

PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY  
COLLEGE COUNSELING OFFICE

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Just as teachers at the Harkness table create a student-centered learning environment, PEA counselors foster active and open-minded collaboration with students. In this supportive environment, students learn to identify their goals and interests, to manage a complex and stressful process, and to make healthy and confident decisions about higher education. Fundamentally, we believe that each student should control the self-evaluation, research, and application writing that is essential to good college selection.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

THE COLLEGE COUNSELOR/STUDENT/PARENT PARTNERSHIP .....	2
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## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

Academic Curriculum .....	5
Planning Academic Schedule .....	6
PSAT/NMSQT—Preliminary SAT/National Merit Qualifying Test .....	8
Test Preparation .....	8
Other Standardized Testing .....	8
Extracurricular Interests .....	9
Summer Vacation .....	10
Family Support, Communication and Expectations .....	11

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

WHAT DO YOU WANT: CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH .....	13
Type of Institution .....	13
Student Body and Gender .....	14
College Setting .....	14
Enrollment Size .....	15
Geographic Search .....	15
Major Fields of Study .....	17
Campus Life .....	17
Housing .....	18
Extracurriculars .....	18
Campus Employment .....	18
Support Services .....	18
Athletics .....	18
Advanced Placement .....	19
Financial Aid/Scholarships .....	20
Admissions Selectivity—Category I, II, III, IV and V .....	20
STANDARDIZED TESTING .....	22
Types of Standardized Tests .....	22
PSAT/NMSQT—Preliminary SAT/National Merit Qualifying Test .....	22
SAT I—Reasoning Test .....	23
SAT II—Subject Tests .....	23
ACT—American College Testing Program .....	24
AP—Advanced Placement .....	24
TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language .....	24
Test Preparation Resources .....	24
Sending Test Scores .....	25
COLLEGE COUNSELING WEBSITE .....	26

## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

THE COLLEGE VISIT .....	27
Preparing for Your Trip .....	27
Overview of Visit Options .....	27

Tours.....	27
Group Information Sessions.....	27
Interviews.....	27
Class Visits.....	28
Overnights.....	28
Meetings with Coaches, Music Teachers, Learning Specialists .....	28
HOW TO INTERVIEW .....	28
Types of Interviews.....	28
Personal Interviews.....	28
Alumni/ae Interviews .....	28
Interviews at PEA .....	28
Tips for Success.....	29
Impact on the Decision-Making Process .....	29
FINANCING YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION .....	30
CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR	
OPTIONS FOR ADMISSION .....	33
Early Decision and Early Action—Is applying early right for you? .....	33
Early Evaluation and Early Notification.....	33
Rolling Admission .....	33
COLLEGE APPLICATIONS .....	33
Types of Applications.....	34
State Applications .....	34
British Universities .....	34
The Common Application .....	34
Institutional Applications.....	35
A Step-By-Step Guide to Filling Out Applications .....	35
Part I of the Application—Personal Information.....	35
<i>DECISION PLAN</i> .....	35
<i>NAME</i> .....	35
<i>ADDRESS</i> .....	35
<i>PARENT AND SIBLING INFORMATION</i> .....	35
<i>PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY INFORMATION</i> .....	35
<i>FEE/FEE WAIVER</i> .....	35
Part II of the Application—Everything Else .....	35
<i>LISTING SENIOR COURSES</i> .....	35
<i>INFLUENCES ON YOUR DECISION TO APPLY</i> .....	36
<i>QUESTIONS ABOUT WHERE ELSE YOU ARE APPLYING</i> .....	36
<i>LANGUAGE, IF OTHER THAN ENGLISH</i> .....	36
<i>INTENDED MAJOR</i> .....	36
Reporting Standardized Tests.....	36
Presenting Your Extracurricular Interests and Activities .....	36
<i>COMMITMENT TO ACTIVITIES</i> .....	36
<i>LEADERSHIP</i> .....	37
<i>VOLUNTEER WORK/COMMUNITY SERVICE</i> .....	37
<i>HOBBIES/OUTSIDE INTERESTS</i> .....	37

<i>ACADEMIC HONORS OR AWARDS</i> .....	<b>37</b>
Recommendations.....	<b>37</b>
<i>SECONDARY SCHOOL REPORT (SSR)</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<i>CLASS RANK</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<i>MIDYEAR SCHOOL REPORT FORMS</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<i>ACADEMIC RECOMMENDATIONS FROM TEACHERS</i> .....	<b>37</b>
<i>THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974</i> .....	<b>38</b>
<i>ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS</i> .....	<b>38</b>
Additional Credentials.....	<b>38</b>
WRITING YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY.....	<b>38</b>
Getting Started.....	<b>38</b>
Writing the Essay.....	<b>39</b>
COLLEGE OFFICE POLICIES.....	<b>39</b>
<i>The E Book</i> .....	<b>39</b>
College Days.....	<b>39</b>
Disciplinary Issues.....	<b>40</b>
Medical and Personal Leaves.....	<b>41</b>
Reporting of Dean's Leaves to Colleges.....	<b>41</b>
Leaving Exeter Early.....	<b>42</b>
Transcripts and Recommendations.....	<b>42</b>
Transcript Requests.....	<b>42</b>
Access to Student Records.....	<b>43</b>
Depositing.....	<b>43</b>
Student Rights and Privileges.....	<b>43</b>
CHAPTER V WINTER OF SENIOR YEAR	
REPORTING WINTER TERM GRADES.....	<b>45</b>
FINANCIAL AID FORMS.....	<b>45</b>
LOOKING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS.....	<b>45</b>
MISSING CREDENTIALS.....	<b>45</b>
SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORMS.....	<b>46</b>
CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR	
DECISIONS, DECISIONS.....	<b>47</b>
SENIORITIS.....	<b>47</b>
WAITLISTS.....	<b>48</b>
UNDERSTANDING YOUR OFFER OF FINANCIAL AID.....	<b>50</b>
CHAPTER VII ADMISSIONS DECISIONS	
ADMISSIONS DECISIONS: HOW THEY ARE MADE.....	<b>53</b>
Academic Credentials Include a Review of.....	<b>53</b>
Personal Profile.....	<b>53</b>
Other Considerations.....	<b>54</b>
CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS	
STUDENT ATHLETES.....	<b>55</b>

Recruitment.....	55
Your Recruitment Calendar .....	56
Winter of Upper Year .....	56
Spring of Upper Year .....	56
Summer between Upper Year and Senior Year .....	57
Fall of Senior Year .....	57
Winter of Senior Year .....	58
June of Senior Year .....	58
NCAA Eligibility .....	58
Eligibility Requirements.....	59
Special Considerations for Eligibility .....	60
Meeting NCAA Eligibility with a Learning Disability.....	61
PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS .....	61
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS .....	62
Defining “International” .....	62
Permanent Resident .....	62
Testing.....	62
Financial Aid for International Students.....	62
Declaration of Funds.....	62
LEARNING DISABILITIES .....	63
Reporting Your Disability.....	63
Testing.....	63
SERVICE ACADEMIES .....	63
Points to Consider .....	64
Application Process.....	64
Academic Programs .....	64
Lifestyle Change .....	64
Postgraduate Obligations .....	64
The Application Process.....	64
Starting the Application Process .....	64
Nomination Process .....	64
Complete Service Academy Application.....	65
Complete Fitness Exam.....	65
ROTC SCHOLARSHIPS .....	65
THE COLLEGE TRANSFER APPLICANT .....	65
Assisting Former Students .....	66

## APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the college process. Since you have already gone through a selective admissions process when you applied to Phillips Exeter, you have a sense of all that is involved. You have taken appropriate testing, filled out applications, asked teachers to recommend you, and interviewed in order to gain admission to Exeter.

This time, the task may appear more daunting. There are more than 2,500 colleges and universities in the United States, not to mention universities in Canada and overseas, from which to develop a list of appropriate matches. You have also heard about today's competitive admission picture at the most selective colleges and the increasing tuition costs at these schools. You are maybe left wondering, "Which schools will admit me, and can I afford to attend?"

The staff of Exeter's College Counseling Office stands ready to guide you through the college admissions maze, ready to talk with you about your choices and concerns as we work together in the months ahead. In addition, we offer you this guide.

The College Counseling Guidebook offers vital information all in one convenient place. The information is organized chronologically, according to the seasons. Prep and lower years form the foundation of your academic achievement, and the fall term of your upper year is the beginning of standardized testing. Winter and spring of your upper year is the time when you and your counselor get to know each other and begin to form college lists. In summer and fall of your senior year campus visits, research, and college lists are finalized. By early winter, the applications are completed. Finally, in the winter and spring, admis-

sions officers make their decisions, and you finally make your choice. Additional chapters cover candidates with special considerations and discuss how decisions are made.

This guidebook is written directly for you the student, although it is intended to be shared with your parents and others who may be interested in its contents.

The college process is one of self-discovery, when students take stock of their ambitions, strengths, and challenges as they begin to build a list of college choices. Students are responsible for contacting colleges for interview appointments, signing up for appropriate tests by the deadlines, and putting the necessary energy into all aspects of the application process. Just as you were responsible for attending to your academic commitments and personal needs at the Academy, you must invest fully in researching and applying to colleges. At all times, you should be at the center of your college admissions process, learning to take charge of it and eventually owning it.

In this endeavor, your parents and college counselor will support and encourage you. As stewards, the college counselors will offer you important guidance along the way. Your college counselor is a counselor, not a placement officer, who supports you in your choices and offers a realistic assessment of your chances of admission to colleges. Your parents will offer you moral support and encouragement along the way. The process requires close communication and cooperation among the important players—student, parents, and counselor. Success is most often achieved when we all approach our various roles with an open mind, humor, and commitment.

The College Counseling Office is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m., Wednesdays from 8 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., and Saturdays, from 9 a.m. until 11:30 a.m., when classes are held. Please schedule an appointment; parents are encouraged to do the same. Our office telephone number is **(603)777-3415**, and our email address is **ccoffice@exeter.edu**. The office fax number is **(603)777-4326**.

# THE COLLEGE COUNSELOR/STUDENT/PARENT PARTNERSHIP

AT PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY

## Your “To Do” List

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The College Counseling Office believes that the college admissions process involves a partnership between you and your counselor. The success of this partnership depends upon students, parents, and counselors fulfilling their obligations and maintaining open communication throughout the admissions process. We have detailed below the expectations and responsibilities of each partner.

### STUDENT

**Prior to your first individual meeting with your college counselor in upper winter, you should:**

- Attend the required all-upper opening meeting and come to the College Counseling Office to schedule your first individual meeting.
- Complete the Student Questionnaire found on the College Counseling Office’s Naviance website. It is imperative that you answer all of the questions on the Questionnaire thoughtfully and thoroughly. The information from the Questionnaire helps guide counselors in their discussions with you and aids them in writing the recommendation they send to your list of schools.
- Begin to regularly check your Academy email, voicemail, post office box, and social media accounts for important updates from the CCO.

**At your first one-on-one counseling meeting in upper winter, you and your counselor will:**

- Review your Questionnaire, and talk openly about what you are looking for in a college.
- Discuss future course work and appropriate AP’s and SAT II subject tests.

**During the remainder of upper winter term and over spring break, you should:**

- Attend a required college resource meeting, and complete the college search homework assignment which will be given to you. This exercise helps you understand what criteria are critical to you and the colleges in the admissions process.
- Engage in standardized test prep for the SAT/ACT.
- Discuss college costs with your family.
- Visit, if possible, a variety of college campuses during spring break (the “Goldilocks” college tour).
- Consider taking, if possible, the SAT I over break.

**During your upper spring term, you should:**

- Schedule your second and third one-on-one meetings with your college counselor, with a copy of your college search homework assignment (preliminary college list) to your second meeting.
- Attend a required mock admissions meeting, which is designed to highlight the selective admission process.
- Attend the Spring College Fair.
- Take appropriate SAT I, SAT II, ACT and/or AP exams in spring term. Students considering an Early Decision or Early Action application should have taken one set of SAT Is and two SAT IIs by the end of spring term.
- Begin researching Category I, II, III and IV college choices from your preliminary college list, using the resources available in the CCO and by attending the annual spring college fair and, if applicable, other

# THE COLLEGE COUNSELOR/STUDENT/PARENT PARTNERSHIP

AT PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY

panels and workshops for athletes, students studying abroad, etc.

## **By the end of upper spring term, you should:**

- Establish a balanced, tentative list of college choices with the guidance of your college counselor and your parents. You must include colleges across the spectrum of admissions selectivity (Category I, II, III, IV and V schools), and colleges that will address your financial aid concerns.
- Request recommendations from two teachers.
- Complete a draft of the Common Application, and discuss possible essay topics with your counselor.

## **Over summer break, you should:**

- Review the late June letter from your college counselor, listing your preliminary colleges and their admissions selectivity (Category I, II, III, IV and V), as well as suggestions/comments regarding your list.
- Try to visit colleges from each of your Category I, II, III, IV and V categories. Take a formal campus tour, attend an information session, and schedule an on-campus interview, where appropriate. Schedule visits well in advance.
- Finish your Common Application, along with drafts of essays and supplements.
- Continue to talk with your family about the admissions process and begin narrowing your choices while maintaining a balanced list.  
  
Talk to your family about the possible need for financial aid.

## **During the fall of your senior year, you are expected to do the following:**

- Meet at least twice individually with your counselor, and attend required all-senior class meetings and workshops.
- Finalize and narrow your list of college choices, while maintaining a balance of admissions selectivity.
- Complete your SAT Is and SAT IIs and send all of your scores to all your colleges through the College Board/ACT before application deadlines.
- Confirm your recommendations with your teacher recommenders, and provide them with forms, stamps, and envelopes, as necessary.
- Meet with college representatives at college mini-fairs and, as applicable, interviews.
- Complete your applications and supplemental forms by their deadlines, and, if applying for need-based financial aid, complete the FAFSA and CSS Profile before college deadlines.

## **COUNSELOR**

Your college counselor will support you first as you develop a balanced college list matched to your particular interests and abilities, and then through the application process. Important information about events and college visitors will appear on Blackboard, email bulletins, social media, as well as in periodical mailings, so you must check these regularly.

In addition, the college counselors cultivate relationships with colleges and universities and with returning students both to explain the unique features of the Exeter program, and to understand the admissions procedures at particular institutions.



CHAPTER I  
PREP & LOWER YEARS,  
AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR



# CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

From a developmental perspective – as educators, as advisors, as parents – the College Counseling Office believes that “the college process” should be the farthest thing from a prep or lower’s mind. Ninth and tenth grade are a time where you should focus on developing intellectual interests through curricular investigation, study habits through independent initiative, and extracurricular and athletic passions through after-class exploration. Given how the college process can sometimes feel like a high-stakes, stressful process for seniors, we do not believe underclass students at the Academy should be anxious about life after Exeter at the very beginning of their Exeter careers.

However, we recognize that many Exeter prep and lower students and their parents may have questions about the college process and Exeter’s academic curriculum and extracurricular offerings, as well as standardized testing. The thoughtful choices that you make now as a prep or a lower can certainly impact your college search, and potentially, your college choices as a senior. **While your faculty dorm or day student advisor is always your first resource for questions about your academic program and schedule**, we offer these recommendations as you chart the next three or four years at Exeter.

### ACADEMIC CURRICULUM

As you plan your Exeter course program with your dorm/day student faculty advisor, you can be confident that the Academy’s graduation requirements, along with the depth and breadth of Exeter’s curriculum, will fulfill many colleges admission requirements. Exeter’s requirements for English, math, science, social science (history and religion), and foreign language help you gain a broad exposure across the curriculum, yet still have some curricular flexibility to discover and explore your intellectual passions.

Given Exeter’s graduation requirements, colleges expect you to take a challenging curriculum that is appropriate for a student’s ability and current level of achievement. College admission committees appreciate students who challenge themselves – but colleges do not want you to be in ‘over your head,’ so that you are struggling. You should choose an academic program that is manageable, yet challenges you to do your best.

Most 300 and 400-level courses at the Academy are equivalent to Advanced Placement (AP)-level or college-level courses, and Exeter also offers ‘enriched,’ ‘intensive,’ and ‘accelerated’ coursework, often marked with an asterisk on your transcript. However, when planning your schedule, you should always speak with your academic advisor or your subject teacher, as appropriate, to determine whether enriched sections or accelerating your studies are appropriate for you. If your teacher and/or faculty advisor believe that you can move up a level in difficulty and not have your grades drop, then you



## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR



should consider taking on this challenge; if you or they aren't sure, you can feel confident remaining in your course sequence.

Although Exeter's graduation requirements for three- and four-year seniors are extensive, many highly-selective colleges require curricular depth beyond Exeter's requirements, or expect students to pursue your intellectual interests in greater depth. For example, Exeter only requires two years of a lab science, including biology, for a four-year senior; most selective universities – even colleges with admission rates greater than 50% – expect successful candidates to have a minimum of three years of lab science. Some engineering programs expect students to have studied both chemistry and physics, with both 400-level math and additional physical science study in your senior year. College admission office webpages will often detail expected requirements for successful applicants, and are your best resource, if you have specific questions.

**As you plan your academic schedule, keep in mind the following about specific subjects and study opportunities:**

**English:** Although many selective colleges and universities recognize that Exeter's extensive senior electives sometimes can replace a spring English elective with no loss to your reading and writing experience, most state universities – and some highly-selective private colleges – require or recommend four full years of English. In addition, if you are a varsity athlete who is planning to compete on a Division I or II intercollegiate team, the NCAA requires that you complete four full years of English. (Additional infor-

mation about NCAA requirements can be found in Chapter VIII of the Guidebook.)

**Math:** After completing Exeter's graduation requirement – completion of Math 330 – you should select additional math coursework based upon your ability and interest, after discussing your options with your faculty advisor and your current math teachers. Generally, the most qualified applicants to highly-selective colleges and universities will have taken calculus (Math 410 and beyond), and you may be at a disadvantage at the most selective colleges if you have not.

If you are a prospective quantitative major, colleges expect you to have mastered Exeter's 400-level calculus sequence, with as much math beyond Exeter's graduation requirement as your schedule permits. If you intend to study science, engineering, economics, or business at a highly selective university, you should strongly consider taking calculus at Exeter, both for admission and in preparation for successful completion of your first-year college coursework.

Exeter's math electives are often good choices for students who would like to study the humanities or social sciences in college, but who would like to continue math. While some admissions offices may still favor calculus, even the most selective universities recognize that Exeter's math electives are taught at the level of AP and college courses. Coursework in statistics and math modeling can be very useful, if you are planning to do social science research; humanities students may enjoy studying the history of math or discrete math. Speak with your dorm/day student advisor to see if these options may be appropriate for you.

## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

**Foreign Language:** The Academy requires students to demonstrate language proficiency beyond 330 coursework or its equivalent. Whether you continue with a foreign language depends on your ability, interests, and intended college major.

Most selective colleges and universities, however, expect students to have studied three years of the same foreign language; some highly-selective universities expect four years of study, or at least proficiency at the fourth-year level, of one foreign language.

Studying more than one foreign language while at the Academy can be done, but it is very difficult, given the breadth of Exeter's graduation requirements and given that students are restricted to only five courses each term.

Because of prior junior high school study or heritage language skills learned at home, some Exeter students begin their foreign language studies at an advanced level. If you will fulfill the Academy's graduation requirement as a prep or lower, you should not drop the language, until you have demonstrated greater mastery with fourth year-level study. If your potential college major includes linguistics or international affairs, you might consider starting a new language – particularly a language that offers the option of two-years-in-one accelerated study, or a senior-only language, such as Arabic or Italian, which are accelerated courses. Or add a new language in addition to advanced study in the original foreign language, if your schedule and fulfillment of graduation requirements permits.

You should be aware, however, that many of the most selective colleges prefer that applicants attain full fluency in one non-heritage foreign language, rather than a less-in-depth exposure in two languages.

**Study Abroad and Off-Campus:** Colleges appreciate the maturity, independence, and cultural enrichment a new environment brings to a student, and the Academy offers an extensive number of term- and year-long study programs, both in the U.S. and overseas. And many three- and four-year seniors find that time away from campus can invigorate your studies, and help you appreciate Exeter more.

Students considering off-campus programs must plan well and in advance, to make certain that your graduation requirements will be completed before you leave Exeter or when you return to campus. Study abroad programs may also restrict your curricular choices. For example, if you study off-campus for a term in England, France, Spain, or Germany during your senior year, you will not be able to take full-year courses, such as the three-term science sequences in Advanced Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. If your college plans include studying science or engineering, you will need to consider this carefully. By planning ahead, you might be able to complete such coursework in your upper year, or take 400+ science electives.

Most students find there isn't a "right or wrong" answer when considering an educational program away from the Academy. But taking an inventory of interests and ensuring the program is a good match are important factors in creating a successful educational experience, both on- and off-campus.



## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

### STANDARDIZED TESTING

As a successful Exeter applicant, you are already familiar with standardized testing, such as the ISEE or SSAT. There are a number of other tests that you will take before you graduate from Exeter, and a thorough explanation of these exams – the SAT I, SAT II, ACT, AP and TOEFL – can be found under the “Standardized Testing” section of Chapter II of this Guidebook. Find below details about the few exams that you will take as an Exeter preps or lower, or during the fall term of your upper year.

