



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS NEWS RE: STANDARDIZED TESTING

- The NCAA has officially eliminated standardized testing as an initial eligibility requirement. From now on, the NCAA will look at a student's GPA in core coursework. This is a huge change, and it will be interesting to see what kind of effect it has on the test-optional world. Just remember that some public universities, such as those in Florida and Georgia, require tests.
- It's looking more and more like tests are still quite important for STEM, engineering, and business programs. We will be waiting on more data to see how well students applying test-optional have done this year. I do recommend that most kids at least prepare and take a few tests. You can always decide not to submit them.
- The Digital SAT is ready for lift off in March 2024. That means that current sophomores will be affected. It will be a shorter test, and it will be adaptive. There are still a lot of unanswered questions, but this blog can help you understand the Digital SAT more and give you some insight on how it will be scored: <https://www.applerouth.com/blog/2022/11/22/deep-dive-on-the-4-digital-sat-practice-tests/>

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

- Location: Charleston, SC
- # of Undergrads: 9,976
- Acceptance Rate: 76%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 15:1
- Returning Freshmen: 80%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 50%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- Small college feel with the advantages of a midsized, urban university
- 13th oldest college in the country; founded as a private college but became public 200 years later; located in Charleston's Historic District; is a Nat'l Historic Landmark
- Core curriculum focuses on problem solving and critical thinking
- Small class size (avg 23 students) with focus on undergraduate teaching
- 70% participate in internships each year
- Strong bio and chem programs; many go on to the Medical University of SC
- Supportive, collaborative environment
- 700 enroll in the Honors College (no additional application requirements)
- Open-minded, liberal student body
- 15% of men and 24% of women participate in Greek life
- Head to the beach on the weekend!

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT:

CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

- Location: Clemson, SC
- # of Undergrads: 22,400
- Acceptance Rate: 43%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 16:1
- Returning Freshmen: 92%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 39%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- More focused on undergraduates than most public universities
- Tight knit campus in a small town location with lots of spirit
- 1,400 acre campus surrounded by another 17,000 acres of farms and woodlands
- Known for biology, computer engineering (especially robotics), veterinary sciences
- Big on undergraduate teaching and undergraduate research (54% take part)
- 53% of classes have fewer than 20 students
- 16% of men and 31% of women participate in Greek life
- Blue Ridge Mountains close by for hiking and camping
- Friendly students who love big-time sports!

THINGS FOR JUNIORS TO THINK ABOUT:

Now's the time to be thinking about what classes you'll be taking senior year. Here are a few things to think about:

- Most colleges want to see students taking **5 core courses** every year of high school. Now is not the time to stop taking math or science, even if your school does not require them for graduation.
- **Keep taking foreign language.** Most colleges recommend 3 or 4 years of foreign language, and some require 4 years. And that's 4 years of the same language. If you haven't taken a language this year, see if you can participate in a summer language program and think about taking a language next year.
- Remember that colleges will be looking at how **rigorous** your courseload has been, so try to take the most rigorous classes that you can handle.

AND ABOUT STRESS...

Hearing about seniors receiving acceptances, denials, and lots and lots of deferrals can definitely cause a lot of stress--especially knowing that it'll be your turn to go through this process next year.

Rest assured that most seniors will be just fine. They will land at the place that is right for them. They may even realize that being denied or deferred from some colleges was actually a blessing. Rejection is really an opportunity for redirection!

The key to this whole process is to figure out which colleges make sense for YOU. Not for your friend. Not for your mom or grandma. If you can make a balanced list of 10-12 colleges--some that are super highly likely that you'll get into and some that are less likely--and you'd be happy to attend each and every one, you will drastically reduce the stress.

And remember this **KEY POINT**: there are about 50-100 colleges that are highly rejective or pretty darn rejective, but there are hundreds and hundreds of other fine colleges and universities that are actively looking for students! Put a few of those on your list!

THOUGHTS FOR SENIORS...

The number of Early Action deferrals / postponements that have come out in the past few days across the country makes my head spin! Hello, institutional priorities! Hello, yield protection! Colleges have priorities to fill, and they simply won't provide acceptances if there is a risk that students will not come. While deferrals are disappointing, there are things you can do:

- Take some time to process and grieve, and then move on. You're going to have other options from colleges that want YOU!
- Look very carefully at the messaging from the college. Follow their directions exactly. They may want you to complete a few more essays (or they may just want you to answer a few questions in bullet form), or they may accept more letters of recommendation. If they say not to send in another letter of recommendation, do not send one! If they say not to send in a letter, do not send one!
- The point is to give them more and useful information that can bolster your case and explain why YOU are a great fit. If you're writing a Letter of Continued Interest, be honest and succinct, and show your enthusiasm if that's how you feel. If you're willing to say that you would definitely come if accepted, go ahead and say that. Just use your judgement to decide what to send in. Please remember that admissions officers are tired by now and don't want to read crazy long letters.

Many of these deferrals have little rhyme or reason to us outsiders. **Please do not waste your time trying to figure out why Person A got in but Person B did not.** We will never, ever know. Remember, colleges need to meet their institutional priorities each year. Those priorities change each cycle, and we will never know exactly what they are!

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I help students and their families navigate the college admissions process while decreasing confusion and stress. I empower students to figure out who they are and where they belong, and I provide structure, insight, and enthusiasm as they apply to colleges that are the best fit academically, socially, and financially. Contact me for a 30 minute complimentary session to learn more!

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www.mgsed.com | marisa@mgsed.com

914-217-9984