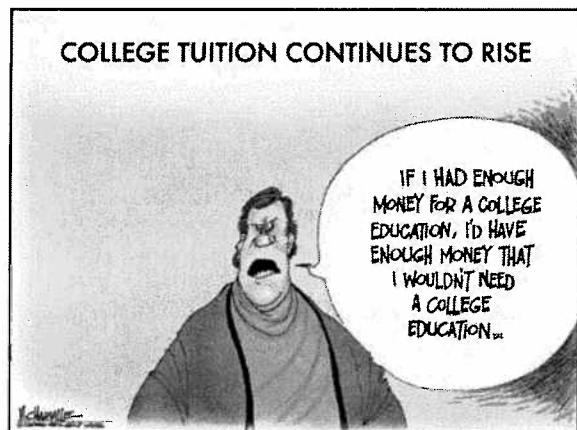
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REMEMBER...

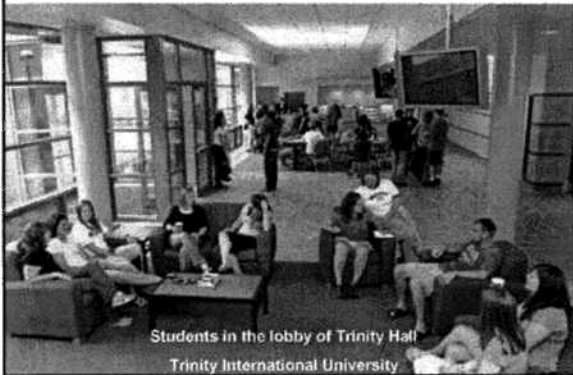
- Don't initially eliminate a school because of costs
- Any amount saved may result in additional options for paying for college
- Think of college more in terms of long-term investment rather than short-term cost

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COLLEGE TUITION CONTINUES TO RISE



Questions?



Christ Centered Higher Ed: Is it for me?

- Research shows that some of the most formative years in a young person's life is between the ages of 18-24
- During that time is when the student develops their OWN faith...
- Many college bound students are not ready for the "faith crisis" that hits them while they are in college

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Changes in our Culture

- ❖ Seeking truth has lost favor (idea, action, way of life)
- ❖ Believe anything you want, as long as you do not claim it to be true (Bloom, 1987 - cultural relativism)
- ❖ Practice anything you want, as long as you do not deem it better (fear not error, but intolerance)
- ❖ If you do, you risk being labeled "irrelevant"
- ❖ Increasing pluralism, yet as Christians we hold firmly to one truth

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Changes in people during college years

Steve Henderson, Higher Ed Consultant

- ❖ Unless at a Christian college, research consistently reports a decline in religious values, attitudes and behaviors during the college years
- ❖ Changes in values during college years do indeed persist into adult life
- ❖ Going to a Christian college has no guarantee
- ❖ Some Christian students do well no matter where they attend, but percentages speak for themselves – 62% evidence significant declines

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What is happening?

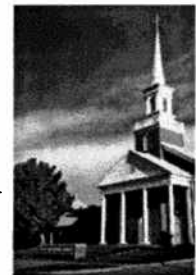
- Troubling Influences:
 - Peers
 - Roommates
 - Professors
 - Culture of Secular Campus
 - Curriculum



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What Can be Done?

- It is vital students stay connected with their home church
- It is even more important they get connected with a church near their campus
- Consider the option of a Christ-centered Higher Education Experience



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Caution


CAUTION

- Christ-centered Schools do not provide any guarantees.
- Some schools are "Christian" in name only
- Investigate!!
 - Quality Academics? (Mind of Christ)
 - Spiritual Environment? (Heart of Christ)
 - Outcomes

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Benefits of a Christ-Centered School


- Choices:
 - Over 104 Christian colleges/Universities in the United States. (www.cccu.org)
- Academic Excellence
 - Compare Class Profile
 - Compare Faculty
 - Compare student/faculty ratio
 - Compare Graduate school acceptance rates



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Benefits Continued


- Personal Attention
 - True "professors" teaching courses
 - Small Classrooms
- Financial Aid
 - Sticker Price is NOT final Price
- Service Learning
 - Opportunity to use faith in learning
- Graduate School



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More Benefits

- Graduate School
 - Many times coming from a Christian College gives students a "leg up"
 - Research done at undergraduate level
 - Master's in Bioethics
 - More involvement on campuses




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At Trinity we expect you to DREAM BIG



- Trinity is made up of 4 different schools
 - Trinity College
 - Trinity Graduate School
 - Trinity Law School
 - Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
- In all, over 3,000 students



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Questions?

- Reminders:
 - If you would like your son or daughter to receive communication from Trinity, please pick up my a business card and e-mail me their information.
- My contact information:
 - Aaron Mahl, Director of Admissions
 - Phone: 847.317.7077
 - E-mail: amahl@tiu.edu

I would be happy to send you a copy of my notes!

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