#### **PSAT/NMSQT—Preliminary SAT/ National Merit Qualifying Test**

The PSAT is administered every October to high school tenth and eleventh graders nationwide. Similar in format to the SATs, the PSAT/NMSQT measures the critical reading, math problem-solving, and writing skills that students have developed through the first half of their high school career. The PSAT/NMSQT will also give students first hand practice for the SAT I. The PSAT scores are reported as two-digit numbers ranging from 20 to 80, and score reports also show an estimated score range of your projected scores for the SAT I test Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing scores.

The National Merit Scholarship Program uses the PSAT to screen those students of exceptional test-taking ability who may qualify for one of its scholarships. If your score is above a certain threshold, which varies each year, you will be notified in September of your senior year that you are a semi finalist, and will receive an application for the final round of competition.

Although only the PSAT score from your upper year counts in the National Merit competition, we strongly encourage lowers to take the PSAT. Taking the test in the lower year is good practice for your “official” PSAT as an upper as well as your SATs. Also, you can look at your mistakes on the PSAT, practice those areas, and potentially raise your scores.

The PSAT exam is offered at Exeter High School. All uppers are automatically registered for the PSAT; in the fall, lowers and their parents will receive an e-mail with instructions about registering. Preps cannot take the PSAT. Additional information about the PSAT is available on the College Board website at <http://www.collegeboard.com/psat>.

#### **Test Preparation**

No student should take any standardized test without first preparing, yet your schedule of classes, sports, and extracurricular activities here at Exeter leaves little time for test prep. We encourage preps and lowers to use your summer vacation as an opportunity to review for the PSAT, using free publications from the College Board and other test-taking guides.

#### **Other Standardized Testing**

A small handful of Exeter preps and lowers may consider taking the SAT II Subject Test in a particular academic field; additional information about the SAT II can be found in the “Standardized Testing” section of Chapter II.

If you are excelling in your introductory science course and are consistently earning grades in the “A” range, or if you completing your foreign language requirement

## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

with fourth-year coursework as a prep or lower, you should consider taking the SAT II Subject Test in that field at the conclusion of the academic year, following the completion of the course. The June SAT II test date generally falls after the last day of spring classes, during which time most students will be at home and can take the test there. Students who live overseas can petition the Dean's Office for approval to remain on campus after the end of spring classes, until the afternoon following the exam, or can stay with a day student friend.

If you have any questions about whether you should take an SAT II Subject Exam, you should speak with your subject teachers and your dorm/day student advisor.

Some parents want their prep or lower child to try the SAT I prior to the second half of the eleventh grade year – the developmental period in a student's high school career for which the test was designed. Indeed, the College Board recently implemented a "Score Choice" option, which allows students to choose by test date the SAT I or SAT II scores they send to colleges. While this option might tempt parents to encourage their children to take the SAT multiple times, many highly-selective colleges have stated that they will require students to waive the "Score Choice" option and to submit their entire testing history, so that weaker testing – even when taken as a prep or lower, or at the beginning of upper year – will be received and potentially reviewed by many of the most-selective colleges.

Given this trend among the most selective universities, the Academy strongly believes

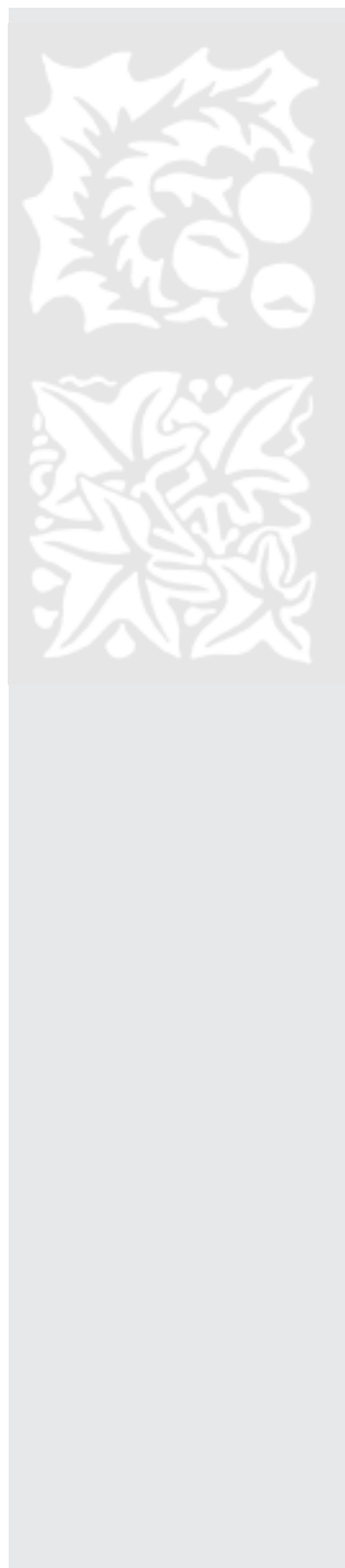
that no prep or lower should take an SAT I or ACT exam prior to the winter term of his/her senior year, unless explicitly required by a scholarship or summer enrichment program, or a college athletic coach. In addition, Exeter High School – the SAT testing site to which the Academy provides transportation when school is in session – only has space to accommodate Exeter's senior class in the fall or winter terms, and upper class in the spring term. By scheduling your testing at the time when it is appropriate for you developmentally and when you are most likely to earn stronger scores, you are also acting in the best spirit of 'Non sibi,' to help assure that your senior classmates are not shut-out from taking the SAT I or II exam, when the timing of the test is critical.

We recommend that you follow our recommended guideline for your SAT I, SAT II, and ACT exams; a chart with our recommendations can be found at

[http://www.exeter.edu/documents/Recommended\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Testing\(31\).pdf](http://www.exeter.edu/documents/Recommended_Guidelines_for_Testing(31).pdf)

### EXTRACURRICULAR INTERESTS

Learning and growth continue outside the classroom. Many parents narrowly focus on their son or daughter's academic curriculum, while forgetting the importance of co-curricular or extracurricular interests. While a student's academic achievement is primary in the application process, your extracurricular portfolio not only will be reviewed with your application to college, but also activities not only for the college admission process.



## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR



Broadly speaking, extracurricular activities are simply anything you do that is not part of an Exeter course. The Academy offers over one hundred campus clubs, over sixty sports teams, over fifteen performance groups, and numerous service opportunities. Your prep and lower years offer the chance to explore Exeter’s clubs, teams, volunteer opportunities, and other activities, as both a chance to strengthen your leadership skills, to demonstrate your commitment to ‘Non sibi’ service to others, and to discover your passions. And given that colleges and universities seek to create a vibrant social community, college admission committees appreciate an applicant’s genuine interest and demonstrated leadership in non-academic activities.

When it comes to extracurriculars, less is often more. You may find enjoyment in being involved in a variety of activities, but don’t join every club on campus for a term and then drop the activity; you should develop a deeper commitment in a small number. This gives you, from a developmental perspective, an opportunity to achieve mastery in a few extracurricular interests. From an admissions perspective, demonstrated commitment helps confirm for a college that you are sincerely interested in an activity, instead of simply pursuing it so that it looks good on your college application. Remember that many selective colleges are not necessarily seeking the “well-rounded student,” as much as the well-rounded freshman class.

While Exeter offers a wide range of opportunities, you should define your extracurricular activities in broad terms, not thinking of them solely as school-sponsored or

during the academic year. For example, summer internships and research programs count as extracurriculars. Activities organized in your home community through civic or religious groups are also extracurriculars. Spend time developing your hobbies and independent interests, whether model railroads, vintage LP collecting, blogging, or knitting. (We’re sorry: “gaming” doesn’t count as a hobby...) Even paid employment – especially a typical teen job such as scooping ice cream, working at a drive-thru, or bus-ing tables – is viewed as an extracurricular activity (and can get you noticed by a college admission officer as someone who understands the value of a day’s work).

Additional information about extracurricular activity and the college process can be found in Chapter IV of this Guidebook.

### SUMMER VACATION

Following your prep and lower years, you should use your summers primarily for rest and relaxation, instead of cramming every week of vacation full of resume-building activities that leave you (and often your parents) exhausted before the start of another busy academic year.

Yet given how filled your Exeter schedule can be, many students intentionally use part of the summer as an opportunity to develop their intellectual and extracurricular interests through volunteer work, athletic or special interest camps, part-time employment, enrichment programs, or travel. Choose summer activities that will both energize you and further your growth.

Many students at other high schools are regularly encouraged by their parents to

## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR

pursue summer school and scholastic camps, as opportunities for intellectual growth. Given that colleges recognize Exeter's curricular rigor, we encourage you to be judicious with academic enrichment programs: from an admission committee's perspective, summer after summer in a classroom can, counter-intuitively, be a less appealing use of a perspective student's summer vacation.

Many families travel over the summer, and while no family trip of a prep or lower should be organized around college visits, we recommend that, if possible, you and your parents consider incorporating one or two 'practice' college tours into your summer family vacation. A practice tour college should be picked based upon the location of your family holiday, and not visa versa. One or two 'practice' college tours will help you gain a better sense about the qualities you are searching for in your future college home. The best 'practice' tours are what Exeter's College Counseling Office calls "Goldilocks" college tours: a big, medium, or small college and/or a rural, suburban, or city college. For preps and lowers, the name recognition or perceived reputation of a college for a "Goldilocks" tour isn't necessarily important. Indeed, our experience has shown that a college tour of a highly-selective university for a prep or lower can often increase a student's anxiety about the college admission process, as a prep or lower worries – rightly or wrongly – about meeting perceived parental expectations.

### FAMILY SUPPORT, COMMUNICATION AND EXPECTATIONS

For a prep or lower parent or guardian, there are very tasks related to the college admission process that needs to be completed, other than the few recommendations noted above. However, the relationship that you establish with your child in his or her first years at the Academy will pay dividends later, as your active listening, emotional openness, and honesty will build a foundation for the communication necessary to support your child in navigating the college process and in transitioning from adolescence to adulthood.

Often Exeter students experience some anxiety about the college process. For many students, the college process may be the first time in their lives when they have worked hard towards a specific goal, but have not been able to achieve what they want. And without being reminded by adults, students know that the college process has become more selective.

Look at the ways that you presently support your child's emotional and physical well-being at Exeter. Identify the healthiest ways to continue to support your child as his or her anxiety builds, particularly with the approach of the upper year. Help your child assess their strengths and their areas for growth. Listen more than you speak.

Finally, be honest about expectations you have placed on your child, whether real or imagined. Your child has become very skilled at picking up clues, both verbal and non-verbal, about what you think; be mindful of what you say and how you say it. Adolescents' sensitivity can be height-



## CHAPTER I PREP & LOWER YEARS, AND FALL OF UPPER YEAR



ened as the college process approaches, and by modeling mature and calm behavior, you can reassure them both of your unwavering support and that they are ready for adult life after Exeter.

The College Counseling Office has assembled a variety of recommended books, websites, and magazine and web articles as a resource for how to parent your adolescent not just during the college process, but also in his or her transition to adulthood. Please review the “Resources Library” under the “Uppers and Parents” section of the College Counseling page on Exeter’s website at [www.exeter.edu/about\\_us/7456\\_10560.aspx](http://www.exeter.edu/about_us/7456_10560.aspx).

CHAPTER II  
WINTER & SPRING  
OF UPPER YEAR



## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

### WHAT DO YOU WANT: CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR COLLEGE SEARCH

The age-old adage is true: the process is as important as the end result. Nowhere is that notion more appropriately applied than to the college search process. As you begin your college exploration, approach your search with a commitment to work hard and be candid about yourself and your past achievement.

The experience of the College Counseling Office has shown that, too frequently, students and families begin the college search focusing on the well-known handful of highly-selective colleges that are familiar household names. We encourage you as you begin your search process to forget about college names, and concentrate on establishing and identifying your own personal, unique criteria for selecting a college before carefully researching a wide range of the schools that meet your needs. In your search, focus on your personal criteria – the list of schools will follow.

We've grouped together general categories below to help frame your thoughts about your college search. Each category offers several questions to ask yourself about your interests, goals, needs, and wishes for your potential colleges.

#### TYPE OF INSTITUTION

##### **Public, Private, Secular, Non-Denominational, Religious Affiliation**

As you consider the type of institutions in which you may be interested, ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

- Am I receiving any financial assistance from Phillips Exeter? How important is financial aid to my college studies?
- Do I have a religious affiliation which may influence my college choice? Is it important for me to attend college with others who share my beliefs and values?

Like high schools, institutions of higher education can be either public or private. Many of the nationally ranked colleges in the United States are state-supported institutions. Often these schools can offer an exceptional, top-tier education at a fraction of the price of private schools for in-state residents, and even a substantially reduced tuition for out-of-state students. At this early stage of your investigation, we would strongly encourage you to consider both private and public universities. If financial aid has been a consideration in attending Phillips Exeter, and/or could be for college, we urge you to include in your college list at least one public school in your home state.

While private colleges frequently cost more than public ones, they often possess the financial means, in the form of endowment and alumni giving, to offer generous need-based or scholarship-based financial aid that might make private education as inexpensive as attending your state school. Most Exonians consider both public and private schools in their college search.

A large number of competitive private universities and colleges have a religious affiliation. The extent of spiritual influence varies. But at the beginning of your



*Focus on your  
personal criteria  
– the list of schools  
will follow.*

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR



*There is no  
one college  
that is the  
“perfect fit”  
for anyone.*

college search we strongly encourage you to consider all private colleges, regardless of religious affiliation.

### STUDENT BODY AND GENDER

#### **Coed, Single Sex, Historically Black Colleges**

Ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

- Would I consider single-sex education?
- How important is it for me to attend college with others who share my ethnic heritage?

The consideration of single-sex education is predominantly one for women, although there is a very small handful of outstanding all-male colleges (such as Wabash and Morehouse). Similarly, students might consider one of the small number of colleges enrolling predominantly African-American students. National studies have shown that students at these institutions are more academically involved in classroom participation, have greater academic self-esteem, and are more likely to pursue advanced degrees.

### COLLEGE SETTING

#### **Size and Location**

Think about the kind of place in which you could be comfortable for the next four years of your academic life.

Some questions:

- How have I felt about living in the town of Exeter (with approximately 14,000 residents)?
- What do I like or dislike about the Academy’s location?
- What extracurricular activities do I generally enjoy?

- Will my family allow me access to a car in college?

The location of your academic home for the next four years will determine your quality of life and should reflect your personal values and lifestyle. Colleges and universities can be located right in the hearts of major cities, in the suburbs, or in more rural settings. Each setting has its own distinct advantages and disadvantages.

Attending college in a major metropolitan setting offers extensive opportunities for cultural events, internships and part-time jobs, and research. Most students do not need or use a car and have the opportunity to build an extensive social life outside of the campus. Yet college life in a city also embodies big city problems. Suburban areas afford more limited cultural and resume-building opportunities, but also possess fewer of the social problems of major cities.

More traditional college towns may not have all of the amenities of city life but can often have a more relaxed, friendly feeling. College faculty tend to live in their small college towns, creating a more residential community feeling on campus. You may need a car for transportation to the big city a few hours away, but you can also easily drive to nearby outdoor activities. Generally, small towns have a lower cost of living than bigger cities. Also, colleges in more rural settings work hard to bring concerts and speakers to their campuses to supplement social life.

Consider what you appreciate or dislike about the town of Exeter and living and learning here. Do you live for “out-of-towns” to Boston? Or do you relish the intimate feeling of living and learning alongside your teachers?

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

### ENROLLMENT SIZE

#### Size of Academic Community

Think about the following “self-evaluation” questions:

- How have I felt learning in a community the size of Phillips Exeter?
- What do I like or dislike about the Academy’s classroom size?
- How important is faculty accessibility?
- To what extent do I desire academic and social recognition for achievement?

Colleges can vary dramatically in size: think carefully about which size is best for you both academically and socially. Use the following generalizations to reflect on your experience both in and out of class here at Exeter.

Over 80 percent of American private colleges — and almost a quarter of public colleges — have enrollments under 2,500. Smaller colleges generally place a greater emphasis on teaching as opposed to research. Similar to the opportunities available through the Academy’s Harkness Table seminar pedagogy, lecture and discussion classes at smaller colleges can afford a high level of interaction with faculty and opportunities to contribute in class. There can be a wonderful comfort in being a bigger fish in a small pond.

Larger colleges and universities can offer a greater breadth and depth of course selection than smaller schools, allowing opportunities to explore a wider range of potential majors for students who are undecided about their field of study. Faculty at larger

institutions may balance teaching with research. This research keeps them up-to-date on current developments in their fields and enhances their classroom instruction, but it may also decrease their available time for informal interaction outside of class. Class size tends to vary greatly. While courses requiring greater faculty interaction (such as foreign language or English composition) may be smaller, many introductory courses are taught in a large lecture format using graduate teaching assistants. Larger colleges and universities usually have a more diverse student body and a broader selection of extracurricular opportunities to explore. Finally, many students prefer the greater anonymity intrinsic to a larger academic setting.

While we encourage you to gain a better feel for the size environment most appropriate for you, we would also encourage you to investigate colleges of a wide variety of sizes in your search.

### GEOGRAPHIC SEARCH

#### Location in the United States or Overseas

When considering the possible locations of your future colleges, ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

- How do I feel attending Exeter in relation to its proximity to my home and family?
- How important is it to me and my family for me to attend college close to home?
- How much do I value attending college with students of different geographic backgrounds?



*Consider your  
experience at Exeter.*

*Do you relish  
the intimate,  
small town feeling?*

*Or do you live  
for “out-of-towns”  
to Boston?*

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR



### *Avoid regional parochialism!*

- How frequently do I anticipate going home during the academic year?
- How extensively does the weather affect my studies or quality of life?

A truly national and international community, Phillips Exeter attracts a broad-ranging geographic diversity. Such diversity includes day students living down the road, students only a few hours away from home, and others from across the country or across the world. Your personal Exeter experience benefits from this geographic mix of cultures and backgrounds.

While you are not planning where you will vacation for the next four years, weather and climate can have an influence in the geographical range of potential college choices for some individuals.

Students who live within a short distance of Exeter enjoy the ease of going home for long weekends. Yet many students are perfectly content to go home only for major vacation periods. While some colleges include travel expenditures within their financial aid packages, transportation is often a hidden, but costly, academic expense.

Reflect on your experience here at the Academy with regard to Exeter's location, climate, and proximity to home. Consider whether, at college, you would prefer a geographically diverse student body such as Exeter's, or a regional community of students from more homogeneous backgrounds. Think about climate and how it affects your quality of life. Perhaps most importantly, take into account your experience with your family while attending

boarding school, how frequently you currently go home, and the cost of round-trip transportation between your home and potential college. We strongly encourage you to talk with your family about their possible geographic preferences for you at the beginning of your college search.

Avoid regional parochialism! While the East Coast offers an extensive number of outstanding colleges and universities, we strongly encourage students to include as wide a geographic range as possible in their initial college search. Don't overlook Midwestern or Southern schools – many of these institutions are hidden gems of truly national reputation. Recognize, too, that you might have an advantage as an Exeter applicant applying to exceptional colleges outside of New England that receive fewer applicants from the Academy.

Depending on your personal search criteria, you may also consider investigating colleges outside of the United States. These can include Canadian universities and colleges (McGill, Queens, University of Toronto, etc.), American colleges overseas (the American Colleges of Paris, London, or Switzerland, for example), and a select number of European national universities which have historically welcomed American students (such as St. Andrew's University in Scotland or the University of London). While transportation and living costs may affect the total cost of education, tuition at these institutions can be significantly less expensive than tuition at comparable U.S. universities. Some of these colleges, particularly the American colleges overseas, may offer their own need-based financial assistance; others may allow

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

select U.S. federal financial assistance, such as Stafford loans, to be used to meet tuition expenses.

Finally, if financial assistance may be a consideration in your college search, the College Counseling Office emphatically recommends that you include a financial aid “safety” school on your college list. To qualify as a financial aid “safety,” a college must **both** be affordable and a Category I school – that is, one where you have the greatest percentage chance of admission. For most Exonians a state university in the student’s home state is an appropriate choice.

### MAJOR FIELDS OF STUDY

As you consider potential college majors, ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

- What are the courses I enjoy most here at the Academy? Enjoy least?
- Do I have specific or general career goals?

Uncertain of your intended major in college? Don’t panic! While a few students begin their college careers with a very specific academic major, most students have only a broad idea of potential fields of study.

Liberal arts is the term most generally used to describe the most common form of undergraduate education in the United States. Pre-professional training in such fields as business, engineering, and education prepares students for careers immediately after receiving their undergraduate degrees. While offering solid preparation for post-college careers, the liberal arts can

often serve as an outstanding springboard for further graduate-level study, such as law, business, or medical school. A handful of exceptionally qualified Exonians who are confident of their intention to pursue medicine may consider joint degree programs offering early admission to medical school.

Remember that many liberal arts colleges may not offer either majors or extensive coursework in certain professional fields, such as engineering, business, or physical therapy. If you are certain of a specific field be sure that the colleges you are considering offer that major.

