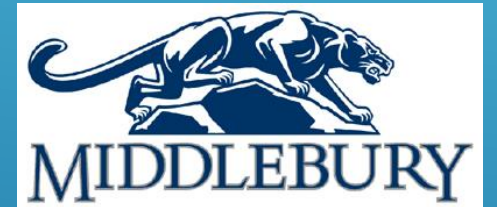


SELECTIVE COLLEGES & THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

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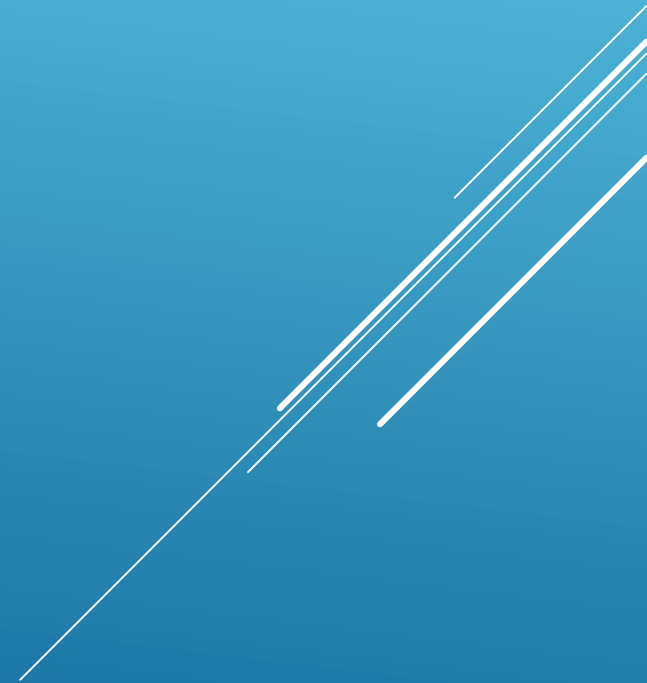
AN OVERVIEW OF TODAY....

- *Welcome!
- *Background & overview
- *Thanks to VSAC
- *Goals for today:
 - Provide an overview of “highly-selective” colleges & the holistic admissions review
 - Provide some useful tools & information on preparing college applications
 - De-mystify the application process
 - Leave plenty of time for your questions





WHAT ARE “HIGHLY-SELECTIVE”
COLLEGES?





HOLISTIC APPLICATION REVIEW – *MOVING WAY BEYOND THE NUMBERS*

- ▶ Application itself (On-line or on paper):
 - ▶ Personal & Demographic Information
 - ▶ Activities, involvement, awards, etc.
 - ▶ Essay(s)/Personal statement
- ▶ Transcript & School Report
- ▶ SAT/ACT scores
- ▶ Letters of recommendation
- ▶ *Interview*
- ▶ Supplemental materials



WHAT GOES INTO A COLLEGE APPLICATION?

- ▶ EACH SCHOOL IS DIFFERENT.
- ▶ Academic preparation
- ▶ Extra-curricular involvement
- ▶ Community involvement/service
- ▶ Diversity
- ▶ Personal characteristics
- ▶ *Ultimately, we are building a community...*



WHAT ARE COLLEGES LOOKING AT?

- ▶ It's an opportunity
- ▶ It doesn't have to be the next great master-work of American literature
- ▶ It's a piece of formal writing, but does not have to be stiff
- ▶ Try starting with brainstorming or 'free-writing'
- ▶ Get feedback
- ▶ Edit & proofread



THE COLLEGE ESSAY

- ▶ Good essays are generally:
 - ▶ Simple
 - ▶ Answer the question asked
 - ▶ Self-revelatory
 - ▶ Explain your context
 - ▶ In *your* voice
 - ▶ Reveal your personality
 - ▶ Authentic
 - ▶ Not repeating things you've already said
 - ▶ Not trying to tell your entire biography
 - ▶ A snapshot of *who you are*



THE COLLEGE ESSAY (CONT'D)

- ▶ Grades:
 - ▶ Sophomore & junior years often most important
 - ▶ Upward trends are good, downward trends.... notsomuch
- ▶ Curriculum:
 - ▶ Core classes looked for_____
 - ▶ Have you challenged yourself?
 - ▶ AP & honors classes?
 - ▶ Early college/Dual enrollment
 - ▶ Independent studies
- ▶ Testing....



ACADEMIC PREPARATION

- ▶ Your potential to contribute to the campus community...
- ▶ Athletics
- ▶ Clubs
- ▶ Activities
- ▶ Leadership
- ▶ Honors/Awards
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Community involvement/service
- ▶ Military experience/ROTC
- ▶ Cultural activities



EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES & INVOLVEMENT



- ▶ Who should I ask?
 - ▶ Choose people who know you well
- ▶ Why are they important?
- ▶ What should I do?
 - ▶ Approach writers early
 - ▶ Give them a resume/list
 - ▶ Ask if they can write you a good letter
 - ▶ *Follow up with them*

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Early On

- ▶ ENGAGE – be active in your own college application process
- ▶ Take challenging classes, keep up with essentials
- ▶ Keep a list of activities, awards, leadership
- ▶ Test preparation/practice
- ▶ Start looking at schools early, take advantage of visits when you can
- ▶ Start looking for aid options **early**

During the process

- ▶ Be strategic in assembling your list of colleges – think carefully about FIT
- ▶ Learn what you can about each school, how they operate & what they look for
- ▶ Keep track of deadlines
- ▶ Start early on essays – share them
- ▶ **BE YOURSELF**

WORDS TO THE WISE