



MGS EDUCATIONAL CONSULTING

Design your path to college

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2025

MY SENIORS HAVE LANDED!

Super proud to announce that my seniors have landed, and they have landed well! Landing well means that they 1) figured out what they're looking for and then 2) researched colleges thoroughly to determine which ones would best meet their needs and wants. I'm proud of this process because my students end up with stronger applications, and they're more likely to thrive wherever they land. These seniors are headed to:

- Boston College
- Case Western Reserve University (x2)
- Clemson University
- Lafayette College
- Loyola Marymount University
- Providence College
- School of the Art Institute
- Southern Methodist University
- Trinity College Dublin
- Tufts University
- Tulane University
- University of California-Los Angeles
- University of Connecticut
- University of Michigan (x2)
- Vanderbilt University
- Wesleyan University

ADMISSIONS NEWS:

The digital, shortened ACT, known as the Core ACT, is here! It is shorter, there is more time allotted per question, and there are now 4 choices per question as opposed to 5. Starting in September, the Core ACT will also be available in paper form, which is great for students who prefer to test on paper. The ACT will now provide a composite score that includes Reading, English, and Math. Science is now considered optional (by ACT) and will not be included in that composite score; instead, ACT will now release a Math/Science score. **That said, many colleges have not indicated whether they think the Science section is optional. As such, I highly recommend that students continue taking the Science section.**

More than 500 universities have banded together to sign a statement against federal government overreach from the American Association of Colleges and Universities. You can find the statement here: <https://www.aacu.org/newsroom/a-call-for-constructive-engagement>.

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

- Location: Pittsburgh, PA
- # of Undergrads: 20,418
- Acceptance Rate: 58%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 13:1
- Returning Freshmen: 92%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 9%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- Excellent engineering, nursing, pre-med, and PT programs
- Known for philosophy and Slavic studies programs
- ROLLING ADMISSIONS (so apply early)!! (I love rolling!)
- Co-ops for engineering students
- Housing guaranteed for first years; good off-campus options
- Campus is next to a 460 acre park
- Coursework is intense but manageable
- 52% of students participate in research
- Career Center provides an excellent internship guarantee pgm
- Great public transportation makes exploring the city easy and fun
- Greek life is small on campus
- It's a large university made to feel small, and students really feel their PittPride!

COLLEGE IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MUHLENBERG COLLEGE

- Location: Allentown, PA
- # of Undergrads: 1,788
- Acceptance Rate: 72%
- Student / Faculty Ratio: 8:1
- Returning Freshmen: 89%
- % Receiving Merit Aid: 29%

INTERESTING FACTS:

- Supportive, nurturing atmosphere with an emphasis on community.
- Strong theater BA program, but any student can audition for shows.
- Strong in pre-med and pre-law. Comprehensive science major allows for a sampling of it all. Cutting edge lab equipment. Public health major.
- 3 writing intensive courses required; capstone experience for all majors.
- Academic and career advising are strong.
- Living Writers course brings authors to campus.
- On-campus housing guaranteed; freshmen live together in one end of campus.
- Students rave about the food.
- Greek life exists but is pretty minimal; most social life takes place on campus.

TERM TO UNDERSTAND: COMMON DATA SET

One of the most useful resources on the internet is the **Common Data Set (CDS)**. The Common Data Set is a compilation of standards and data points as defined by the US Department of Education, and most every college posts their Common Data Set data on their website, typically under their Institutional Research page.

The CDS covers a huge amount of data, such as:

- How many students apply and are accepted
- Test data and GPA data for enrolled students
- How many are invited to be on a waitlist and then accepted
- Importance of certain admissions criteria
- How many receive need-based and merit aid

The easiest way to find the CDS is to Google "Common Data Set + Bard" (or whichever college you're looking at). Enjoy the research!!

SENIORS: WHAT TO DO ABOUT WAITLISTS?

Like last year's admissions season, many seniors have been placed on waitlists, which means that they weren't accepted or denied and that their applications will be reconsidered if spots become available. Waitlists can lead to a mix of emotions in teenagers, including hopefulness, frustration, and anxiety.

Colleges and universities use waitlists to help them manage enrollment. As students turn down their offers of admission, spots will open up, and they will start reaching out to students with offers. You may have noticed or heard that many colleges are already taking students off of waitlists.

If you're offered a spot on a waitlist, you should do the following:

- Commit to the college where you think you're most likely to thrive. There is NO guarantee that you will come off of a waitlist, so please get excited about the college you're committing to! Find housing, find a roommate, participate in orientation.
- Check section C of the Common Data Set (google CDS + the college). Get a few year's worth of data to see how many students were offered the waitlist, how many accepted a place on the waitlist, and how many were eventually admitted. If it's a tiny percentage, then getting off the waitlist is highly unlikely; it's best that you move on.
- If you're interested in staying on a waitlist, showing continued interest is absolutely critical. Please think about doing the following:
 - Confirm your interest and write a short explanation of why that college is your top choice (please don't go beyond 250 words). Let them know if you've had any interactions with current students or alums.
 - Update the college with your AP/IB scores.
 - Update the college on any awards you've received or any achievements you've had since applying (academic, athletic, or activities-wise). Many high schools give out awards at graduation; let the colleges know!
 - Visit the college.

Being on a waitlist can feel like limbo. Being hopeful but also realistic will help you navigate this effectively!

MORE THOUGHTS FOR SENIORS...

Now that your college admissions season has wrapped up, there are actually quite a few LOOSE ENDS to tie up in MAY:

- ☐ Decline any other offers of admission.
- ☐ Send thank you notes to anyone who wrote a letter of recommendation for you.
- ☐ Finish the year strong. Colleges will see your final transcript, so make sure your grades don't tank. There are stories every year of colleges rescinding offers for sudden low grades and/or problematic behavior. Make sure that doesn't happen to you!
- ☐ Keep your behavior in check. Colleges and universities are also known to rescind offers because of poor student behavior. Trust me here too: you don't want this to happen to you or your friends. Have fun for sure, but please show some restraint!
- ☐ Ask your high school to submit your final transcript.
- ☐ Set up your campus email and then check it regularly.
- ☐ Check your college portal regularly.
- ☐ Make sure you understand the housing process. Submit whatever you need to submit.
- ☐ Join Instagram or other social media groups that pertain to your college. Getting to know a few kids over the summer can help ease the transition in the fall.
- ☐ Consider whether you will try to find your own roommates through social media or if you'll "go random." "Going random" typically is not random at all; colleges will have you submit a survey about your living habits (eg, study habits, bedtime, and neatness) and then they'll match you with other people who share your lifestyle. I personally recommend this process because you'll probably be more compatible than with people you find on social media. And you're more likely to live with people who expand your horizons, which is one of the points of college! Check out this article:
https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/18/opinion/roommates-college-strangers.html?unlocked_article_code=1.IU0.PkxJ.GJzrl_A9GGoA&smid=url-share
- ☐ Make appointments for any doctors you need to see before you head off.
- ☐ Update your neuropsych evaluation, if that pertains to you.
- ☐ Think about creating a LinkedIn profile. It's never too soon!

**PLEASE FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO OTHER FAMILIES WHO
WOULD BENEFIT FROM MY APPROACH AND PERSPECTIVE!
(They can subscribe on my website)**

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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