### CAMPUS LIFE

#### **Extracurricular Activities, Housing, Student-Employment Opportunities, Support Services**

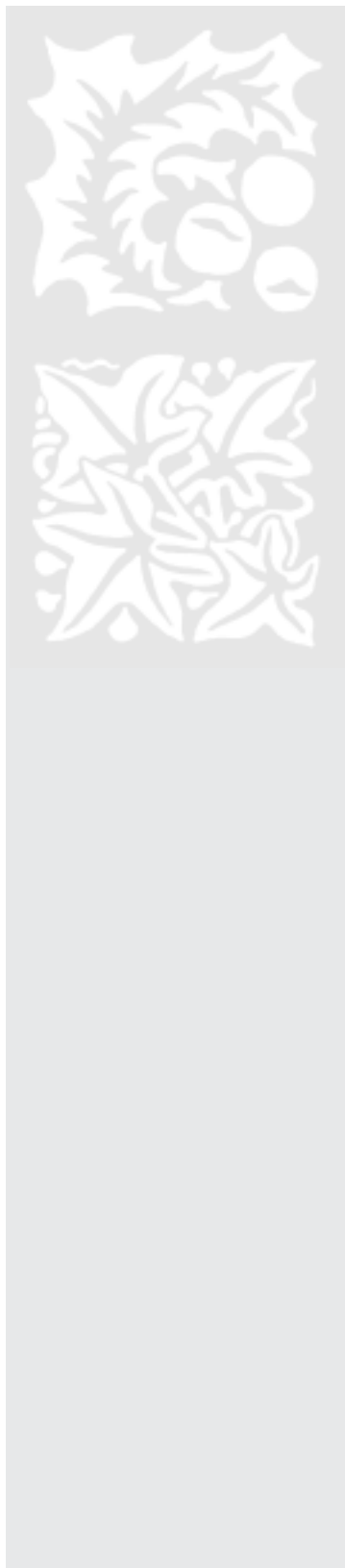
Consider the following self-evaluation questions:

- How important is it for me to attend a primarily residential college?
- What extracurricular activities am I currently pursuing here at Exeter that will be critical to the quality of my college life?
- Do I plan on working part time while in college?
- Do I require any support services for physical or learning differences/disabilities?

Much of the success of your college career comes from liking the experience of living on a college campus. Alumni frequently reflect that they learned as much from their interaction with their college peers through study groups, extracurricular



## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR



activities, and just hanging out in the dorm as they did through classroom instruction. Campus residential and social life plays a significant role in effecting student satisfaction with their alma mater.

### **Housing**

Living on-campus for the first few years of their college experience is a primary consideration for most Exonians. Dormitories can become a focus of college campus life and the easiest way to meet new friends. Thus finding a college campus that has a primarily residential feel, rather than the feeling of a “commuter” school, can be important. Consider the percentage of students who live either in campus housing or within a close radius of the college campus. If it is an important consideration for you, remember to ask about availability of on-campus housing for all four years. Some colleges only have enough housing for underclassmen, and a few may even require students to move off-campus for a year to help alleviate their own on-campus housing shortage.

### **Extracurriculars**

College is about working hard and studying ... but there is plenty of time to have fun, too. Thoughtfully consider which of your current campus activities will be critical to your collegiate experience. Also consider those activities you’ve never explored but would now like to pursue in college.

### **Campus Employment**

As a means of providing personal spending money, gaining valuable professional experience, or augmenting their need-based financial assistance, many students will hold a part-time job on or off cam-

pus while enrolled full time in college. These jobs can be work-study positions sponsored by the college as part of the student’s financial aid package, volunteer or paid internships, or more traditional part-time jobs in service industries. The college’s location can play a determining factor in the availability of off-campus employment. Universities in or near major metropolitan areas offer extensive opportunities for part-time jobs, including positions in a student’s field of interest; colleges in more rural settings may offer fewer options.

Most colleges and universities provide some assistance for finding part-time jobs, either through a career center or work-study office. In addition, most institutions of higher learning offer career counseling and placement assistance for graduating seniors who will not be pursuing graduate school immediately after their undergraduate degree.

### **Support Services**

Federal law now requires colleges and universities to offer extensive support services to students with physical or educational differences. These services can include physical accommodations, such as ramp access to buildings and handicapped restrooms. For some Academy students, finding colleges offering extensive support services for students with learning disabilities may be an important factor in their college search.

### **ATHLETICS**

As you think about your interest in collegiate athletics, ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

- What sports am I currently participating in at the Academy that I might continue in college?
- Will my athletic participation be at the intercollegiate, club, or intramural level?
- Will I be a recruited athlete in any of my Exeter sports?
- Have I spoken with any Exeter coaches to gain a better sense of my potential for intercollegiate athletics?

Many Exonians who currently engage in athletics may want to continue such participation in college. College students participate at three levels: intramural, club, and intercollegiate. Intramural play is most common. Intramurals allow students to compete at a variety of different levels of competition with a primary emphasis on enjoying the sport for personal fitness, relaxation, and fun. Club sports are usually jointly sponsored by students and the college, and can compete against other schools' club sports as well as varsity intercollegiate programs.

Intercollegiate athletics is the university equivalent of varsity-level sports. These programs are categorized by the NCAA into three divisions of varying degrees of competition: Division I, Division II, and Division III. There are some very general rules of thumb concerning athletic divisions. Most small liberal arts colleges and smaller universities will have a majority of Division II or Division III athletic programs, with perhaps one or two high-profile sports competing at a higher division level. Most Exeter alumni participating in intercollegiate athletics will compete at this

level. By definition Division III colleges do not offer athletic scholarships, while Division II programs offer partial scholarships. Most larger colleges and universities field predominantly Division I programs, with some of their underdeveloped programs occasionally competing at a lower division level. Division I athletic programs are generally the college sports which receive the most extensive media coverage, including such athletic conferences as the Ivy League, the Big Ten, and the Big East. A handful of truly exceptional Academy alumni will compete at the Division I level. Almost all Division I programs offer athletic scholarships with the noteworthy exception of the eight members of the Ivy League conference (Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard, Princeton, University of Pennsylvania, and Yale).

The College Counseling Office strongly believes that student-athletes should discuss their collegiate potential with their Academy coach and other club coaches early in the college search process. Coaches offer a supportive, seasoned perspective that can prove invaluable in students' own self-assessment of their athletic ability. Take advantage of your coach's wisdom.

### ADVANCED PLACEMENT

Consider the following "self-evaluation" questions:

- Do I plan on taking any AP examinations prior to graduating from Exeter?
- How important is finishing my college study in less than four years?



*Take advantage  
of your coach's  
wisdom in assessing  
your potential  
as a recruited  
collegiate athlete.*

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR



*While cost should not be the principal factor in creating your college list, today's high price tag for college may become a serious factor in your final decision.*

- Are there any financial benefits to completing my college degree more quickly?

Many selective colleges and universities can award college credit on the basis of AP test scores. Students can fulfill general curriculum or graduation requirements earlier, advancing to higher level courses even in their freshman year. Advanced standing can allow students to double major or minor more easily, or to take a reduced load one semester in order to concentrate on especially challenging coursework or extracurricular activities. Because of the financial benefits gained by earning AP credit, some students will accelerate earning their college degree through AP credit, graduating a semester or even a year early.

While the awarding of advanced academic standing on the basis of AP credit is commonplace, please note that several of the most highly selective colleges and universities may at best use AP examinations for placement and do not award any academic credit for even the highest scores.

### FINANCIAL AID/SCHOLARSHIPS

Discuss with your family and consider the following “self-evaluation” questions:

- How important is financial assistance to my education here at Exeter?
- Will I require need- or merit-based assistance to attend college?

While we believe that the cost of attending a college should not be the principal factor in creating your college list, the high price tag for today's college educa-

tion has become a serious factor in the final decision for many students and families. Even if you are not receiving any current assistance from the Academy, college financial aid may be important. We strongly encourage you to begin discussing these issues with your family at the beginning of your college search.

There are many forms of financial assistance available. The most basic financial assistance offered at all colleges is need-based. Need-based financial assistance is given to families who demonstrate financial eligibility using nationally standardized needs-analysis forms, such as the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) and the College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile. Demonstration of financial eligibility is determined through detailed review of a family's net assets, salary, investment income, liabilities, home equity, and other factors.

Some colleges also offer merit-based assistance. Such financial assistance comes in the form of scholarships for students who have achieved superior levels of academic excellence or offer some special talent in the performing arts or athletics. Please note that while all of the most-highly competitive colleges and universities offer need-based assistance, only a handful offer any merit-based aid.

### ADMISSIONS SELECTIVITY

#### Category I, II, III, IV, and V

As you think about admissions selectivity, ask yourself these “self-evaluation” questions:

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

- What percentage of applicants is offered admission?
- How does my academic achievement compare with other applicants?

The most important factor to consider in building your college list and conducting a college search is finding institutions for which you have a good chance of being offered admission. While the review of your application will take into consideration numerous subjective factors, such as your essay, teacher letters of recommendation, and perhaps major field of study, you must focus your search on the more concrete factors involving your academic performance and standardized testing.

One tool to help narrow down your prospective colleges is the percentage of students admitted. This 'admit rate' provides a general guidepost for admissions selectivity. Approximately six percent of colleges and universities nationwide admit fewer than fifty percent of applicants to their freshman class. For many Exonians, the institutions in this category would most likely be classified as Category III or IV schools for admission selectivity. Any college or university with a single-digit admission rate would be designated a Category V school. Colleges admitting more than 50 percent are generally Category I or II schools for many Exeter applicants. Note that the admission rate may not always provide the most accurate sense of selectivity. For example, many nationally ranked state universities (such as UC-Berkeley and the University of Virginia) may have higher than a 50 percent admission rate for in-state students, yet select a mere

handful of out-of-state applicants.

Standardized testing plays a critical role in admissions. Most colleges and universities require the SAT I and many require two sets of SAT II subject examinations. Other colleges will accept the ACT exam. When reviewing potential colleges and universities, keep in mind their 'middle 50 percent' range of testing. While a quarter of admitted students have scores either above or below this test range, such a median range will give a general indication of the strength of the applicant pool.

Including colleges with a broad range of admissions selectivity is important to a successful start to your college search. Be honest with yourself, making a realistic assessment of your chances for admission. The more truthful you are with yourself at the start of your college search, the better your chances of having a good number of choices in the spring of your senior year.

Your academic performance in a challenging, rigorous program of study is the most important factor in determining your admissibility to highly selective colleges. Admission committees value a consistent level of achievement over four years, but they also give strong weight to students who demonstrate significant improvement over the course of their academic career. While your grades are the most obvious indication of potential future success, colleges also want to see that you have challenged yourself in a competitive, demanding academic program throughout your high school career.

In conclusion, as you begin to consider your personal criteria in selecting the college that is right for you, the College



## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR



*Remember*

*that no one college  
or university is perfect  
for every single student.*

*Resist the urge  
to “follow your crowd”*

Counseling Office strongly encourages you to think about three critical points.

First, take plenty of time to do this step in the process. The more conscientious effort you put into thoughtfully reviewing the characteristics of the colleges that will meet your needs, the more satisfied you will be with the choices available to you.

Second, resist the pull of the “names.” From our experience in the College Counseling Office, too many Exonians focus on the names of colleges rather than the characteristics of the schools behind those names. A college isn’t “good” only if you have heard of its name. Remember that there are over 4,000 private and public colleges and universities in the United States, Canada, and overseas to consider. Don’t think about names. Focus on characteristics, and the names will follow.

Finally, your college criteria will be distinctive from your best friend’s, your roommate’s, and perhaps from every other student in your dormitory. Frequently, Exonians forget this simple fact when they begin to compare college lists. Recognize—and celebrate—the fact that you are unique.

### STANDARDIZED TESTING

Every Academy student will take a series of standardized tests as part of the college application process. The acronyms—including PSAT, SAT-I, SAT-II, ACT, AP and TOEFL—can be intimidating, and the purposes of the various tests can be confusing. Read this section for help in sorting through the various testing options appropriate for you.

### TYPES OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

#### PSAT/NMSQT—Preliminary SAT/National Merit Qualifying Test

By the second half of your upper year, you have likely taken the PSAT, which is administered in October to high school 10th- and 11th-graders nationwide. Details about the PSAT can be found under the “Standardized Testing” section of Chapter I of this Guidebook.

The National Merit Scholarship Program uses the PSAT to screen those students of exceptional test-taking ability who may qualify for one of its scholarships. If your score is above a certain threshold, which varies each year, you will be notified in September of your senior year that you are a semi finalist, and will receive an application for the final round of competition. Only the PSAT score from your upper year counts in the National Merit competition.

PSAT scores are generally available to students in mid-December; when they arrive, copies of the score reports will be put in students’ campus P.O. boxes. Upon receipt of their scores, some uppers only pay attention to the predicted SAT I score range that comes with PSAT results, and ignore the valuable information also included with the test results, which provides feedback on your strengths and weaknesses, with recommended areas for study in preparation for the SAT I. Review your PSAT results carefully with your parents, your academic advisor, and your college counselor.

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

### **SAT I—Reasoning Test**

The SAT I is the most general standardized test offered by the College Board, and the exam that almost every member of Exeter's senior class will take for college admission. With three sections that measure critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills, the SAT is a long test, at three hours and 45 minutes. The Critical Reading section emphasizes reading skills and tests vocabulary in the context of short and long reading passages and sentence completion questions. The Writing section includes both multiple choice questions and a student-written essay, and tests a student's skill with grammar, word usage, and word choice. The Math section includes topics from advanced algebra and precalculus, and emphasizes data interpretation and applied math questions. Although it is possible to complete the Math section without one, students should use a four-function, scientific, or graphing calculator for the exam. Student scores will include Critical Reading (CR 200-800), Mathematics (M 200-800), and Writing (WR 200-800), with two Writing subscores for multiple choice and the essay. The SAT tests are usually offered seven times a year: January, March or April, May, June, October, November, and December. Most competitive colleges require the SAT I.

Most Exeter students will take the SAT I once in the second half of their upper year, and once or twice in the fall of their senior year. The Academy believes that Exeter students are best prepared for the SAT I following this recommended schedule, because research by the College Board has shown not only that students

see very insignificant score improvements upon taking the SAT I exams more than twice, but also that long term preparation for the SAT produces better scores than cramming for a few weeks.

Because Harkness pedagogy requires that all students attend class daily, the Academy builds the school calendar to promote a minimum disruption of class attendance because of standardized testing; by following the CCO's guidelines, students will not miss class and will be able to take standardized testing following a thoughtful schedule.

Recently the College Board has implemented a 'Score Choice' option, which will allow students to choose by test date which SAT I or SAT II score that they want to send to colleges. While this policy might tempt parents to encourage their students to take the SATs multiple times, many highly selective colleges require students to waive the 'Score Choice' option and to submit their entire testing history.

Given this trend among the most selective universities and the importance of class attendance, the College Counseling Office believes that Exeter students should be judicious in when they schedule their SAT I and II exams, and follow our recommended dates guidelines for testing, which are available at "Documents and Forms" under "For Uppers, Lower, and Preps and Parents" on the College Counseling section of the Academy's main webpage.

### **SAT II—Subject Tests**

Many colleges to which Academy students apply require two or three Subject Tests: Math level I or II, and one or two other tests



## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

### TEST-TAKING TIPS

- Use the same name on all forms.
- Use your Social Security number when registering for tests.
- Use your home address as your permanent address.
- Exeter CEEB code number is 300185.
- Exeter High School's Test Center number for the SAT is 30-145.

of the student's choice. Carefully check the testing requirements of the schools and particular programs in which you are interested. The Subject Tests are each one-hour long and you may take as many as three different tests on any one test date. Like the SAT I, the scores range from 200 to 800.

In selecting which Subject Tests to take, focus on your strongest areas of study and plan to take the corresponding test on the dates you will be best prepared, usually when you complete a certain course. If you have any questions about the appropriateness of a particular test and the timing of your taking it, please consult your teacher and your college counselor.

### ACT—American College Testing Program

For some Exonians, the ACT may be a testing option to consider. The ACT can be used at many colleges as a substitute for the SAT I, and sometimes even for certain SAT II Subject Tests. You should review the testing requirements of the colleges you are interested in and discuss the ACT option with your college counselor. The ACT is administered at Exeter High School (ACT Test Center code 238260). When the Academy is in session, transportation will be provided to Exeter High School for most test dates; otherwise, students must register at home.

The ACT consists of four 35-50 minute subtests in the areas of English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. You will receive four separate scores in addition to a composite score that averages the tests. Scores range from 1 (low) to 36 (high).

### AP—Advanced Placement

Given once a year in May, the APs are three-hour long examinations based on

full-year college level courses offered in high school. APs are scored from 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest score. Many selective colleges require a score of at least 4 before they will award credit and/or course acceleration. Be certain to check the requirements of colleges you are interested in to find out their policies regarding placement and/or credit for these examinations.

While APs were not originally intended to be used in the evaluation of college candidates, many admissions officers pay attention to the AP scores in a candidate's folder. If you have taken APs and done well, it is in your best interest to report the scores to the colleges; the task of reporting lies with you.

### TOEFL—Test of English as a Foreign Language

Required by many colleges, the TOEFL is used to evaluate the English proficiency of applicants whose native language is not English. The test is administered in the United States by computer at Sylvan Learning Centers and other sites. Please consult your college counselor about the appropriateness of the test and the timing and location of its administration.

### TEST PREPARATION RESOURCES

Although we may decry the role that SATs and ACTs have assumed in relation to a student's academic record, standardized tests are more important than ever in selective college admission. As for any event of such significance, we believe that preparation beforehand can not only provide students with specific, effective test-taking strategies that will help their performance on the test, but also can build confidence and teach useful skills that extend far beyond the SATs and ACTs.

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

Because standardized tests measure abilities and skills acquired over many years of education, the best preparation for the SATs and ACTs is for a student to study hard in a challenging academic program and to read extensively outside the classroom. Yet some familiarity with the exam and preparation before the test can help students improve their scores, on occasion with dramatic results. We strongly believe that you should first familiarize yourself with the test by reviewing your PSAT results. When reviewing their PSAT scores, many students do not look beyond their estimated SAT I score range; however, reviewing the detailed report showing how you performed on each question, as well as the PSAT test booklet, can help identify areas to which you need to pay attention. The sample SAT I and II questions in the free publications *“Taking the SAT I”* and *“Taking the SAT II Subject Tests”* (both available on the table outside the College Counseling Office), and in other test-taking guides such the College Board’s 10 Real SATs, are also great preparation tools. You may also consider the College Board’s *“Question Answer Service”* which, for a nominal fee, provides comprehensive details about your SAT I test results.

Some students benefit through more targeted preparation. More than half of Academy students currently use an outside tutor or a test-preparation course, although such services are generally very expensive. If you decide to use an outside tutor or service, you should do so when you have ample time. Many Exeter students are too busy during the academic year to take on the additional responsibility of an outside prep course; summer may be a better time for such

extended preparation.

Members of the upper class will have an introduction to the SAT and ACT during the winter term of their upper year through Academic Approach. This opportunity is unique to the Academy in that it balances Exeter student’s needs for test preparation with an understanding of the demands already placed on them. Featuring an on-line test review program, this curricular supplement will teach effective test strategies, fit comfortably into students’ busy schedules, and be accessible to all Exeter upper.

### SENDING TEST SCORES TO COLLEGES

It is the student’s responsibility to send standardized test scores to colleges. The following offers details on how to send your scores.

#### **Sending SAT Scores by Phone:**

1. Before calling the College Board’s Educational Testing Service(ETS), gather the following information:
  - \*Score reports for each test
  - \*College CEEB codes
  - \*Credit Card
2. Call 1 (866) 756-7346.
3. ETS will ask for your name, registration number (on the bottom of the score report) for each test or your Social Security number, date of test, name of test and score of test.
4. Give ETS the CEEB codes of the colleges you wish to receive the scores.
5. Your SAT I scores will automatically be sent with your SAT II subject scores.



#### **TEST-TAKING TIPS**

- You cannot take both the SAT I and SAT Subject Tests on the same date.
- Not all SAT subject tests are offered on every test date.
- You are responsible for sending your SAT and ACT scores to colleges.

## CHAPTER II WINTER & SPRING OF UPPER YEAR

### **Sending SAT Scores electronically**

Follow the directions online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

### **Sending SAT Scores by Mail:**

Follow the directions in the SAT Registration Bulletin, or use an Additional Score Report Request Form, found online at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org)

### **Sending ACT Test Scores:**

Follow the directions in the ACT Registration Bulletin, or on-line at [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org).

### **Sending TOEFL Test Scores:**

Follow the directions on their website: [www.toefl.org](http://www.toefl.org).

