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## **SO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING TO COLLEGE?**

Congratulations! Application decisions are rolling in. Some of you have already heard some positive news. When dealing with college decisions, it may be best to do so at home so you have some privacy in case it is not the decision you hoped for. If it's good news, be mindful that classmates might not receive the same good news. Be proud of your accomplishments, but also remain humble. Not everyone will get into their ED and EA colleges.

Despite the setbacks and challenges you face, you are and will continue to be successful in your life. Admissions decisions you receive will not change that. I encourage you to sit with your moment of disappointment in the bad news, but not dwell on it. Remind yourself that you've submitted your best application and admissions decisions are not in your control. Never forget that you are enough. Always. Without condition.

It is that time of year when well-meaning family and friends want to weigh in on your college future. Remember it is okay to tell family and friends you do not want to discuss your college plans. After this long and arduous process, you may need a break from all of the college talk. That is okay! Parents, feel free to run interference for your children. Between college decisions and end of the semester coursework and projects, you have a lot going on right now. Here are some examples of how you can answer the question you may get on repeat this holiday season, "So, where are you going to college?"

- "Oh, I decided I'm going to take a year off to see if I can make it as a TikTok star!"
- "We decided as a family that we aren't going to talk about it until we've made a final decision. I'll be sure to let you know when we do!"
- "Johnny has applied to a list of schools we are really excited about! As soon as we make a decision we'll let you know!"



## WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING NOW

Depending on what year you are in high school, college can seem like a long way off or right around the corner. Regardless of where you are though, there are things you can be doing right now to help prepare for college application season.

### Freshman Year:

- Review college requirements and map out a tentative four-year schedule of classes keeping in mind college applications.
- Begin passionate community service/volunteer hours and explore summer opportunities that you can hopefully build on each year.
- Begin a list of accomplishments, awards, honors, and activities for each semester of school. You'll need it to complete the Activities Resume on your application.

### Sophomore Year:

- Athletes - explore summer camps or showcases for your sport
- Explore summer job/internship/volunteer opportunities
- Continue to add to your activities resume
- Keep your grades up!

### Junior Year:

- Connect with teachers (for future letters of recommendation)
- Build a preliminary college list based on your interests, aptitudes, and GPA/test scores
- Identify 4-7 majors you are interested in
- Discuss and create a standardized testing strategy
- Visit/tour college campuses

### Senior Year:

- Complete and submit your college applications (using an IEC can make the process more organized and less stressful)
- Monitor your student portal for emails from colleges
- Search for outside scholarships
- Continue your research by visiting the college campuses you've applied/been admitted
- Accept at your college of choice and submit a deposit
- Take a deep breath and congratulate yourself on a job well done!

## IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING A MAJOR

A college major is a structured program of study built around a particular discipline. Curriculum offerings focus on exposing students to the knowledge and skills needed to work in their area of study.

- Choosing a major can narrow down the list of colleges to consider.
- An early choice major can help you graduate in 4 years. Once you choose a major, your academic requirements will be clearly defined.
- Choosing a major takes the guesswork out of choosing what courses to take.
- Some colleges admit by major and may have limited space for popular majors.

An intersection of Interests and aptitudes nets the best choice major. To choose a major, think about your favorite classes in high school. What did you excel at and enjoy the most?

If you have no idea, take a few major quizzes and explore different majors on college websites by looking at the curriculum to see if you will enjoy taking all the required coursework for that major. Most college websites have search tools to research specific majors and learn about potential careers related to a specific major.

- <https://www.luc.edu/undergrad/academiclife/whatsmymajorquiz/>
- <https://www.princetonreview.com/quiz/career-quiz>
- <https://admissions.illinois.edu/Discover/Academics/explore>

As an IEC, I have a toolbox full of links, ideas, and helpful tips for choosing a major. Contact me for guidance.



