

Freshman Year - College Planning Outline

It is never too early to plan for the future!

Basic Checklist

- Build strong academic, language, mathematics and critical thinking skills by taking challenging courses.
- Study hard and get excellent grades.
- Strengthen your vocabulary by increasing your reading.
- Become involved in co-curricular activities.
- Browse through college literature or surf the Web to get an idea of what kinds of schools may be of interest to you and decide which characteristics are most important to you.
- Check out what high school courses colleges require.
- Research career possibilities.
- Begin saving money for college.

Pre-College Checklist Outlined by Month

June

- Think about which extracurricular activities you wish to participate in during high school. There are numerous opportunities.
- Be outstanding in your job, internship, volunteer service or academic pursuits this summer.
- Build your vocabulary by reading during summer months (and throughout the year).
- Build strong academic, language and critical thinking skills during your four years of high school.

July

- Talk with your parents about starting or continuing a savings plan for college. It's smart to start saving now.
- Obtain a Social Security card (if you don't already have one). A Social Security number is required for college applications, standardized tests, and financial aid.

August

- Use a day planner or calendar to organize assignments, schedule events, and to meet deadlines.
- To get a head start on the financial aid process, start researching scholarships. Some scholarships are available for high school freshman.
- Get involved in high school activities.

September

- Study hard and earn top grades. Freshman grades will be included in your final high school GPA and class rank; freshman grades do count toward college admission and scholarships.
- Get involved with school activities and extracurricular activities outside of
- Start a list of your activities, accomplishments, awards, community service, and other unique experiences. Use this list to create your student résumé.
- Develop teacher and upperclassmen relationships. Plan to use teachers and older high school students as mentors. Learn from college-bound students going through the college admission process so you will be better prepared when you begin the process in your junior year.

October

- Start writing your student résumé.
- Explore your career and college interests. Talk with both your parents and high school teachers.
- Take the PSAT in preparation for the SAT and ACT which you will need to take as a junior or senior. All freshmen at TLHS will be registered to take the PSAT in October.

November

- Research college summer enrichment programs for high school students. If you find a summer program of interest, start the application process next month.

December

- Investigate college summer enrichment programs for high school students. Start filling out application materials for programs you wish to attend.

January

- Do well on your final exams. Your GPA is the single-most important factor for getting accepted to college. This includes freshman grades.
- Apply for college summer enrichment programs of interest. Meet all application deadlines.
- Continue participating in extracurricular activities.
- Study hard this semester to earn top grades so you can have the highest possible GPA and class rank.

February

- Build respectful, hard-working relationships with your teachers so they will be glad to write letters of recommendation on your behalf when you apply for college admission and scholarships.
- Continue to think about college majors of interest. Conduct research on possible careers that may spark interest in a specific major.

March

- Start thinking about summer activities – Work a job, internship, or provide volunteer service.
- Continue to study hard to earn top grades. High GPA's open college admission doors.

April

- Continue to research opportunities for summer employment, internships, volunteering, etc. Use the summer months wisely to develop and improve your student résumé.
- Continue to build hard-working, respectful relationships with teachers through the entire semester.

May

- Sign up for summer activities – Work a job or internship, provide volunteer service, or enroll in a college summer enrichment program.
- Plan to work hard this summer to impress your employers, supervisors, or class instructors; these are people you may ask for letters of recommendation in the fall of your senior year . . . but only if you do an excellent job for them this summer.

- If you have a job this summer, save as much money as possible for college.
- Continue to discuss college options and costs with your parents over the summer. Calculate how much you and your family can afford to pay toward college expenses. Keep in mind a small, private university may offer substantial scholarships and cost you less than other schools that offer very little financial aid.
- Do well on your final exams.
- Continue to think about college majors during the coming summer. Conduct research on possible careers that may spark interest in a specific major.

June

- Update your student résumé to include freshman year activities and accomplishments.
- Continue to think about college majors. Conduct research on careers that may spark interest in a specific major; talk with your parents and teachers.
- Be active this summer: Work a job or internship, provide volunteer service, attend a college summer enrichment program or perform other activities. Use summer months wisely to build your student résumé.
- If your summer activities include a job, internship, or volunteer service, give it your all and be outstanding. Work to impress your bosses and supervisors; these are people you may ask for letters of recommendation in the fall of your senior year . . . but only if you do an excellent job for them this summer.
- If interested, visit a few college campuses this summer.
- Continue to build your vocabulary by reading during summer months (and throughout the year).
- Continue to build strong academic, language and critical thinking skills during your four years of high school.