## COLLEGE COUNSELING WEBSITE

### USING THE INTERNET IN YOUR SEARCH

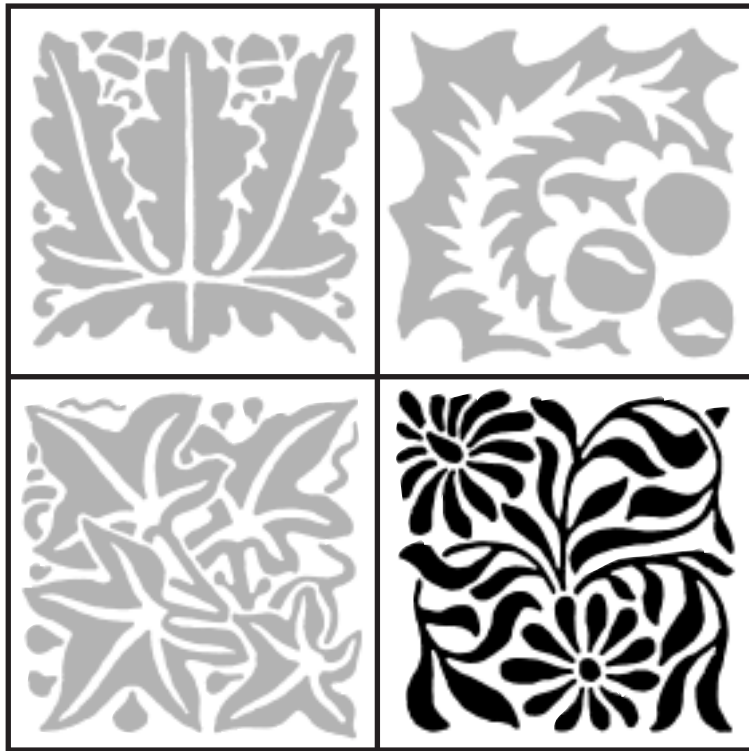
College-related websites seem to be as numerous as colleges, yet not all websites are created equally. While some organizations' websites, such as those for College Board, the Common Application, and Colleges that Change Lives, are reputable, thoughtful and fair, other sites—particularly those that purport to offer confidential, insider information or a precise ranking of colleges—may not be as balanced and trustworthy. Use the good sense you've gained by your research for your History 333 paper to determine the editorial bias of secondary sources related to colleges, and if in doubt, ask your college counselor for recommended online sources.

Fortunately, Exeter provides two trustworthy foundational tools for you as you navigate the college selection process. The Academy's public site: [www.exeter.edu](http://www.exeter.edu) (<http://www.exeter.edu>) offers extensive

information about the process, with a calendar of events, copies of all-class e-news bulletins, information on scholarships and financial aid, links to our *Guidebook*, a list of journal articles on the college process, links to required documents and forms, and much more. The College Counseling Office also uses a private, password-protected site though Naviance, which allows you to manage most aspects of your college search. With individual passwords, uppers, seniors and their parents will take advantage of the rich interactivity of your personalized information and the Naviance website's database of college profiles. You will use these features to create your preliminary college list and to modify your college list throughout your search. In addition, both uppers and parents can complete their own Upper Questionnaire on the site; this questionnaire will enable you to update your personal and extracurricular information as necessary, thus keeping your counselor fully informed and giving yourself a well-organized database for filling out your college applications. Uppers and their parents will receive password access to the Naviance website at the start of uppers' college process during winter term.

There are many more helpful aspects of the Academy and Naviance's websites, which you will discover as you use them. The college counselors will give you a training session on both websites at the all-uppers College Counseling "kickoff" meeting in January, and in a required College Resource meeting during winter term. The more you use both websites, however, the more you will take advantage of their many features.

CHAPTER III SUMMER  
BEFORE SENIOR YEAR



## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

Summer may seem to offer a break in your college search process, but in fact the opposite is true. The summer between your upper and senior years is ideal for committing a significant amount of time to researching and visiting the colleges on your preliminary list, interviewing, and writing drafts of essays. Use this summer to rest, clear your mind, and think about your college criteria without the distractions and commitments of the Exeter school year. The steps you take now during the “downtime” of this summer can benefit your college search later on.

### THE COLLEGE VISIT

For the majority of seniors, the campus visit will be a decisive factor in where you will apply and enroll. The campus visit is your chance to size up a school and to gauge how it fits with your interests. Do some research before you go — read the catalogue and look at the website — so the visit will be more meaningful in the context of what you have already learned. If you are planning an extended trip, consider visiting no more than two schools a day and keep notes of your impressions. Do your campus visits during the academic year breaks or during the summer after your upper year. Seniors are allowed two college visit days during the academic year. Visit forms are available in the College Counseling Office and your college counselor’s signature is required. See the *E Book* for further information on the college visit policy.

### PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

Always call to find out what type of campus visit arrangements are available well in advance, at least three weeks, of your

intended visit. By calling ahead you can set up a schedule that ideally suits your travel needs and makes the best use of your limited time. Avoid the drive through and drop in approach.

### OVERVIEW OF VISIT OPTIONS

#### Tours

Campus tours generally last about an hour and range in group size from as small as your family and a student guide to as large as 50 prospectives and a tour leader. The campus tour format usually includes a brief background on the college’s history, an overview on the academic and student life programs offered, and a view of the resources available. If there is a part of the campus (the sports center, music facilities, particular dorms) you want to see, be sure to ask. While it may not be part of the general tour, your guide may be able to point it out, and you can always go back on your own. Be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes.

#### Group Information Sessions

This is a popular and efficient forum where a school provides general information and offers a large gathering of students and their families the chance to learn more about the college or university.

#### Interviews

A personal interview with an admissions officer is an evaluative, information-sharing exchange with a member of the admissions office. Generally the interview will last about 30 minutes. When a student cannot interview on campus, an interview with an alumnus/a usually can be arranged in a student’s home area. The interviewer generally writes a summary



### VISITING TIPS

- Call ahead for tour and group information times.
- Register your visit with the admissions office to formally demonstrate your interest.
- Get directions to the admissions office.
- Schedule your interview after a tour or information session and wear appropriate clothing.

## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR



### VISITING TIPS

To customize your campus visit arrange an appointment to:

- Attend a class
- Stay overnight
- Meet with a faculty member
- Meet with a coach
- Have lunch with an Exeter alumnus/a who is a current student

report that is placed in the student's file. Neat, comfortable attire is appropriate. More information is outlined in the "How to Interview" section of this chapter.

### Class Visits

During the academic year, a prospective student may attend a class or two of his/her choice. The student generally stays the entire class period and can approach the instructor afterwards with any questions.

### Overnights

Some colleges have designated students who serve as overnight hosts or offer common rooms to visiting students. Generally overnights are not offered on weekends and might be limited to one night only.

### Meetings with Coaches, Music Teachers, Learning Specialists

Plan to arrange these meetings on your own. While the admission office can give you the name and phone number of the person to contact, they will generally ask you to call directly to arrange a convenient time.

### HOW TO INTERVIEW

The interview serves two purposes. It reinforces your interest in a particular institution and it is an opportunity for the admission staff to clarify the match between their school's offerings and your interests and abilities. Every school treats interviews differently, so it is important to read their literature closely and determine where and when to interview. Your college counselor will guide you.

### TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

#### Personal Interviews

These usually take place on the college campus and are held with a representative of the admission office. The conversation usually lasts about 30 minutes. Parents are generally not included in the initial conversation but will be approached afterwards to see if they have any questions.

#### Alumni/ae Interviews

When students are not able to travel to campus for an interview, the university may offer students the chance to interview with an alumnus/a in the student's home area. The local alumni/ae chapter of the university works with the admission office to arrange the interviews. Some universities may ask students to put their request in writing, and other universities will automatically contact you once you have sent in your application. Be sure to check the application materials or call admission offices directly to see about arranging alumni/ae interviews. Alumni/ae interviews are given the same weight as on-campus interviews in the admission process.

#### Interviews at PEA

Every fall over 120 university representatives visit the Exeter campus either at our mini college fairs, or at an evening presentation. When the universities' staffing and schedules permit, representatives will spend an additional day or evening on campus interviewing interested students. Interview sign-up sheets are posted in the College Counseling Office and all seniors are notified of upcoming interviewing opportunities through Blackboard, social media, and the *Daily Bulletin*. Also, students who have a specific university on

## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

their college list on their Student Profile Page will receive a sign-up notice by email stating when the interviews will take place. Interview slots fill quickly. Seniors are encouraged to check Blackboard, social media, and the *Daily Bulletin* and to check their post office boxes and e-mail early each day.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Take interviews seriously. It is important to come across as interested and engaged in both the learning process and the institution you are visiting.

Be prepared to talk about yourself. Sounds easy, but you have just 30 minutes to talk about all your classes, your activities and summer plans. Prioritize your thoughts: what have been your favorite classes, teachers, assignments? What extracurriculars are most important to you and why? Think ahead. What do you want to try in college? Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Relate your interests and questions back to the college you are visiting. “I am interested in Russian and I saw you have a study abroad program. I’d love to go abroad.” It is imperative that you prepare and are familiar with the offerings of the school.

Check out your interview style. Do you appear poised, confident, articulate? Work at containing any nervous habits and try to keep your thoughts focused on what you are saying. If you are shy, reticent, or a non-native speaker, we strongly encourage you to do some practice interviews before going to your Category III, IV and V schools. You will naturally become more comfortable with the interview format once you have done a couple and know what to expect.

Keep the conversation focused on strengths. While it may be important for an admission officer to have a sense of family transition or teacher conflicts, the overriding tone of the conversation should be upbeat, geared toward the last two years in school, and show a fit with an institution. Be sure to intersperse the genuine challenges with the success stories of your life.

During the busiest times of the year, staff members may be doing numerous interviews in one day. Or you may have an alumnus/a who seems a bit out of touch with the university. Don’t let the interviewing style faze you. Politely guide the conversation when you want to mention something, or at the very end be sure to add that you have one more thing you want to emphasize. At the conclusion leave a résumé with the person so that he or she has a record of your activities and interests. The résumé will be a useful reference and may help jog your interviewer’s memory about specific topics you have mentioned. The résumé should not be used as an interviewing prop.

### IMPACT ON THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

As most admission officers will tell you, the interview is just one piece in the student’s application file, and no one credential alone gets a student admitted or denied. Rather, all information is examined, and typically the interview evaluation reinforces or clarifies other aspects of the file.

Occasionally, an interview may not be in the student’s best interest, or could adversely affect the student’s application. Discuss with your college counselor whether interviewing is appropriate for you.



## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR



*Filing for  
financial aid?  
Make sure  
you have completed  
the FAFSA  
and CSS Profile.*

### FINANCING YOUR COLLEGE EDUCATION

#### **Beginning the Search for Need- and Merit-Based Assistance**

As increasing college costs put more stress on family resources, the topic of financial aid can be a decisive factor in the college search for many families. The College Counseling Office strongly encourages you to honestly and openly discuss with your family the role of financial assistance in your college selection. While we believe that the total cost of college should not be the primary factor which shapes your college search, availability of financial aid frequently plays a critical role in the final decision about which college to attend.

There are two basic types of financial aid: merit-based and need-based. Merit-based aid is offered to a student based on academic, artistic, athletic, or other criteria; the college or scholarship-sponsoring group makes the determination of the merit award on their own criteria. The most common merit awards are college-sponsored scholarships, corporate or non-profit scholarships, government-sponsored scholarships (such as service academies and state scholarships), athletic scholarships for highly talented Division I and II athletes, and multicultural scholarships.

The timetable for some merit scholarships can be as early as the summer between your upper and senior years. During this time, students who are interested in merit-based aid should begin their research by looking at two websites devoted to scholarships: [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com) and <http://studentaid.ed.gov>

In addition to the “scholarship” file of printed material located in the College Counseling Office, we also provide detailed information about scholarships in the “Financial Aid” and “Library” sections of the College Counseling webpage.

Need-based aid is the most common form of financial assistance. Since private colleges cost more than Exeter, most colleges have an even higher percentage of students on need-based aid; the Academy provides need-based aid to almost half of our students.

Need-based aid requires a family to submit financial documentation which establishes their eligibility. All colleges and universities require a student to submit the federal government’s Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA). Some colleges and universities will also require their own institutional form. In addition, over 600 private and public colleges also require the CSS Profile form, which is customized by each college to provide the specific additional financial information each college needs to assess a student’s eligibility for aid. Two external parties—the federal government’s Central Processing Agency, which reviews the FAFSA, and the College Board’s College Scholarship Service (CSS), which processes the Profile form—serve as impartial agents in assessing eligibility.

It is vitally important that students and families not wait until senior year to find a way to finance their education. To assist families, almost all colleges and universities provide printed and website material which gives guidelines about their individual policies and timetables.

## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

In addition, we suggest using some of the most helpful and commonly used financial aid website resources: [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov), [www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org), and [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com).

Every family contemplating applying for need-based aid should try at the beginning of the college search process to determine what their approximate eligibility will be. By completing the College Board's 'Finding Scholarships and Financial Aid' calculator or the 'Need Analysis Financial Aid Estimation Form' on the [finaid.org](http://finaid.org) website, families can be provided with an approximate Expected Family Contribution (EFC). In addition, many colleges will have their own on-line worksheet which can calculate the EFC as determined by their own unique policies. It is important to remember that this EFC figure is only an estimate; some colleges and universities will expect a family to pay more or less than the EFC, depending on the college's admission and financial aid policies and the availability of institutional funding. However, by knowing your estimated EFC, you can begin to look more knowledgeably at grant and loan options for paying for college costs.

In addition, keep in mind these points about financial aid:

- Aid is offered in packages consisting of grants, work-study, and a sizable amount of loans. Carefully consider whether you are willing to assume a heavy loan burden.
- Most highly-selective institutions offer few, if any, merit-based scholarships.
- Our experience has shown that Exeter often awards much more generous financial aid than colleges.
- Although many colleges are "need-blind," some schools may consider a student's financial eligibility as they make admissions decisions. Because of this, students should apply to several colleges where their credentials will place them among the strongest candidates in the applicant pool.
- It is possible for colleges to admit you but deny financial aid, or to provide you with an aid package that does not meet your calculated need. This is known as "gapping."
- On your summer college visits, ask questions about each school's financial aid policies: Is the college need-blind/need-aware? Any merit-based scholarships?
- If receiving financial assistance is critical to your ability to attend college, you must include a financial aid "safety" school on your college list. This financial "safety" school must both be affordable and fall in the Category I group for admissions. Often a state university in the student's home state is an appropriate choice.
- Deadlines are important, and many come early; a handful of scholarship applications are due as early as the summer prior to the senior year. Although the federal government's FAFSA form cannot be filed until January of the senior year, we recommend that the

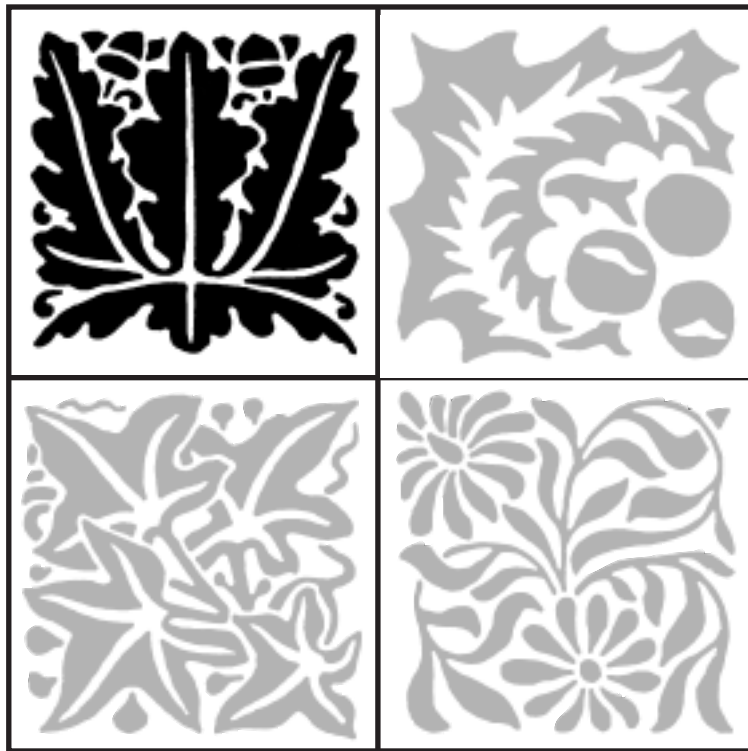
## CHAPTER III SUMMER BEFORE SENIOR YEAR

College Board College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile registration form (Part 1) should be submitted shortly after a student's return to campus in September.

- Students can register on-line with Profile by checking the website <http://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. If you are applying under an Early Decision or Early Action plan, you should register with the Profile as early as possible. Worksheets to help families complete on-line the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA), the aid form required by all colleges, are available at the 'Library' section of the CCO website.

The College Counseling Office encourages parents and guardians to discuss financing higher education with their children in order to assure that college planning will reflect family circumstances and will promote the search for any and all means of supporting our students' aspirations. Please feel free to speak with your college counselor if you have any questions regarding financing your college education.

CHAPTER IV FALL  
OF SENIOR YEAR



## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

### OPTIONS FOR ADMISSION

#### EARLY DECISION AND EARLY ACTION Is applying early right for you?

Most colleges and universities offer an early application plan that allows a senior to apply by November 1 or 15 and receive a decision by approximately December 15. Some schools offer Early Decision, a binding plan that states that a student agrees to matriculate if offered admission. Students can only apply Early Decision to one school. Some schools offer an Early Decision II plan which is still binding but has an application deadline later than November 1. Typically Early Decision candidates, if accepted, are required to make a deposit at the university to secure their place in the class.

Early Action, also an early plan, is not binding. Students, if accepted, do not have to deposit until May 1, and may apply elsewhere. However, the College Counseling Office assumes that a student admitted under an early admission plan, whether Early Decision or Early Action, at a college or university with a national admit rate of less than 10% has been admitted to his first choice school and therefore has completed the application process and will file no further applications. This philosophy parallels the spirit of the Academy's motto of "*Non sibi*," and allows the greatest number of Exonians to be considered favorably at the most selective colleges. Given the changing admission landscape and the importance of financial aid for many families, seniors should certainly consider applying Early Action to public universities, as well as any private university that limits eligibility to their own merit-based

scholarships to Early Action applicants, as these Early Action applications are within the spirit of Exeter's "*Non sibi*" philosophy.

#### EARLY EVALUATION AND EARLY NOTIFICATION

With Early Evaluation and Early Notification plans, universities send a preliminary letter indicating the likelihood of acceptance in late February with the official decision being mailed in early April. On occasion, these plans may advantage a student in the review process. Students should discuss this option with their college counselor.

#### ROLLING ADMISSION

Many state universities render decisions as applications become complete. Therefore, we encourage students to apply to state universities with rolling admission plans (for example, Colorado-Boulder or Penn State) by late September of the fall term.

### COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The time has come. You have made your college list, checked it twice, and are ready to put pen to paper and start filling out your college applications. Before you begin the process, keep a few things in mind.

First, college admission officers expect honest and complete answers to the questions asked. Take time to read each part of the application fully and, when possible, use the space that has been provided. Whenever possible, apply electronically.

Second, many application booklets provide a checklist for keeping track of required credentials and important dates. Keep a copy of this along with a copy of your completed application for each school.



*The College*

*Counseling Office*

*assumes that a student*

*accepted under*

*an early admission plan,*

*either Early Decision or*

*Early Action,*

*has completed*

*the application process*

*and will file no further*

*applications.*

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR



Last, work on your college applications a little bit at a time. Read through the application once fully, and then spend some time thinking about how you want to organize your academic and extracurricular record. Jot down some essay ideas. Revisit the whole process again and again. By working at it a little bit at a time, you will have more time to prepare a full and attractive application.

### TYPES OF APPLICATIONS

#### **State Applications**

State university applications require transcript and testing information but may not ask for teacher recommendations or an essay. Some university systems, such as the University of California, require the completion of a standardized self-reporting form. Generally, students submit one application to the university system and indicate which campuses they prefer. Because many state universities admit on a rolling basis, the College Counseling Office strongly encourages all seniors to submit state applications by late September. Students applying to the University of California system need to complete the application by November 30.

#### **British Universities**

The British university system, including Cambridge and Oxford, uses a standardized application form. Applications to British universities are processed through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services (UCAS), and are submitted online at [www.ucas.co.uk](http://www.ucas.co.uk). Most British universities require an application to be submitted prior to January 15. Both Cambridge and Oxford have significantly earlier deadlines, however, and students interest-

ed in either school must submit both the UCAS application and an Oxford or Cambridge application by mid-September, in order to be eligible for overseas interviews in the United States. Students should ask an Academy teacher to be their referee before mid-August, so that the referee's recommendation can be submitted to UCAS prior to early September. The Oxford and Cambridge paper supplements must be mailed to the U.K. by the second week of September, so that the documents can arrive in the U.K. prior to the October 1 postmark deadline; the online UCAS application deadline for both universities is also earlier. Students may not apply to Cambridge and Oxford in the same year, and most successful candidates will have several Advanced Placement test scores of '5's prior to their senior year. Additional information about applying to British universities and the application timetable are available from the College Counseling Office.

#### **The Common Application**

Over 450 private colleges and universities comprise the Common Application member institutions which agree to give equal treatment to the information provided in the Common Application form. In fact, many more schools have begun to accept the Common Application as the standard. The advantage of the Common Application is that students can complete, thoughtfully and carefully, one version of the application and apply on-line. The disadvantage is that students are often required to complete a supplement in addition to their Common Application. Sometimes, students hastily complete or don't complete this additional supplement and thus jeopardize their applications.

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

If you use the Common Application you must follow through fully on these subsequent forms. Each school has particular application fees and deadlines, and you may need to submit a letter stating the decision plan or particular college within the university for which you wish to be considered if it is not clearly stated in the application. Common Applications can be found online at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org).

### **Institutional Applications**

Most schools still offer some version of an admission application. While similar in appearance to the Common Application, institutional applications may include questions about legacy, visit information, and different essay questions.

### A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO FILLING OUT APPLICATIONS

Read the directions thoroughly and follow the instructions.