# COLLEGE CONNECTIONS

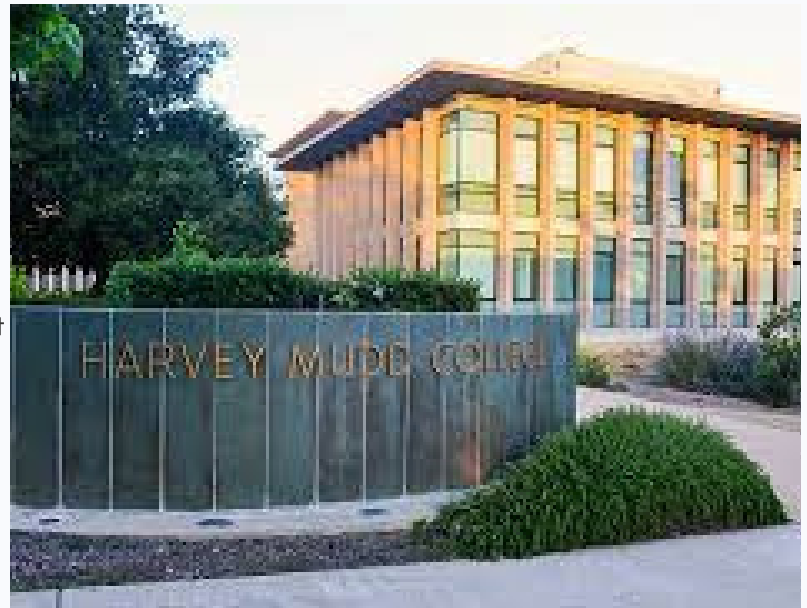


## BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Boston University is a large private research university located in the vibrant city of Boston, Massachusetts. BU has 17 schools and colleges with over 300 programs of study. BU is known for strong programs in Business Administration, Communication, Engineering, Economics, and the Health Professions. The general education curriculum at BU creates many opportunities for interdisciplinary, co-curricular, and experiential learning. Train and bus access make all parts of the city available in minutes. The campus community is very active and socially aware. Housing at BU is guaranteed all four years and BU is known for its great food! With no football team, school spirit is celebrated by supporting the D1 ice hockey team. BU presents many social and academic opportunities for students who are go-getters!

## HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE

Harvey Mudd College (HMC) is a private college in Claremont, California, focused on science and engineering. It is part of the Claremont Colleges, which share adjoining campus grounds and resources. HMC offers four-year degrees in chemistry, mathematics, physics, computer science, biology, and engineering, interdisciplinary degrees in mathematical biology, and joint majors. Students may elect an Individual Program of Study (IPS) or an off-campus major offered by any of the other Claremont Colleges. All students are required to take a Common Core Curriculum, typically in their freshman and sophomore years. Admission to Harvey Mudd is highly competitive, and the college is known for its intense academic culture.



## VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Located in Nashville, TN, it has a unique blend of Southern Charm and scholarly achievement. Undergraduates choose one of four schools—Arts and Science, Engineering, Blair School of Music, or Education and Human Development—but everyone takes their core liberal arts courses in the College of Arts and Science, where the writing program is a standout. Immersion Vanderbilt, a graduation requirement, calls for every undergraduate to undertake an immersive learning experience (such as internships, fieldwork, or performances) culminating in a final project; students choose from four pathways: civic and professional, creative expression, international, and research. Engineering, education, and music are particular strengths at Vandy. All first-year students live together in 10 Commons houses and take part in Vanderbilt Visions, a living/learning initiative designed to foster a sense of community.

# MAJOR SPOTLIGHT

## ENGINEERING

Engineering is an interdisciplinary study relying heavily on math and science. The most common engineering majors offered are electrical, mechanical, civil, chemical, and computer engineering. Newer engineering majors include robotics, environmental engineering, architectural engineering, biomaterials, and biochemical engineering. Engineers are problem solvers with strong math and science skills. In college, engineering majors can expect heavy math, statistics, basic science, and lab work. Students interested in engineering should take physics and chemistry over biology and earth science. Students with attention to detail, creativity, and who are skilled at critical reading and thinking, leadership, math, organization, quantitative analysis, and spatial thinking who work well with a team and have imagination and initiative should consider engineering.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### STEM/STEAM

STEM education is the intentional curriculum of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. STEAM educational curriculum is similar, with integrating Art into the mix.

### AID PACKAGE

A financial aid package is the total amount of financial aid, both need and merit-based, offered by a college. It combines various forms of aid including grants and scholarships, that do not need to be repaid, as well as loans that do need to be repaid. Students need to accept their financial aid package, typically through the college student portal.

### DEFERMENT

Getting deferred means the college is postponing its admissions decision and will review your application again with the regular-decision applicants.



**STAR COLLEGE PREP**

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