If you are uncertain where to start, make a copy of the application and write out a draft to see how the information appears.

Remember that writing assignments often take longer than you think they will. A short-answer essay question may take you a long time since you are trying to find just the right four lines.

Also, technology can be both a blessing and a curse. Be sure to allow time to work out the unforeseen kinks.

### **Part I of the Application**

#### **Personal Information**

The receipt of your Part I will often convert you in the university's system from a prospective student to an official applicant. Some of the typical questions asked in Part I of the application are:

**Decision Plan:** Standard options include Early Decision, Early Action, or Regular Decision.

**Name:** Be consistent. Use the same name that is on your Exeter transcript and SAT tests.

**Address:** The permanent address is where your family resides and the mailing address is where all correspondence, including the decision, will be mailed.

**Parent and Sibling Information:** Check and verify college attendance and graduation dates. If your parents did not attend college, it is important for your colleges to know that. You may be identified as a first generation college student.

**Phillips Exeter Academy Information:** Our CEEB number is 300185. The College Counseling Office address is Phillips Exeter Academy, 20 Main Street, Exeter, NH 03833. The phone number is (603)777-3415. The fax number is (603)777-4326.

**Fee/Fee Waiver:** Personal checks, money orders, or credit cards are acceptable. If you receive substantial financial support from the Academy, as determined by Exeter's Director of Financial Aid, application fee waivers are available through the College Counseling Office. Be sure to speak with your counselor early in the fall. An application may be processed and read without a fee or fee waiver but the university might withhold notification of the final decision.

### **Part II of the Application**

#### **Everything Else**

Part II of an application takes a little more time and thought to complete and must be submitted by the application deadline. Part II questions include:

**Listing Senior Courses:** Admission officers



*Students are responsible for contacting the Educational Testing Service directly and requesting that their SAT scores be sent to their schools.*

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR



*Using a*

*Common Application?*

*Remember to submit*

*any required supplements.*

want to see your full senior schedule. If the space provided is divided into semesters, draw a line down through the second semester and separate out winter and spring term. Be sure to denote intensive-level or college-level courses, usually marked by an asterisk.

### **Influences On Your Decision To Apply:**

This question is less about the admission process and more about which of their marketing efforts are effective in getting students to apply. A sampling of choices is usually provided and you should just answer honestly.

### **Questions About Where Else You Are Applying:**

Some universities might pose this question to see where their applicant pool overlaps with the competitors. You can either leave it blank or offer a partial list (say three other similar schools). It is not advisable to offer a full list of schools under consideration.

**Language, If Other Than English:** If a student has a low SAT Reading or Writing score, an admission officer will look here to see whether another language is spoken at home.

**Intended Major:** Most colleges and universities recognize that students will change their minds several times before officially declaring a major at the end of their sophomore year, so the emphasis here is on “intended.” Be aware some universities suffer from over-represented majors (for example, science majors interested in pre-med). Discuss with your college counselor the possible impact your intended major may have on the admission process.

### **Reporting Standardized Tests**

Standardized testing information is not reported on the Phillips Exeter Academy transcript. **Students are responsible for contacting the College Board or ACT directly and requesting that scores be sent to their university choices.** At certain times in the admission process, universities may contact Phillips Exeter and request scores. Only with your prior written approval will the College Counseling Office release the scores to admission offices. Students who have attended a previous high school should check about the reporting of testing on their previous transcript. While the College Counseling Office submits all transcripts to admission offices, we cannot be held responsible for the testing information provided by other schools.

### **Presenting Your Extracurricular Interests and Activities**

Just as college admission officers try to assess your academic record by looking at your course of study and grades, they will also try to gauge your level of achievement outside of the classroom by looking at how you spend your time. While there may be significant personal merit and enjoyment by being involved in a variety of activities, admission officers tend to look for students with commitment.

**Commitment To Activities:** Most colleges will ask students to amplify their commitment to an activity by defining hours per week, positions held, and whether or not a student plans to continue with the activity in college.

**Leadership:** As you consider your senior activities, think about ways that you can

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

take on a leading role, perhaps in your dorm, in clubs/organizations, or on athletic teams. If an organization does not exist at PEA, think about starting one. Many established groups started this way.

**Volunteer Work/Community Service:** Admissions officers are interested in how you help others, whether during the academic year or on breaks from school. Through the Exeter Social Service Organization (ESSO), potential contributions are limitless. Rather than being active in five or so different social service groups, try identifying which issues are of most concern to you and play an active role in making a difference.

**Hobbies/Outside Interests:** Admission officers are interested to see how you spend your free time.

**Academic Honors or Awards:** Be sure to list all the academic achievements that you have earned since ninth grade.

### Recommendations

**Secondary School Report (SSR):** Most colleges and universities require the College Counseling Office to submit information about you—your academic performance, your personal qualities and your extracurricular accomplishments—as part of your application. We provide this information with a form, called the Secondary School Report, to which we attach your high school transcript(s), documentation of medical leaves or probations, and a detailed recommendation written by your counselor. In the paper applications that you receive from most colleges, you will find a Secondary School Report form. You can ignore this form, because at PEA we

have our own Secondary School Report form that all colleges and universities accept, and usually submit credentials electronically.

**Class Rank:** Many schools request information on class rank and ask the counselor to compare students within certain categories. Phillips Exeter does not rank its students, but we do provide a range of cumulative grade point averages attained by seniors who entered the Academy in a particular year.

**Midyear School Report Forms:** Students do not need to submit the midyear report forms found in most college applications. Exeter sends final winter term grades, which are usually available mid-March, to all schools on a student's list, even if a student was accepted under an Early Decision plan. Exeter does not release midterm grades to colleges since they are an internal assessment tool. A final transcript is sent to the school where a student matriculates.

**Academic Recommendations from Teachers:** Generally, two teacher recommendations are requested by colleges, and you should ask teachers from the upper or senior year. Some schools will require a humanities teacher and one other instructor, but be sure to read each application closely. Be sure to ask your teachers early—a month or two in advance is not too soon. Many universities, including colleges that accept the Common Application, allow teachers to submit their recommendation letters electronically; students should follow the applications' directions on how to invite



*Be sure to ask  
your teachers for  
recommendations early  
—a month or two  
in advance  
is not too soon.*

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR



### **Before you mail your application:**

Check to see that you signed the application forms.

Make sure someone proofreads your entire application.

Make sure you mail the application to the correct school (it is very easy with the Common Application for materials to get mixed up).

Always keep photocopies of your completed applications.

Use appropriate postage for the weight of your application envelope.

their teacher recommenders. If your university does not have an on-line form, or if you or your teacher choose to submit your recommendations by mail, you should complete the recommendation form with your name, address, and Social Security number and provide your teachers with pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes. Share your interests with your teachers and your thoughts about their class by providing them with the completed Exeter “Teacher Recommendation Information Form,” both in the spring term and updated in the fall. Academy faculty are not required to agree to write recommendations, and they graciously extend themselves by writing for seniors, so please be considerate and give them as much notice and information as possible. And remember to thank them!

One year seniors and postgraduates are encouraged to talk with their college counselors about asking teachers from both Exeter and from their previous high school.

**The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974:** The act entitles a student to review his/her permanent record once she/he has matriculated at a college. Most students opt to waive the right to see the recommendation because it implies that the recommendation was written candidly.

**Additional Recommendations:** If you have one additional person who would like to write on your behalf, it may be worth considering. However, too many additional reference letters can be distracting to the admission reader. Again, talk with your college counselor about the value of your additional letters.

### **Additional Credentials**

The deadline for alumni/ae interviews is usually well in advance of the application deadline. If needed, check the application booklet for details about how to arrange an interview.

Students with talents in the performing arts should discuss with their college counselor the process for sending art, music, theater or dance material. See the chapter “Special Applicants” for more information.

### **WRITING YOUR COLLEGE ESSAY**

The most difficult and time-consuming portion of the application is the essay — or essays, since many colleges ask you for more than one. This is your opportunity to speak for yourself and your candidacy in an honest and straightforward manner. Consider it an invitation to talk face to face with an admission committee. It is an interview on paper. Colleges ask these essay questions for two reasons:

- To learn more about you. Who is the real person behind these credentials?
- To discover if you are a skilled and articulate writer.

Every essay should reflect both of these attributes. This is your chance to distinguish yourself to the college admissions officers.

### **GETTING STARTED**

The end of the upper year is not too early to begin. Make a list of traits and experiences that set you apart from others. Make a chronological list of important things you have done in and out of school. Finally, boil it down to a few that have

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

meant the most to you, or carry index cards with you and every time you think of something write it on one of the cards. When your applications arrive in the fall list all the questions. Make sure you answer the question or questions that the college asks. Choose a topic that is close to your heart. Let your personality shine through. Tell them what you want them to know, not what you think they want to hear. Never underestimate the power of your own written words. Make one experience come alive. Reinforce something positive in your application.

### WRITING THE ESSAY

Once you have decided on your topic find a quiet place, sit down and write from the heart. Put down whatever comes into your mind and edit it later. Find your own voice; don't twist yourself into someone else. The college admissions committee expects you to write the way a 17-year-old writes, not the way a parent writes. Use Hemingway's sentiment, "Show, don't tell!" How long should your essay be? "As short as you have time to make it," writes one admissions officer.

Lead into the essay clearly and quickly. Avoid slang, long words and humor (unless you are truly funny and have a truly funny story to tell).

Use transition sentences between paragraphs to retain continuity. The first draft will be very rough. Leave it for a few days, then read it again with fresh objective eyes. Rewrite. Ask a literate friend to read it and make suggestions. Ask him/her if your personality shows through in the essay. Take criticism gracefully. Re-read your essay,

being aware of grammar, spelling, and correct organization around the theme. Remember to be concise; the reader allows approximately 2-3 minutes per essay.

Finally, college admission officers are savvy to essays that have been over-edited by parents or purchased on the Internet. Please do not download any part of your essay from cyberspace, or you may face disciplinary action at the Academy.

### COLLEGE OFFICE POLICIES

*The E Book* contains relevant information about the College Counseling Office and its policies and procedures; please refer to *The E Book* for more detailed information than that which is listed here.

#### College Days

In general, Exonians are encouraged to visit colleges during vacation times. However, by faculty decision, seniors are allowed to miss classes on two days for the purpose of visiting colleges. You must obtain a permission form from the College Counseling Office for a college day, complete the form, and return it to your college counselor. Then submit the completed form to the Dean of Students Office and fill out an out-of-town form. If you are staying overnight on a college campus, a written invitation from the host at the college and written parental permission is required by the Dean's Office before an out-of-town will be approved.

Only one college day can be taken in any one term; students who wish to take both their college days in one term must petition the Dean's Office. We advise students to reserve at least one college day for a visit after the receipt of college admission letters to help inform their final choice. All college



#### POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Follow the directions in regard to length, format and whether it should be typed or in your own handwriting.
- Read the question carefully and answer the question accordingly.
- Start in plenty of time to do all that needs to be done.
- More is not better. Keep it short and simple without big words.
- Use your own voice.
- Make sure your grammar and spelling are correct. A mistake is evidence that you are not truly interested in that college.
- Make it neat and well-organized.
- EDIT! (More than once)
- Write about something you care about.
- Finally, make it your best effort.

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR



days must be taken before May 1.

Students who are admitted through an Early Decision or Early Action program will not be allowed to miss a class for a college visit subsequent to their acceptance unless they receive an invitation to an orientation or open house program for admitted students. In such a situation, you must submit a copy of your invitation or a description of the program to the College Counseling Office and the Dean's Office in order to obtain the necessary permission.

Extensions of the college day for travel are not permitted, so you should plan these days carefully. To facilitate travel, consider taking a college day on a day adjacent to a no-class day or long weekend. The college day is defined as any 24-hour period. Before travel plans are made, students should obtain approval from the Dean's office for a college day.

### **Disciplinary Issues**

Increasingly, colleges are asking students and college counselors about disciplinary infractions of the applicant. In those cases where the question is asked directly of the student and/or the college counselor on the application forms the question needs to be answered truthfully. A student who is placed on disciplinary probation during his/her tenure at the Academy, but before filing of applications, should address the situation within the body of the application. A brief and honest explanation of your past trespasses and a longer description of what you have learned from your experience are both required. If you have questions about reporting such matters to colleges with your initial application, you should seek clarification and guidance from your college counselor.

If you are placed on probation during or shortly after the filing of your application, and the colleges to which you have applied ask a direct question about probation, you should submit a supplemental letter explaining the incident in question to the particular colleges, despite the fact that the actual application may have already been submitted. Colleges have numerous ways of uncovering such information, and a straightforward, honest approach concerning the disciplinary process at the Academy has proven to be the most effective method of dealing with such issues and the college application process. Once again, you should always check with your counselor if there are lingering concerns or questions regarding such a specific situation.

In those cases where the question is asked directly of the student and/or the college counselor on the application forms, the College Counseling Office will forward to the college a brief statement describing the Academy's philosophy about discipline, a brief description of the disciplinary process, and a simple statement of the charge brought against the student. If you are on probation after filing an application, you will be instructed by the College Counseling Office (in writing or through a personal meeting with your college counselor) to notify the college in writing about the disciplinary action. After 10 calendar days, to allow the student to inform the college, the College Counseling Office will send a statement concerning the probation directly to the college.

In situations where a student is required to withdraw from the Academy, the College Counseling Office will notify in writing all the colleges to which the student has

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

applied describing the charge and the change in status within 10 calendar days of the decision. Students are encouraged to contact the colleges involved immediately and discuss the specifics of their situation. If such disciplinary action is taken after the student has been admitted to college, the College Counseling Office is still obligated to notify the colleges to which the student has applied of the change in status, through a written statement describing the charge and the change in status, within 10 calendar days of the decision.

### **Medical and Personal Leaves**

By Academy policy, when a student takes a medical or personal leave from Exeter, the student's transcript reflects the change in status. In most cases, college admission officers will ask questions about such leaves of absence. It is the practice of the College Counseling Office to indicate that the medical or personal leave has occurred, and to encourage the student to discuss the leave and the reasons behind it with each college directly.

In cases where the student has taken a medical leave of absence and has returned to school prior to the filing of his/her application, the fact that the student has successfully continued his/her academic career after the medical leave often reassures college admission offices of the student's readiness to handle the rigors of college life. In cases where the leave is prolonged or occurs close to or after the filing of the college applications, colleges will be more concerned about the leave and its ramifications.

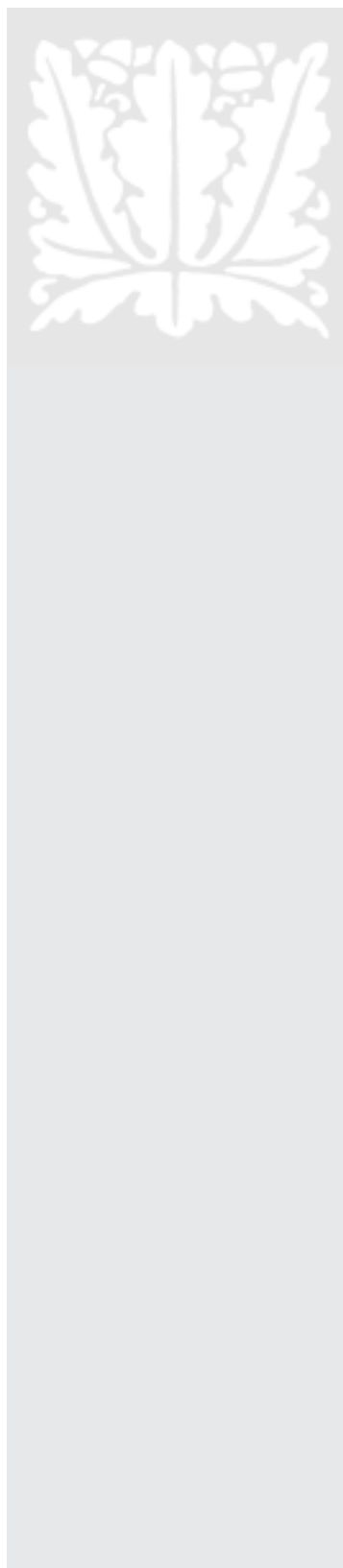
The College Counseling Office encourages

students to be direct and honest with admission officers in these situations so the college representative can make an informed assessment of the effect of the medical condition on the student's ability to perform academically. Medical leaves occurring prior to senior year will be noted on the student's transcript and should be addressed by the student within the body of the application. Check with your counselor for advice on the most effective means to convey this information to colleges.

If medical or personal leave is taken during the senior year, the College Counseling Office is required by the colleges to notify them immediately of the absence, regardless if the leave is granted from the Academy or from an off-campus program. Students should contact the college admissions office immediately and discuss the specifics of the particular situation. After giving the student 10 calendar days to contact the colleges directly about the reasons for the leave, the College Counseling Office will submit to each college in question a written statement indicating the change in status for that student. If a student has already been admitted to a college, the College Counseling Office is still required by the colleges to inform them of a change in status, and a written statement will be submitted to those schools in question.

### **Reporting of Dean's Leaves to Colleges**

In situations where a student is required to take a Dean's Leave from the Academy, the College Counseling Office will forward to all the colleges to which the student has applied a brief statement describing the Dean's Leave. The student will be instruct-



## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR



*A student may accept  
only **one** offer  
of admission  
– double-depositing  
is not allowed.*

ed by the College Counseling Office, in writing or through a personal meeting with his/her counselor, to notify colleges in writing about the Dean's Leave. After 10 calendar days, to allow the student to inform the colleges to which s/he has applied, the College Counseling Office will send a statement concerning the Dean's Leave directly to each college.

### **Leaving Exeter Early**

On rare occasions, a student who has generally exhausted the Academy's curriculum, has demonstrated a significant level of academic achievement, and has a high degree of emotional maturity may consider applying to college in the 11th grade year. Such a process is unusual and should be approached cautiously, after consulting with the student's adviser, college counselor, subject teachers, and academic deans. Students must declare their intention for an early admissions application to the College Counseling Office by November 1 of the 11th grade year. The College Counseling Office will assume that a student who has applied and has been admitted to college in the 11th grade year (prior to receiving an Exeter diploma) will not return to the Academy, nor continue in the college admissions process.

### **Transcripts and Recommendations**

The College Counseling Office will process transcripts and counselor letters of recommendation. The Exeter transcript only reports end-of-term grades. It is the policy of the College Counseling Office NOT to include unofficial midterm grades. The College Counseling Office sends out transcripts on all applicants (including those

admitted under an Early Action or Early Decision plan) to all schools at the end of each term.

We do not act as a clearinghouse for teacher recommendations or your part of the application. **Except in the case of some large state universities which require that all application materials be enclosed in the same mailing, it will be the student's responsibility to make sure that he/she has sent all applications to the colleges before the applicable deadline.**

### **Transcript Requests**

If you are a current Exeter upper or senior or an Academy alumna/us requesting a transcript, all requests must include:

- your full name and any former names;
- your graduation year;
- name and address to where transcript(s) are to be mailed; and
- your daytime phone number.

Seniors can stop by the College Counseling Office and complete a 'pink sheet' request form. Requests from alumni/ae can be made by completing the online transcript request form on the College Counseling section of the Academy's webpage at [www.exeter.edu/about\\_us/7456.aspx](http://www.exeter.edu/about_us/7456.aspx). Please note that the College Counseling Office will only mail 'official' transcripts from our office directly to a third party (such as a college admission office, employers, scholarship organizations, etc.). Since there may be as much as a 10-day processing period, particularly during busy periods when the office is helping current seniors or processing their applications, we encourage you to plan accordingly.

## CHAPTER IV FALL OF SENIOR YEAR

Standardized test scores, such as the SAT, ACT, AP, and TOEFL, do not appear on Exeter transcripts. If you need your previous standardized test scores, you are responsible to contact the College Board and/or the ACT for all testing reports.

### **Access to Student Records**

A student wishing to review his or her Academy records must submit a written request to either the Dean of Students or Director of College Counseling. Parents of students under the age of 18 must sign a request. The Academy will respond within a reasonable amount of time.

Copies of transcripts will be provided to students and families upon request. These transcripts will clearly indicate either unofficial or official status, depending on the nature of the request and the specific situation at hand. All other records contained in a student's permanent file may be reviewed at the Academy in the presence of the Director of College Counseling. The composite report written in the College Counseling Office does not become a part of a student's permanent file until the completion of the college admission process, after graduation. Parents wishing to review the composite report may follow the above procedures after graduation. Once again, the Academy will respond within a reasonable amount of time. Alumni and alumnae may also request to review their records; requests for a copy of a transcript must be made in writing to the College Counseling Office. The process for alumni/ae review of other records is identical to the one outlined above.

### **Depositing**

A student must accept only one offer of admission. In most circumstances, the acceptance of such an offer is indicated by the submission of an enrollment deposit and occurs on or before May 1 of the senior year. Submitting two or more deposits, or double-depositing, is against the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) guidelines and will not be condoned by the College Counseling Office. Students who double-deposit may jeopardize their place in the freshman class at both institutions.

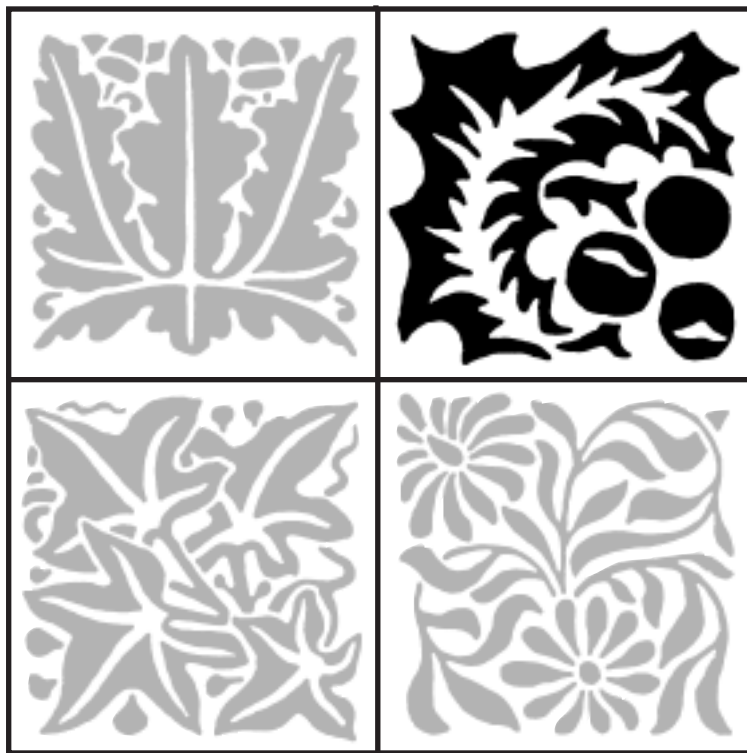
### **Student Rights and Privileges**

The College Counseling Office recognizes and abides by all counseling principles set forth by NACAC. We expect students and parents to abide by these principles, as described through the counseling process, as well. If you have questions about your rights and obligations in the application process, you should immediately seek clarification or explanation from a college counselor.

Students admitted to a college under a binding Early Decision program will be strongly encouraged to abide by their agreement that they, their parents, and their college counselor sign as part of the process. While financial issues sometimes complicate such agreements, students and their families must recognize that Early Decision commitments entail a financial, as well as an admission commitment that may affect their decision to apply under an Early Decision plan.



CHAPTER V WINTER  
OF SENIOR YEAR



# CHAPTER V WINTER OF SENIOR YEAR

By now you have mailed your applications, have requested that test scores be sent to colleges, and are finishing up supplemental application materials that arrived after mailing the initial application. Now, though it may seem like a relatively quiet time in the college process, the college counselors, through telephone calls and campus visits, are making themselves available to admission officers. For this reason, we encourage you to remain in close contact with your college counselor so that the counselor is aware of course grades and winter term activities.

## REPORTING WINTER TERM GRADES

The College Counseling Office sends winter term grades to all colleges to which a senior has applied. Early Decision and Early Action candidates should note that the College Counseling Office sends winter term grades to the school where they have been accepted. While many colleges request midyear grades by February 15, the winter term at Exeter does not end until mid-March. As soon as the term ends, the grades are sent to the schools to which a senior has applied. Though students receive midterm grades, they are unofficial and are not released to admission officers.

## FINANCIAL AID FORMS

Most colleges request that institutional financial aid forms, supporting documentation, and the Profile form be submitted by February 1. While it can be challenging to gather tax information and complete the necessary paperwork by the deadline, it is important that financial aid officers are able to process your financial aid award

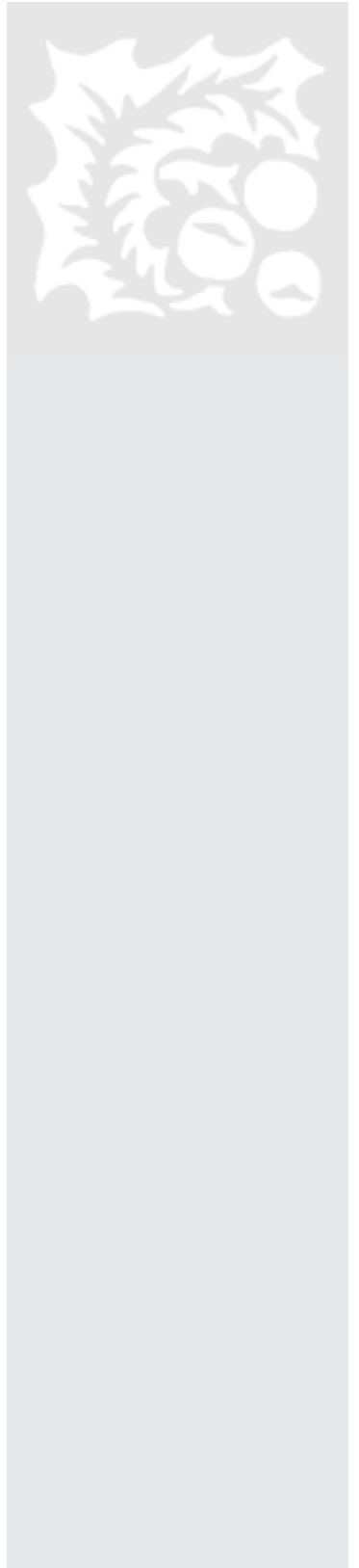
as soon as they know the admission status of your application. If you are having trouble getting your financial aid forms prepared, speak with your college counselor.

## LOOKING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

With most of the application work already done, winter term can be an appropriate time to continue to look for scholarships. Continue your search by visiting two websites devoted to scholarships: [fastweb.com](http://fastweb.com) and [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov). Also, the College Counseling Office posts information about scholarships on Blackboard and the College Counseling Office website and you will receive notification in your mail if you qualify as a National Merit Semifinalist or a Congressional Presidential Scholar.

## MISSING CREDENTIALS

By the beginning of winter term, all transcripts and counselor letters of recommendation have been mailed or sent electronically to your list of colleges. Occasionally, students will receive notification that their application is incomplete because of missing documents or test scores. Don't panic. Admissions officers are processing tens of thousands of pieces of mail with varying degrees of efficiency. Often the "missing credential" letter and the Exeter materials have crossed in the mail or the materials are in the admissions office but have not been processed. If you receive such a notice, bring it to the College Counseling Office and we will promptly follow up with the college to confirm that the information has been received. If, for any reason, the missing document cannot be found, we will fax and/or express mail the missing forms.



# CHAPTER V WINTER OF SENIOR YEAR



## Your “To Do” List

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### SUPPLEMENTAL APPLICATION FORMS

After you have submitted your applications, some colleges may send you a supplemental application form that you need to complete and promptly return. Be sure to take as much care with the supplemental form as you did with the original application. The information requested is very often institution-specific, such as legacy status and visit information. Be sure to answer the questions fully. More

and more schools are keenly interested in gauging a student’s interest in their college, so the answers you provide will help them to determine the level of your interest in their school.

CHAPTER VI SPRING  
OF SENIOR YEAR



## CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR

### DECISIONS, DECISIONS

It's here — that long-anticipated “senior spring.” The many hours you have spent thoughtfully researching your college choices, filling out forms, writing essays, and visiting college campuses have paid off with offers of admission and financial aid packages from several of your colleges. For many of you, the decision will be an easy one, as you have been offered admission to your first-choice college. Other seniors may still be undecided, and may choose to revisit college campuses to narrow their choices, attend open houses or receptions for admitted students, or speak with Exeter alumni/ae who are currently attending colleges under consideration. Use your college counselor as a resource to help you sort through your options, confirm your financial aid award, and make your final decision.

As the College Counseling Office celebrates your admission offers with you, we recognize that many of you will also have received some disappointing news from colleges. A denial letter is never pleasant, even if you were anticipating it. Being denied admission does not mean that you were unqualified or did something “wrong.” With many more highly qualified students applying by record numbers at institutions nationwide, a denial letter simply means that there were other candidates who better met the college's unique needs and criteria. Your college counselors firmly believe that the college didn't turn you down — they turned down your résumé. Use the support resources of your family and friends as you sort through your decisions.

When you make your final decision, remember that **students *must* accept one offer of admission by the official candidate reply date, May 1.** Take this deadline very seriously. Colleges have been known in the recent past to return deposits post-marked after the stated deadline. Do not put yourself in this difficult position. Be sure to graciously decline the admission offers made by other colleges. Remember that accepting two colleges' offers of admission to secure a spot in the freshman class at two different schools — an unethical practice known as “double-depositing” — is prohibited by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), of which Exeter is a charter member.

### SENIORITIS

**You've made it!** The 1st of May has come and gone, you have deposited with your first-choice school and are already beginning to anticipate the start of college. You are now ready to relax, knowing that the pressure of performing academically in order to get into college is off. It is time to take it easy because, after all, grades don't count anymore.

This is false. The college process isn't over until that Sunday in June when the final senior's name is announced at graduation. Until that moment, and even beyond, colleges retain the right to rescind offers of admission for students who have failed to maintain consistent academic performance. Reread your offer of admission. Colleges require students to agree to maintain their academic status



Senioritis (sen'yer-ey-tiz), n.: infectious, yet curable, illness common among high school 12th-graders in late spring prior to graduation; often minor infection which, when left untreated, can cause extensive damage to future college goals, often irreparably. Also known as senior slide or senior slump.

## CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR



*You should only remain  
active on a waiting list  
if you are sincerely  
interested in attending  
that college.*

quo and complete their Exeter career at the same general standard which they had achieved before. Your failure to do so is a breach of your end of the bargain, thus permitting colleges to reconsider their part of the contract — your offer of admission.

Some clever students may attempt to gauge the threshold at which they can lessen their effort without causing their grades to raise any “red flags.” Yet only the college knows its own threshold. Continue to work hard to maintain your present standard of performance.

Colleges have been known to rescind offers of admission. While colleges are not eager to take such a dramatic step, they are willing and able to rescind offers of admission. Remember that you are not a freshman at that college until the first day of class. Any action you take — not only academic inconsistency, but also disciplinary matters both on- and off-campus — can impact your offer of admission. Don't be foolish. Do not do anything that can jeopardize all of your hard work.

### WAITLISTS

Many students incorrectly judge a college's decision on the size or weight of the envelope: a big, fat packet means an offer of admission; a thin envelope signifies the disappointment of being denied admission. Yet colleges mail out more than two types of decision letters. Often, that thin envelope can convey a different type of decision: a waitlist letter.

Most selective colleges and universities use waitlists as an “insurance policy” for meeting their target for their freshman class. College admissions is art, not science.

Sometimes a college's projections for its target may be dead-on ... other times, significantly over or under its goal. At any point just before or after May 1, once the college has recognized that they have not met their target enrollment, admissions offices review their waitlist to select a number of students to round out their class. When waitlist letters are mailed, it is impossible to know which colleges will be able to admit students from their waiting lists or how many students they will admit. The status of the waiting list will become much clearer after May 1 when admissions offices will have a final tally of matriculating students.

No two colleges look at waitlists in the same way. Some schools use it as an effective enrollment tool, others hope never to go to their waitlist. Others inappropriately use the list as a supposedly gentler way of saying “no,” without any intention of ever admitting a student. The number of students taken from a waitlist can be a mere handful or in the hundreds. Sometimes colleges have “special interest” waitlists for athletes or legacy cases; others group everyone together. Some institutions rank waitlists, others do not. Recognize that there are numerous variables to how a college uses a waitlist. Waitlist opportunities can fluctuate from year to year — no two years are exactly alike at a given institution. Carefully review the waitlist letter for clues about past waitlist activity. A telephone call to admission offices can also provide valuable information.

Being placed on a waitlist can be both a blessing and a curse. The good news is that you might have received a simple let-

# CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR

ter of denial. Yet there are downsides. Accepting a place on a waitlist prolongs your admissions process at a time when most of your peers may be wrapping up their own. There is also absolutely no guarantee of any positive outcome to remaining on a waitlist. Despite a college's statement that only a handful of waitlist students may be admitted, many students cling to a false sense of hope, only to be disappointed. Whatever happens, a waitlist can be an emotional roller coaster ride.

There are concrete things you can do if you have been placed on a waitlist:

- If you plan to remain on a college's waitlist you should immediately contact your college counselor and work out a plan. Students who plan to drop their waitlist candidacy should notify both the college and their counselor promptly. Consider your options carefully, and talk with your college counselor and your family about your plans.
- You should only remain active on a waitlist if you are sincerely interested in attending that college. If you have other college choices about which you are excited, then it is not advisable to remain on a list. It may not be wise to remain on a waitlist if your recent grades or other parts of your college candidacy have not shown improvement.
- Many colleges provide information on how often and to what extent the waitlist has been used by their admissions office in the waitlist letter. The letter may also give an indi-

cation of whether the college encourages additional supporting evidence or recommendations. Some schools welcome such "lobbying" from candidates, while others may discourage it.

- Decline offers of admission at colleges you do not plan to attend before May 1. In the spirit of "Non sibi," such action could benefit one of your peers in getting off that school's waitlist and being offered admission to their first-choice school. If you and your friends respond quickly, colleges may turn to their waitlists earlier than mid-May.

While the decision to take a student from the waitlist ultimately rests with the college admissions office, there are some effective actions you can take if you choose to remain on a waitlist:

- Tell your counselor of your plans.
- Accept one college's offer of admission and make a deposit there BEFORE May 1 so that your place in their freshman class is guaranteed. Your deposit will be forfeited if you are accepted off the waitlist at your other choice, but you cannot postpone depositing because you will lose your place at the college which offered you admission. It is an accepted practice to commit to one college while remaining on the waitlist at another. Remember that there is no guarantee that any college will offer admission to any students placed on its waitlist, so it is IMPERATIVE that you accept an



## Your "To Do" List

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## CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR



*Accept one college's  
offer of admission  
and make a deposit there  
BEFORE May 1  
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is guaranteed.*

offer of admission that has been made to you before May 1.

- Keep up your performance in the classroom and remain active in extracurricular activities.
- Discuss with your counselor the efficacy of writing a direct, succinct letter to the appropriate admissions officer at your waitlist school. (The College Counseling Office has his/her name.) Restate your reasons for wanting to attend the college, mention any recent accomplishments or pertinent new information about which the college may not be aware and emphasize that you will attend if offered admission from the waitlist. Show this letter to your college counselor before mailing it.
- Resist the urge to telephone admissions offices to lobby on your own behalf.
- Discuss frankly with the college, your college counselor, and your family the opportunities available for need-based financial aid for waitlisted students. Many colleges completely deplete their institutional resources for grant money on or before May 1. Some schools do not have the resources to offer any aid to waitlist students.

Above all else, try to maintain perspective and a sense of humor. Remember that you probably have wonderful college choices available to you. By concentrating your focus and energy on those and making a deposit before May 1 to one of them, you can assure yourself of a good college option.

The College Counseling Office will stay in contact with the colleges during this time to support your efforts. Remain patient, keep this process in perspective, and continue communicating openly with your family and your college counselor. Use the support network you have to assist you through this challenging time.

### UNDERSTANDING YOUR OFFER OF FINANCIAL AID

For students who have applied for need-based financial aid, most colleges will notify students of their aid package shortly after their offer of admission. If a student has submitted required documents, such as the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and the Profile forms, on time, college financial aid offices are usually able to notify students of their aid award prior to the May 1 deadline for accepting an admission offer.

Upon receipt of their financial aid package, students and families should thoroughly read **all** of the information that has been included in their aid award. Families who have questions about award packages should contact the college's financial aid office **as soon as possible**. Aid officers are available to help families make sense of their packages and financing options. When contacting aid offices, be patient – many other families are also seeking to clarify their packages in the next three weeks, before the May 1 deadline.

Remember that need-based financial aid packages consist of two types of assistance: grant and 'self-help' money. Grants may come from the college or from federal/state governments, and do not require repayment. The most common forms of grants

## CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR

Exonians receive in their financial aid award include SEOG, Pell Grants, and college-sponsored scholarships or grants. Colleges expect students and families to help finance their education through such 'self-help' means as college work-study or student loans. Students are required to pay back 'self-help' money. Exonians may see in their award packages such 'self-help' funding as Perkins Loans, college work-study, Stafford Loans, and privately-sponsored loans, such as PLUS loans.

When reviewing the aid package, students may also consider college-sponsored options, such as payment plans and deferred payment programs, that can help spread out a family's contribution. Some colleges and universities may include their own college-sponsored loans, which are often offered with attractive payment plans and competitively low interest rates. Check with the college aid office to see how to apply for these programs.

On occasion, some colleges' financial aid awards do not fully meet a family's demonstrated financial need, as calculated by the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) from the FAFSA and Profile forms, with sufficient grant dollars, leaving a significant difference between the cost of attendance and the total aid award. This administrative policy is known as 'gapping.' If you have received a 'gapped' aid package, we suggest you speak directly with the respective financial aid office. Some students may choose to borrow funds from an outside source - Tree Loans, CitiAssit loans, or other loans recommended by the New Hampshire Higher Educational Assistance Foundation - to meet the 'gap.' Please rec-

ognize that some of these loans have origination fees, in addition to interest payments and requirements that students begin to repay during their undergraduate years.

If you have any questions about understanding your financial aid award, or need help in determining how to proceed with questions and negotiations with college financial aid officers, please feel free to contact your college counselor.

If you have not heard about your financial aid package by the first week in April, we strongly recommend that you contact the college financial aid office **immediately**, to confirm that your aid application is complete. Frequently, the following missing information can hold up a student's aid package:

- Did you complete your FAFSA/Profile on time? Delays in submitting these forms create delays in receiving financial aid.
- Did you receive your Student Aid Report (SAR)? After submitting your FAFSA, you will either be mailed a paper SAR or you will receive an e-mail that lets you access your electronic SAR. If you did not receive a SAR or need an extra copy, an electronic copy can still be accessed from the FAFSA website with your PIN.
- Has your Student Aid Report (SAR) been selected for verification? On the paper form or the electronic SAR, look for the letters EFC followed by a series of numbers. If there is an asterisk (\*) after your EFC, your FAFSA has been selected for verification. About 30 per-

## CHAPTER VI SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR

cent of FAFSAs are selected for verification. If selected, you will be asked by college financial aid officers to provide more information.

- Have you submitted copies of tax returns and W-2 forms to financial aid offices, or via an electronic delivery provider, such as College Board's IDOC (Institutional Documentation Imaging service)?
- If your parents are divorced or separated, have you submitted documentation verifying their marital status? Financial aid offices may seek additional information about a student's non-custodial parent.
- Does your family own a business or are they self-employed? Usually, college financial aid offices require additional documentation (such as specific tax return schedules) for small-businessmen.
- Do you have any siblings or parents who are enrolled as undergraduate college students? Financial aid offices may require verification of full-time enrollment.

Because every family's financial circumstances are unique, each financial aid case will be different. Do not hesitate to speak directly with a college's financial aid office, should any of these specific areas of concern pertain directly to you.

CHAPTER VII ADMISSIONS  
DECISIONS



# CHAPTER VII ADMISSIONS DECISIONS

## ADMISSIONS DECISIONS: HOW THEY ARE MADE

There are many factors that influence an admissions decision. The type of institution (public vs. private), the size (large, medium or small), the level of selectivity, the philosophy of the institution and the “context of the applicant pool” in any given year will influence how an admissions officer will read and rate an application, present an application to a committee, and make a final decision on an application.

Most often at public institutions, objective data (rank, GPA, SAT I, SAT II Subject tests, ACT) will direct a decision. However, this is not true for every public institution — you must ask each institution how it evaluates in-state and out-of-state applicants. At the most selective private institutions, a student’s academic and personal profile as well as the secondary school context (the number of applicants from Exeter in any given year, the strength of their as well as our applicant pool, the history of admissions decisions, matriculation rates and present performance of Exeter students) are taken into consideration. If you have attended more than one secondary school, each educational experience will be evaluated.

An admissions officer reviews two main ingredients of a student’s application — the student’s academic and personal profiles. The outline below will offer some insight into the many facets of each profile.

### ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS INCLUDE A REVIEW OF:

- The transcript. Balance and rigor of courses (Intensive/Honors/400+/AP-level), as well as grades.

- School profile: context of learning environment, number of 400+/AP-level courses offered, faculty/student ratio, percent of graduates attending four-year colleges, unusual programs, history of school with college/university, grade distribution.
- Grade distribution vs. class rank vs. grade-point average.
- Standardized Test Scores (SAT I, SAT II, ACT, TOEFL).
- Teacher and counselor recommendations. Both should provide specific information about strengths, accomplishments, areas of improvement and aberrant performance.
- Achievements/Awards/Scholarships.
- Academic programs beyond the traditional, including study abroad programs and summer study.
- Academic interest (major).

### PERSONAL PROFILE

- Extracurricular activities including time commitment and roles within activities, both in and outside of school. (Colleges are not necessarily looking for the “well-rounded student,” they are looking for a well-rounded freshman class.)
- Character traits (leadership, fellowship, inspiration, discipline, determination.) What traits do you possess?
- Interviews can give life to your application, or clarify a special talent or lapse in your record.
- Recommendations (counselor, teacher, employer, volunteer supervisor, etc.).

*An admissions officer  
reviews two main  
ingredients  
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## CHAPTER VII ADMISSIONS DECISIONS

- Summer experiences. How have they influenced your life/perspective?
- Cultural experiences (travel, living abroad, etc.).

### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The list below may be factored into the admission equation.

- Gender.
- Family background, race or ethnicity.
- Permanent residence (geographical diversity).
- Recommendations (peer, political figures, etc.).
- Special talents (art, music, writing, athletics, etc.).
- Language ability.
- Area of interest.
- Legacy status, or whether a child of a faculty or staff member.
- Other supplementary material (e.g. term paper, portfolio, etc. Ask the institution if they will review it.).
- Philanthropic interest.
- Financial need.
- Unusual circumstances.
- Disciplinary issues such as probation.
- Separation from school, such as medical leaves.

CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC  
APPLICANTS



## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

### STUDENT ATHLETES

If you presently compete in varsity athletics, and/or with a competitive club, AAU team, Junior National and/or Junior Olympic team, you may want to consider the possibility of playing at the college or university level. Athletics can enrich your undergraduate experience and may assist you in the college admissions process.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) oversees athletics at many colleges and universities, and its membership is divided into three Divisions. There are over 340 Division I schools, over 290 Division II schools, and over 450 Division III schools. One of the major distinctions among the divisions is that Division I and Division II universities and colleges may offer athletic scholarships; Division III schools do not. For more information about the NCAA's Divisions, review the "Athletics" section in Chapter II of this guidebook.

Before you contact college coaches, take time to discuss your interests and abilities with your present coach. Ask your coach for a candid evaluation of your ability (i.e. can you play at the Division I, II, or III level, or are you a recreational student-athlete?). If your present coach is unable to assess what division you can compete at on the college level, you may want to attend a summer camp in order to access the expertise of college coaches, most of whom can evaluate your skill level. Once your skill level is determined, discuss with your coach and college counselor those colleges that meet both your academic and athletic needs.

As in the overall college admissions process, it is important to create criteria for selecting athletic programs. What are you looking for in your college athletic team? Do you want to be part of an already winning program or do you want to be a star in a building program? Is your talent or position needed in the college's upcoming class or in two years? How many seniors graduate from the team? As you match your talent with the "right" program, your coach and college counselor can give you additional questions to ask to be an informed consumer.

### RECRUITMENT

The NCAA oversees the recruiting policies and practices for each sport. These guidelines are updated annually and are available at [www.ncaastudent.org](http://www.ncaastudent.org), by downloading the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete." It is important for prospective student-athletes to become familiar with recruiting terms and the recruiting calendar for his/her sport. Prospective athletes are strongly advised to read the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete" before starting the recruitment process.

Students should be familiar with several common recruitment terms. According to the NCAA, you become a "prospective student-athlete" when you start ninth-grade classes. You become a "recruited prospective student-athlete" at a particular college if any coach or representative of the college's athletic interests (booster or representative) approaches you (or any member of your family) about enrolling and participating in athletics at that college. Any time

*If you are a recruited student-athlete, no matter what the division level, read the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete" to be clear on recruiting rules and violations.*

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

*Most of the Academy's  
"recruited prospective  
student-athletes"  
are contacted  
in the summer  
prior to their senior year  
or during the fall  
of their senior year.*

a college coach has face-to-face contact with you or your parents away from the college's campus that is more than a simple greeting is known as "contact." A contact also occurs if a coach meets with you at your high school or at any location where you are competing or practicing. During the "evaluation period" time, a college coach may watch you play but cannot have any in-person conversations with you or your parents off the college's campus; a coach may write and telephone you. As a prospective student-athlete, you can contact coaches at any time; college coaches, however, have restrictions on when they can contact you, particularly prior to your lower year. For detailed information about recruiting and contact rules for each sport, refer to the "NCAA Guide for College-Bound Student-Athletes."

Most of the Academy's "recruited prospective student-athletes" are contacted in the summer prior to their senior year or during the fall of their senior year. Many students will visit college campuses during this time. For both Division I and Division II, you can have one expense-paid "official visit" to a particular campus. An official visit may not exceed 48 hours and has a limit on dollars spent on the recruited student-athlete as well as dollars spent by the host. Before a college may invite you on an official visit, you will have to provide the college with a copy of your high school transcript and, if applicable, your standardized test scores; you will also need to have registered with the NCAA Eligibility Center. Division III student-athletes can have one expense-paid (official) visit to a particular campus; however, there is no

limit on the number of campuses that you may visit if you initially enroll in a Division III college. Any visit by you or your parents to a college that is paid for by you or your parents is an "unofficial visit."

### YOUR RECRUITMENT CALENDAR

In addition to reviewing the schedule below, prospective Division I and Division II athletes should review the recruiting calendars noted by sport found in the "NCAA Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete."

#### Winter of Upper Year

It is your responsibility to review your past, current, and future academic courses with your academic advisor. Are they certified by the NCAA and do you project meeting the NCAA's core requirements? You can check by going to the following NCAA website: <https://web1.ncaa.org/eligibilitycenter/common/index.html>. For more information please read the section below on "NCAA Eligibility."

#### Spring of Upper Year

Speak to your respective Academy/club/AAU coaches for their assessment of your level of skill and potential as a recruited student-athlete. Ask them for their recommendations of potential college programs that would best match your athletic talent. Share this information with your college counselor. Ask your coaches if s/he will be willing to complete college sport questionnaires on your behalf and/or write letter of recommendations with follow-up phone calls to the college coaches.

Student-athletes should complete athletic recruiting questionnaires at all of their

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

prospective colleges.

### **Summer Between Upper Year and Senior Year**

In addition to recruiting questionnaires, you should consider writing to every coach of the respective college programs to which you are interested in applying. Include in your letter or e-mail the following information:

- Your interest in the college and athletic program.
- A profile of both your athletic and academic performance(s) over the past three years.
- Summer camps and competitions outside of your Exeter experience, names of coaches, and any statistics clarifying your talent.

### **Fall of Senior Year**

By September you have contacted your coaches for an assessment of skill. Remain in contact with them regarding the completion of college sport questionnaires and telephone contact with college coaches.

Continue follow-up telephone calls and/or e-mail contact with coaches. Continue to express interest in their program by inquiring about specific aspects of their program:

- What is their record over the last two years?
- How many athletes will graduate in the coming year - what positions? what events?

Keep track of each college coach contact (i.e. name of coach, Head vs. Assistant, etc., date and substance of contact). Consider keeping a journal noting the frequency of

contacts and distinguishing between hand-written and computer-generated, generic form letters.

Complete an NCAA eligibility form (review the following section on NCAA for more details).

Be aware that some coaches may encourage you to apply Early Decision/Action as a tool in their recruitment process. Talk to your college counselor about such a decision.

If you and a coach are having serious conversations about your prospective contributions to his or her athletic program, you should speak to your college counselor about asking the coach for a “preliminary review” of your academic credentials by his or her athletic liaison in the college’s admission office. A preliminary review is not a guarantee of admission; rather, it is an opportunity for both you and the coach to gain feedback on whether or not you are a viable admissions candidate as a prospective student-athlete. For Division I universities that compete in the Ivy League Athletic Conference, a preliminary review can help a coach determine your “Athletic Index,” or “AI”; at Division III colleges, especially those that compete in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), a preliminary review can help a coach identify your recruitment “band.” For a preliminary review, some colleges simply require an unofficial Exeter transcript and, if applicable, standardized test scores; others require a completed application, supplemental essays, and all letters of recommendation.

If you would like to have an unofficial transcript and, if applicable, standardized test scores faxed to a college coach, seniors who

*Register with the National College Athletic Association Clearinghouse before you graduate from the Academy if you plan to participate in Division I or Division II athletic programs.*



## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

records of all Division I and Division II student-athletes through the NCAA Eligibility Center. You must register with the NCAA Eligibility Center by the time you graduate from the Academy if you plan to participate in Division I or II athletic programs, whether as a recruited player or as a “walk on” who tries out for the team after enrolling in college. All Division I and Division II intercollegiate athletes – even “walk ons” – must be cleared by the NCAA Eligibility Center before they can practice or play with the intercollegiate team. You can obtain an NCAA Eligibility Center form on the Internet at [www.eligibilitycenter.org](http://www.eligibilitycenter.org), or write to:

**NCAA Eligibility Center**  
**P.O. Box 7136**  
**Indianapolis, IN 46207**  
**(877) 262-1492**

Athletic recruits who plan to participate in an “Official Paid Recruiting Visit” at a Division I or Division II school should register for the NCAA Eligibility Center as soon as possible. **In addition to completing the NCAA Eligibility Center form, you must contact the College Board to send official SAT I scores to the NCAA Eligibility Center. Please note the NCAA CEEB code is: 9999.**

### Eligibility Requirements

In order to compete in Division I or Division II athletics as a freshman, you must meet the NCAA’s eligibility requirements. They are:

1. Graduate from high school.
2. Have a core-course grade-point average (based on maximum of 4.000) and combined score on the

SAT Reading and Math sections or a sum score on the ACT based on the qualifier index scale in the NCAA “Guide for the College-Bound Student Athlete.”

3. Successfully complete a core curriculum of at least 16 academic requirements. These requirements include:

#### ENGLISH:

4 full years for Division I; 3 years for Division II

#### MATHEMATICS:

3 years for Division I;  
2 years for Division II

*(Division I — one year of algebra plus one year of geometry or a year of higher-level math for which geometry is prerequisite.)*

#### SCIENCE:

2 years for Division I or II  
*(1 year of lab science for both)*

ADDITIONAL MATH, SCIENCE,  
or ENGLISH:

1 year for Division I;  
3 years for Division II

#### SOCIAL SCIENCE:

2 years for Division I or II  
*(history, economics, geography, psychology, sociology, government, political science, anthropology)*

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

### ADDITIONAL WORK:

4 years for both Division I and Division II (*English, math, science, foreign language, computer science, philosophy, “non-doctrinal” religion— see your college counselor for the list of non-core courses that do not meet eligibility according to the NCAA, or check for Phillips Exeter’s “List of Approved Core Courses (Form 48H)” on the NCAA website. The list of NCAA-approved core courses is maintained and updated annually by the Director of Studies in the Dean of Faculty’s office.*)

### Special Considerations for Eligibility

- Repeated courses are ONLY counted ONCE. This includes classes taken at different high schools that have similar titles.
  - Changing schools can sometimes make the certification process more confusing.
  - Students who have repeated a grade during their high school experience should speak directly with their college counselor about NCAA eligibility issues. The NCAA requires that students “must complete the 16 core-course requirement in eight semesters, which begin when you initially started high school with your ninth grade class.”
  - Post-Graduates (PG’s) should have received certification before coming to Phillips Exeter.
  - For Canadian citizens who have graduated from a Canadian high school prior to attending Exeter, the certification process is different than domestic students; speak with your counselor and the NCAA directly.
- Field Courses do NOT fulfill NCAA requirements.
  - Potential Division I or II student-athletes who participate in fall term abroad (Stratford, Grenoble, Russia, Beijing) or winter term abroad (Cuernavaca, Germany) MUST enroll in two English electives during senior spring.
  - The Washington Intern Program does NOT provide an NCAA-recognized English credit. Students who participate in the Washington Intern Program may find that they will be ineligible to compete in Division I or II athletics.
  - After graduation, students will have to receive a final certification from the NCAA Eligibility Center before they will be allowed to compete for their college or university. Division III athletes and students interested in club or recreational sports at the Division I level do not have to register with the NCAA Eligibility Center.
  - **Division III programs are NOT affected by any of this!**

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

### Meeting NCAA Eligibility With A Learning Disability

If you have a documented learning disability, discuss with your college counselor how to meet NCAA eligibility. There is a four-step process that includes:

1. Documenting your disability.
2. Registering with the NCAA Eligibility Center as a student with a disability with the intention to potentially request a waiver of certain requirement standards.
3. Register and complete non-standardized SAT I testing.
4. Meet the acceptable NCAA core courses for students with disabilities, obtained from your college counselor. Also, review the section on “Learning Disabilities” in this guidebook.

### PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

If you are a student with talent in the visual arts, music, dance or theater, you may want to submit a sample of your ability to the various colleges to which you are applying. Consider the following in determining what you send:

- Does your Academy or private instructor believe your talent will win a favorable review from a particular college? Which pieces should be used to demonstrate your talent?
- Do you have the time and resources to present your talent in a format that is acceptable to the college (e.g. art in the form of slides not original canvas)?

- Contact each of your respective colleges to learn what supplemental materials they will accept and where to send them (i.e. the admissions office or the music department and/or both).

If you are planning to apply to a conservatory, art institute, or school devoted to the arts (e.g. Julliard or Museum of Fine Arts) or a school for the arts within a larger university (e.g. The Tisch School at NYU or Cornell’s College of Architecture, Art and Planning), you should understand how your application will be evaluated. Ask each college:

- How much is your talent used in the decision-making process?
- How do they evaluate your talent (portfolio, audition, and tape)?
- Does each institution look for specific ingredients in talent? What does each college want to see in your portfolio or audition?
- For this year’s applicant pool, is the college looking for one type of instrument more than another (e.g. harp players over violinists, or oil painters over graphic designers)?
- How do you make an audition appointment? Who does the actual evaluation? Are there regional auditions available? Can you send a tape?

After learning more about the evaluation process at each college, have a conversation with your college counselor, adviser, and Exeter teacher to determine which schools are a better match for you.

*If you are a student with talent in the arts you may want to submit a sample of your ability to the colleges to which you are applying.*



## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

### LEARNING DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a documented learning disability (i.e. a professional has evaluated your learning style with diagnostic tools and has written a report indicating a learning style difference), you have the right by law not to share this information with colleges. However, most Academy students with learning disabilities have developed various strategies to help them with their academics and share with colleges their learning difference and coping strategies.

Colleges must accommodate students with documented learning or physical disabilities by law. However, it is helpful to inquire what the individual college offers in terms of support for students with learning disabilities. Do they presently have the services you need?

### REPORTING YOUR DISABILITY

If you choose to disclose your learning disability, enclose a copy of the diagnostic evaluation with your application. If your evaluation was done as a young child, it is helpful for the college to know how you manage your learning difference (i.e. do you need extra time on papers and tests, or do your present strategies allow you to handle your workload without any intervention?).

### TESTING

The College Board and Phillips Exeter Academy facilitate special testing arrangements for students with a documented disability. To become eligible for such services, the College Board's SSD Student Eligibility Form must be submitted for each student requesting accommodations. The American College Testing (ACT) has a similar quali-

fication process. To be eligible for any special accommodations for any test, the student must have documentation on file in the Dean's Office that supports the need for requested accommodations and meets the guidelines for such documentation. Students must also receive and utilize the requested accommodations, due to the disability, for school-based tests as well.

The submitted documentation that supports the need for testing accommodations must state the specific disability, be completed within three years of the request for accommodations, provide relevant educational, developmental, and medical history, describe the comprehensive testing used to arrive at the diagnosis, describe the functional limitations supported by the test results, describe the specific accommodations requested, and establish the professional credentials of the evaluator. Qualified students wishing to use these services must contact the Dean of Academic Affairs and the College Counseling Office (CCO) at least nine weeks in advance (two weeks for the Dean's Office to process all relevant materials and then seven weeks for the testing agency to render a decision).

### SERVICE ACADEMIES

If you are considering one of the service academies among your college choices, the College Counseling Office recommends you think carefully about the education and experience found at a service academy. First and foremost, you must know yourself well enough to understand whether this is an appropriate match for you personally, academically, physically, and vocationally. The exten-

# CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

sive steps necessary to complete the application include nomination by a senator or congressperson, as well as evaluation of your academic credentials, personal integrity, and physical fitness.

## POINTS TO CONSIDER

### **Application Process**

As mentioned above, you must receive a nomination from your senator or congressperson. Also, an evaluation of academic credentials, personal character and physical examination are considered in the application review.

### **Academic Programs**

Math, engineering, and the physical sciences continue to be strong at the service academies. Are you interested in one of these academic areas?

### **Lifestyle Change**

The service academy requires a change in lifestyle. It is very different from the traditional undergraduate experience. Investigate and comprehend the magnitude of the change and whether you are ready to fully embrace it on a daily basis.

### **Postgraduate Obligations**

As a service academy graduate, you are obligated to give at least six years of military service in return for your free education. Determine whether this obligation is reasonable to you.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### **Starting the Application Process**

Request and submit a pre-candidate questionnaire at the end of your upper or beginning of senior year. You may obtain a questionnaire from one of the service academies or a senator or congressperson.

Listed below are the addresses for the Service Academies:

Candidate Guidance Office  
United States Naval Academy  
117 Decatur Road  
Annapolis, MD 21402-5018  
(410) 293-4361  
[www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

U.S. Military Academy  
Director of Admissions  
West Point, NY 10996  
(845) 938-4041  
[www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)

U.S. Air Force Academy  
Director of Admissions  
USAFA/RRS  
USAF Academy, CO 80840  
(800) 443-9266  
[www.usafa.edu](http://www.usafa.edu)

### **Nomination Process**

You must be nominated in order to apply to a service academy. Write to each of your senators and your congressperson to ask if they would consider you as one of their nominees. The letter must include the following information: your name, address, phone number, date of birth, Social Security number, secondary school, year of graduation, name of your parents, and your first, second, third and fourth choices for academies. In turn, the senator or congressperson will contact you by letter with instructions on what to do next.

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

The U.S. Coast Guard **does not** require a nomination by a senator or congressperson, although the evaluation process does use the same selection criteria as the other military academies.

### **U.S. Coast Guard Academy**

Director of Admissions  
15 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320  
(800) 883-8724  
www.uscga.edu

### **Complete Service Academy Application**

Write to the individual service academy for an application.

### **Complete Fitness Exam**

You will be sent information about how to complete your physical examination upon initial inquiry.

### **ROTC SCHOLARSHIPS**

If you are interested in a ROTC scholarship, contact the Navy ROTC, Army ROTC, and/or Air Force ROTC at the following telephone numbers for more information:

#### **Navy ROTC**

(800) USA-NAVY

#### **Army ROTC**

(800) USA-ROTC

#### **Air Force ROTC**

(866) 423-7682

#### **Marine ROTC**

(800) MARINES

ROTC will provide a booklet that indicates what majors at particular colleges/universities they will sponsor. Upon graduation from college with a ROTC scholarship, you will be responsible to serve in the military for eight years (active duty and/or Reserves).

### **THE COLLEGE TRANSFER APPLICANT**

The College Counseling Office recommends each student carefully consider the resources at their present college before pursuing a transfer admissions process. Often, your present institution will allow you to achieve your academic goals through independent study or access to graduate courses in order to accommodate your needs. However, if you are truly unhappy, here are some guidelines to consider when transferring.

If you are a senior dissatisfied with your college choices in spring of your senior year, the College Counseling Office suggests preparing now to enhance your transfer candidacy later. The same process for first-year students applies to transferring, with some slight modifications. Begin the transfer process by thinking about a range of schools (i.e., Category I, II, III, IV, and V). Review your original criteria for colleges and call each of the colleges that you believe meet your criteria. Ask if you can speak to someone who evaluates transfer applications. Write down this person's name as your contact source and call him/her for all future inquiries. It is important to ask the following questions and review the answers to determine how to proceed in your college course work in order to enhance your transfer application.

- What is the percentage of transfer students accepted as sophomores for the last two years? Percentage projection for the year you plan to apply?
- What is the percentage of transfer students accepted as juniors? Percentage

*The same process  
for first-year students  
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## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

projection for the year you plan to apply?

- What was the average college GPA and SAT I score accepted in the last two years?
- How much weight is given to the high school record in the evaluation? It is usually less if you are applying for junior status.
- How much weight is given to SAT scores in the evaluation process? (Again, it is usually less if you are applying for junior status.)
- What are the required courses the admissions office is looking for transfer applicants to have completed by the close of their first year? Usually, colleges will evaluate transfers more favorably if they have taken some of the basic requirement courses towards their major. This may not hold true for students attending a focused program (e.g. conservatory); they may be evaluated differently due to the courses and opportunities available.
- Does financial aid play a role in the transfer admissions decision?
- What was the percentage of aid given to accepted transfer students last year? What was the average grant for transfer students?
- Does the college have a separate financial aid budget for transfer students? Does this budget fluctuate each year? How much?

### ASSISTING FORMER STUDENTS

While Exeter's College Counseling Office will provide occasional support to gap year and transfer applicants, it is our expectation that you have acquired the skills necessary to complete the college admission process. Our primary responsibility is to the current student body; we know Exonians are characterized by their ability to think independently, to evaluate information critically, and to utilize appropriate research tools—all of which are necessary to ensure a successful college match.

If you are a recent Exeter alumna/us who is planning on filing a new college application, either as a transfer applicant or as a first-year student after having completed a gap year, please follow the instructions under "Transcripts and Recommendations" in the "College Office Policies" section of this guidebook to request a transcript. Remember that the College Counseling Office requires 10 working days to complete your request.

If you are pursuing a gap year, please let your former college counselor know how you have spent your interim year and if you are currently deferred from any other university. If a gap year student has deferred admission at a university, the College Counseling Office requires a copy of the deferral letter, before we can release transcripts to additional colleges. If you are transferring, it is very helpful to our counseling of other students to know why alumni/ae are considering transferring from their current college. To that end, we would appreciate your response to our year-end "Transfer and Gap Year Application Results" questionnaire

## CHAPTER VIII SPECIFIC APPLICANTS

when it is emailed to you in June. Your feedback is extraordinarily helpful and greatly appreciated.

The Academy follows the Principles of Good Practice set by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC). The College Counseling Office expects that alumni/ae will self-report their records honestly and fully. Alumni/ae should also know that some colleges and universities ask the Academy about discipline issues as part of the application. Phillips Exeter's policy is to report on discipline whenever a college asks the question on any application. This policy continues after initial applications are filed and after graduation if an alumna/us initiates a transfer or gap year application.

Former Exonians who did not receive a diploma from the Academy for any reason, including a Requirement to Withdraw, do not request transcripts from the College Counseling Office. Instead, former students should contact the Dean of Students Office for official Academy transcripts.

APPENDIX  
GLOSSARY OF TERMS



## APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Academic Discipline:** A college departmental or subject area, such as English literature, history, or business.

**Academic Year:** The period in which school is in session—typically September through May.

**Accelerated Programs:** Exceptionally-selective admission programs which offer graduate school admission, generally for medical school, to freshman applicants. Program length can vary from seven to eight years, often including summer coursework.

**Accrual Date:** The date on which interest charges on an educational loan begin to accrue.

**Adjusted Available Income:** The remaining income after taxes and a basic living allowance have been subtracted in Federal Methodology (q.v.).

**Advanced Placement (AP) Exams:** Tests sponsored by the College Board for students who have taken advanced, college-level courses here at the Academy. Some colleges may allow students to receive college credit for high scores on these exams; still others will place students out of introductory-level courses into higher levels.

**American College Test (ACT):** College admissions examination administered by the American College Testing Program, measuring through multiple-choice questions four areas of academic knowledge: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. While widely accepted throughout the United States, this exam is used more commonly by Midwestern and Western colleges and universities for admission testing.

**Assets:** Cash in checking and savings accounts, trusts, stocks, bonds, other securities, real estate, income-producing property and business equipment and inventory which is all considered in determining the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) (q.v.).

**Asset Protection Allowance:** The portion of parents' assets that is not included in the calculation of the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) (q.v.), as calculated by Federal Methodology (q.v.).

**Bachelor of Arts (B.A. or A.B.):** Traditional degree awarded by a liberal arts college or university following successful completion of a course of study. These degrees may be granted in any number of fields in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, or fine/performing arts. Some colleges award an A.B., which is simply the Latin abbreviation (Arts Baccalarius) for a Bachelor of Arts degree.

**Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.):** Degree offered by undergraduate business and management programs, which are accredited by such national agencies as the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business, by meeting a required set of certification and course requirements. Accredited business programs can differ significantly from B.A. (q.v.) liberal arts degrees.

**Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.):** Degree offered by fine arts, design, theater, dance, and other visual and performing arts programs. Admission to B.F.A. programs can be based to a large extent upon artistic talent, determined through an audition or portfolio review, and to a lesser extent upon standardized testing and academic performance in traditional curricula.

**Bachelor of Science (B.S.):** Degree usually awarded for successful completion of requirements in the natural and physical sciences, or for more professionally oriented programs, such as education, engineering, or business. Note that many colleges award B.A.s (q.v.) for similar degrees. Some universities may offer both degrees in a particular academic discipline; generally the B.S. degree may require additional work in the major for graduation.

**Budget:** The estimated cost of attendance for a student at an institution which typically includes tuition, fees, books, supplies, room, board, personal expenses, and transportation.

**Category I:** Selective colleges and universities on an Exonian's college list, to which s/he has the greatest chance of gaining admission; generally colleges with a higher percentage of applicants offered admission.

**Category II:** Selective colleges and universities on an Exonian's college list, to which s/he has roughly 50/50 odds of gaining admission; frequently subjective factors, such as the college's own institutional needs and a student's demonstration of interest, can play a large role in the application review for Category II schools.

**Category III:** Highly selective colleges and universities on an Exonian's college list, to which s/he has a moderate chance of gaining admission.

**Category IV:** Among the most-selective colleges and universities on an Exonian's college list, to which s/he has a small chance of gaining admission; generally colleges with the lowest percentage of applicants offered admission.

**Category V:** Any college or university with a single-digit national admission rate; the most selective colleges to which an Exonian has the smallest chance for admission.

**Collateral:** Property used to secure a loan which can be seized if the borrower defaults on the loan.

**College Board:** For-profit organization which sponsors such educational testing as the SAT I, SAT II, AP, and CLEP exams and such financial aid forms as the Profile form. The informal name of the College Entrance Examination Board [CEEB] (q.v.).

# APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**College Days:** Academy policy currently allows for a student to use two days during the senior year to visit colleges, known as college days. In addition to the standard out-of-town procedure, students must procure from their college counselor a permission slip to request a college day from the Dean of Student's office. Visits must take place prior to May 1.

**College Entrance Examination Board (CEEB):** Another name for the College Board (q.v.). In filling out applications and other college forms, students are frequently asked for their high school's CEEB number; the Academy's CEEB number is 300185.

**College Level Examination Program (CLEP):** Exam offered by the College Board testing knowledge in a subject area without regard to how a student gained that knowledge. Unlike AP exams, these tests do not require that a student complete high school coursework to take the exam. Some colleges award college credit for high CLEP results; others will waive certain general curriculum requirements.

**College Scholarship Service (CSS):** Branch of College Board (q.v.) which administers the Profile (q.v.) form and other financial aid services.

**College Work-Study Program (CWSP):** A federally-sponsored program which allows students to pay for part of their educational expenses through part-time work on campus. A portion of the work-study salary comes from the college employer; most is through federal subsidies. Only students with demonstrated financial need are eligible for work-study jobs.

**Cooperative Education (Co-op):** College-sponsored programs designed to help undergraduates meet college expenses and gain work experience, alternating periods of study with periods of work in a field related to a student's academic or professional interests. Traditionally, but not

exclusively, used by students in such pre-professional programs as engineering, computer science, and business.

**Core Curriculum:** Required college courses necessary for graduation, consisting of a comprehensive selection from such fields as the humanities, social sciences, natural and physical sciences, quantitative fields, and requiring English and foreign language proficiency. Core curriculums can range from a handful of courses to well over half the required courses necessary for graduation.

**Cosigner:** Individual who assumes responsibility for a loan if the borrower fails to repay.

**Credit Hour:** Measure of degree of difficulty of courses, frequently proportionate to the number of hours of weekly classroom instruction. For example, a four-credit hour course will generally require more work and be more demanding than a three-hour course. Most colleges require students to meet a certain threshold of credit hours in order to graduate.

**Custodial Parent:** In cases where a student's parents are divorced or separated, the custodial parent is the parent with whom the student lived the most during the past 12 months.

**Default:** Failure to repay or otherwise meet the terms and conditions of a loan. Penalties include a damaged credit rating, withholding of tax refunds, and loss of future aid eligibility.

**Demonstrated Financial Need:** Amount, as determined through Federal, private and/or institutional financial aid forms, which is the difference between the total cost of attendance and the estimated family contribution (q.v.).

**Demonstration of Interest:** An internal measure by selective colleges and universities that may be sensitive to their freshman yield (q.v.) of an applicant's level of interest in their institution. Such factors considered can include on-campus visits,

interviews with an alumnus/a or admissions officer; meetings with an admissions officer off-campus, or the level to which a student engages with the college's application and essay.

**Dependency:** A student's dependency status determines the degree to which the student has access to parental financial resources.

**Differential Packaging:** Administrative policy where colleges use enhanced financial aid offers to entice academically-stronger or under-represented students to matriculate (q.v.). While meeting demonstrated financial need (q.v.), differential packages may consist of a larger percentage of grant money vs. student loans than what most students would receive.

**Disbursement:** The process by which financial aid funds are made directly to students for use in meeting educational expenses.

**Discipline:** See "Academic Discipline."

**Division:** Academic unit of a college or university; can also be a school ("School of Business") or college ("College of Arts & Sciences") within a university.

**Double Deposit:** Accepting two colleges' offers of admission by submitting a binding deposit to secure a spot in the freshman class at both. This practice is prohibited by the regulations of the National Association for College Admissions Counseling (NACAC), and is vehemently discouraged by the College Counseling Office.

**Early Action:** The non-binding admission process used by a handful of colleges whereby a student applies to his first choice college in late fall and is notified of his admission decision in mid-December, yet does not need to respond to the institution until the May 1 common notification deadline (q.v.). While Early Action colleges do not require a student to withdraw other applications, the College Counseling Office takes the approach

## APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

that, if a student has been admitted to an Early Action school with a single-digit admit rate, she/he will withdraw all other applications, since the student has been admitted to his/her first-choice school.

**Early Admission:** An admission process whereby a student who has completed 11th grade applies for college admission, thus skipping their 12th grade year. Occasionally, though infrequently, used synonymously for Early Action (q.v.).

**Early Decision:** The binding admission process whereby a student applies to his first choice school in late fall, and is notified of their decision in mid-December. If offered admission under Early Decision, the student must withdraw any other applications from other colleges.

**Early Evaluation:** A non-binding admission process where a student is tentatively notified of their admission decision in January or February, receives their official offer in late March, yet does not need to respond to the college until May 1. While the Early Evaluation college does not need to be a student's first-choice school, most applicants use the program for their first or near first-choice college.

**Educational Testing Service (ETS):** Branch of the College Board (q.v.) which administers the SAT I and SAT II (q.q.v.) examinations, and processes requests for scores to be reported to colleges.

**Eligibility Center:** Division of the National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA] (q.v.) which certifies that all Division I and Division II athletes have taken 16 "core" high school courses, meeting a minimum level of achievement in academic and testing performance. Prospective athletes must register and be cleared by the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to their participation in college sports. Most Academy students initiate the NCAA Eligibility Center process during the fall of their senior year.

**Enrollment Status:** For financial aid pur-

poses, the amount of time a student is enrolled in courses per semester—"full-time" for a full course load generally consisting of four or more classes and "part-time" for less than that amount.

**Expected Family Contribution (EFC):** The amount of money determined through needs analysis, (q.v.) from Federal and institutional financial aid forms, that a family can afford to spend for college.

**Extracurriculars:** Activities in which students participate outside of the classroom, such as athletics, student organizations and clubs, volunteer work and community service, music lessons or groups, or part-time jobs.

**Federal Methodology (FM):** The method created by the U.S. Government and calculated from the information supplied by the FAFSA (q.v.) used to determine a student's expected family contribution (q.v.).

**Federal Processor:** The organization that processes the information submitted on the FAFSA (q.v.) and uses it to compute eligibility for federal student aid.

**4-1-4 Plan:** An academic calendar usually including a fall term with four courses, a shortened winter term with one course, and a spring term with four courses.

**Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA):** The Federally-sponsored financial aid form required by all U.S. colleges and universities to apply for Federal loans and grants, used to determine a student's financial need based upon Federal Methodology (q.v.).

**Gapping:** Administrative policy where the college's financial aid award does not fully meet a family's demonstrated financial need (q.v.). Such a "gap" can range from a few hundred to several thousand dollars.

**Grade-Point Average (GPA):** Numerical conversion of letter grades into a cumulative average, by term, year, or academic

career. Generally GPAs are computed using a 4.0 scale (4.0 = A, 3.0 = B, etc.); the Academy utilizes an 11.0 scale (11.0 = A, 10.0 = A-, 9.0 = B+, etc.).

**Grants:** Financial aid money from the Federal/ state government or matriculating college, which does not require repayment, like a loan.

**Honors Programs:** Special college courses within an informal or structured program offering greater intellectual challenge for highly qualified, motivated students. Some programs are open by invitation only; others require a supplemental application, different from the application for admission. Many honors programs offer scholarships or special prerogatives, such as preferential registration.

**Hook:** A subjective factor in the admissions decision-making process which can influence, to varying degrees, a student's final decision, such as legacy (q.v.) status, athletic recruitment, exceptional artistic talent, or membership in an underrepresented multicultural population.

**Humanities:** Fields of study including English, literature, languages, philosophy, classics, history, music, fine arts, theater, and religion.

**Institutional Methodology (IM):** The method used by individual colleges from the information supplied by the Profile form (q.v.) to determine a student's EFC (q.v.). Where Federal Methodology is universally standard, the individual components of Institutional Methodology can vary from school to school.

**Interest:** See "Demonstration of Interest."

**Internship:** A part-time paid, volunteer, and/or for-college-credit position offering hands-on experience in a student's academic or professional field of interest. Internships are undertaken either while enrolled during the academic year or in the summer.

**Ivy League:** While its eight members (Brown, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth,

# APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Harvard, Penn, Princeton, and Yale) are highly selective colleges for admission, the designation “Ivy League” only refers to their membership in a common athletic conference.

**Joint Degree:** Also may be known as a “dual degree” program. Academic program of study which allows a student to either major in two separate undergraduate fields in completely distinct disciplines (such as engineering and business, or business and foreign language), or to pursue a joint undergraduate-graduate degree program (such as joint B.A./M.B.A., B.A./J.D., or B.A./M.D. programs).

**Legacy:** Having an immediate family member, generally a parent and occasionally a grandparent or a sibling, as an alumnus of a college to which the student is applying.

**Liberal Arts:** A broad-based introduction to a wide variety of subjects, including the social sciences, humanities, and natural sciences (q.v.v.). Generally does not include professional programs, such as business, engineering, or nursing, although these programs may contain some coursework in the liberal arts.

**Loans:** Financial assistance which must be repaid over an extended period of time, generally after a student completes an undergraduate degree, but occasionally beginning during undergraduate enrollment.

**Major:** Concentrated field of collegiate study in one academic discipline (q.v.), requiring a set number of required courses for completion beyond any required core curriculum (q.v.) requirements. Students concentrate in two academic fields by “double-majoring.”

**Matriculate:** Academic term meaning to “enroll” at or “attend” a college or university.

**Merit-based Aid:** Financial aid based on academic, artistic, athletic, or other non-need based criteria.

**Minor:** A secondary field of concentrated study during the final two years of college, similar to a major (q.v.) yet with fewer requirements.

**National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC):** Professional association of college admissions and high school guidance/college counseling personnel. As a member of NACAC, Exeter and its students agree to abide by the “Principles of Good Practice,” which outlines the appropriate ethical standards for such issues as Early Decision, application deadlines, and double depositing.

**NCAA Clearinghouse:**  
See “Eligibility Center.”

**National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA):** National organization which supervises and regulates most intercollegiate athletic programs. Based upon size of institution and level of competition, these programs are divided into three divisions: Division I, II, and III. The first two Divisions generally award athletic scholarships; Division III athletic programs do not.

**National Merit Commended Student:** A designation given to students by the National Merit Corporation for students who score high on the PSAT/NMSQT (q.v.) examination, but do not pass the state-specific threshold score to become a semifinalist (q.v.).

**National Merit Finalist:** A National Merit Semifinalist (q.v.) who becomes eligible for merit-based academic scholarship, based upon the student’s strong PSAT/NMSQT (q.v.) scores, high school record, and counselor recommendation.

**National Merit Scholar:** A National Merit Finalist (q.v.) who receives a merit-based academic scholarship, sponsored by a member organization or college, or the National Merit Corporation.

**National Merit Semifinalist:** The initial designation by the National Merit Corporation for students who pass a state-specific threshold score on the

PSAT/NMSQT (q.v.) examination.

**Need Aware, Need Conscious or Need Sensitive:** A college financial aid policy where a family’s ability to pay may influence the college’s admission decision. Students with a higher demonstrated financial need who may not be near the academic top of a college’s applicant pool are most vulnerable in the admissions process at need aware colleges.

**Need Blind:** A college financial aid policy where a family’s ability to pay does not influence the college’s admission decision.

**Needs Analysis:** The standard, uniform process by which a college financial aid office determines how much a family can afford to pay, using two systems: federal methodology and institutional methodology (q.v.v.).

**Net Price Calculator:** Required by Federal law effective October 2011, a financial tool to help prospective students and families estimate the net cost of a college’s education; because this tool is unique to each college, information about the calculator is required by law to be posted on a college’s website.

**Package:** A student’s financial aid award, “packaged” together with such components as loans, grants, work-study, and scholarships.

**Parent Contribution (PC):** Another name for the EFC (q.v.), usually not including any of the student’s summer-employment savings.

**Payment Plans:** College-sponsored programs which allow families to spread the yearly cost of attendance out over monthly installments.

**Pell Grant:** Named in honor of Sen. Claibourne Pell (RI), Federally-funded grants (q.v.) designed to help students with the lowest EFC (q.v.). Eligibility is determined through the information provided through the FAFSA (q.v.). The yearly maximum amount of a Pell Grant is about \$5,500.

## APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Perkins Loans:** Federally-funded college loan with traditionally lowest interest rate of educational loans, with repayment deferred until nine months after a student leaves school. Students may borrow up to a total of \$27,500 for an undergraduate degree (approximately \$5,000 annually), and eligibility is determined through the information provided through the FAFSA (q.v.).

**PLUS Loans:** Federally-sponsored college loans administered through individual banks and loan lenders available to parents who are U.S. citizens of an undergraduate student enrolled at least part-time. Parents must pass a credit check to qualify for PLUS loans and are legally responsible for repayment. Available without regard to financial need, PLUS loans may cover the full cost of education minus other forms of aid.

**Prepaid Tuition Plan:** A college savings plan guaranteed to rise in value at the same rate as college tuition. Several states and private institutions offer such programs.

**Principal:** The amount borrowed or owed on a loan.

**Professional Judgment:** For need-based federal aid programs, financial aid administrators can adjust the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) (q.v.) or the cost of attendance, or change the dependency status (q.v.) with documentation when extenuating circumstances exist, such as when a parent becomes unemployed.

**Promissory Note:** A legally binding contract which a student signs before receiving the disbursement (q.v.) of their financial aid package that details the terms of the loan contract and obligating the borrower to repay the loan.

**PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test):** Administered by ETS (q.v.), a standardized exam generally administered during the 10th and/or 11th grade

enabling students to practice for the SAT I and SAT II: Writing tests. The PSAT test offered in October of the 11th grade year is the qualifying exam for the scholarship competitions administered by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

**Pre-Law/Pre-Med:** Not a major (q.v.) or academic discipline (q.v.), but an intended direction for graduate school allowing a student to concentrate in many different fields of study. Law and medical schools generally offer basic guidelines on undergraduate courses for students interested in gaining admission to these graduate programs. However, students can generally integrate these basic requirements into many divergent majors, including business, engineering, and other non-traditional pre-professional majors.

**Profile:** Financial aid form sponsored by CSS (q.v.) and utilized by approximately 350 participating colleges, which is similar to the FAFSA (q.v.), but is customized by colleges to supply additional information as required by the colleges to which the student is applying for aid.

**Quarters:** Academic calendar consisting of four terms, approximately 10 weeks in length; some quarter-system schools have courses in the summer.

**Rate of Attrition:** Percentage of students who do not return, due to academic, financial, or personal reasons, usually given at the end of the freshman year.

**Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC):** U.S. military program offering one-, two-, and four-year scholarships at select colleges and universities, covering tuition, books, and fees in addition to a living stipend, in exchange for a set number of years in a branch of the service.

**Rolling Admission:** Admission process whereby students are offered or denied admission throughout the calendar year.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress:** A college or university's policy stipulating that a student maintain a certain mini-

imum number of courses that must be completed each semester, the maximum time permitted, and the minimum grade-point average (q.v.) required to continue to receive financial aid.

**Scholarships:** Merit-based financial assistance offered in recognition of a student's academic, personal, extracurricular and/or athletic achievements and promise, regardless of whether a student qualifies for assistance on the basis of demonstrated financial need (q.v.).

**Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT):** Standardized tests administered by the College Board (q.v.) which provide college admission offices with a common national standard for evaluating student records from different high schools. Along with a student's academic performance in high school and other more subjective factors such as recommendations, extracurriculars (q.v.), and essays, the SAT is used with variable success to attempt to predict a student's academic performance in college.

**SAT I:** The most general standardized test offered by the College Board—a three-hour, primarily multiple-choice test which measures Verbal and Mathematical reasoning abilities. The SAT is required by almost all U.S. colleges and universities for freshman admission.

**SAT II:** One hour-long, primarily multiple-choice tests measuring knowledge of particular specific subject areas and a student's ability to apply that knowledge. SAT II Subject Tests fall into six general areas: English, history and social sciences, mathematics, sciences, and foreign languages. Many highly selective colleges and universities will require SAT II exams for admission.

**Secondary School Report (SSR):** College-generated form requesting a copy of the applicant's high school record and, frequently, a college counselor letter of recommendation. Exeter

# APPENDIX GLOSSARY OF TERMS

creates its own SSR forms and does not use any of the colleges' own copies.

**Selective Service:** U.S. Department of Defense bureau which requires registration by all 18-year-old U.S. citizens. Confirmation of registration with the Selective Service is required for eligibility for Federally-funded financial aid money.

**Self-Help:** The amount of money, in addition to receiving non-repayable grants, which colleges ask students to help finance their education through college work-study or loans (q.q.v.).

**Semester:** The most common academic calendar, dividing the year into two equal terms.

**Servicer:** An organization that is paid by a loan lender to administer student loans.

**Simplified Needs Test:** An alternative method of calculating the expected family contribution (q.v.) for families with adjusted gross incomes over \$50,000, who have filed or are eligible to file an IRS Form 1040A or 1040EZ, or who are not required to file an income tax return.

**Social Sciences:** Academic fields of study which focus on human behavior and societal interactions, such as psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, and economics.

**Stafford Loan:** Formerly known as "Guaranteed Student Loans" and renamed in honor of former Sen. Robert Stafford (VT), low-interest loans sponsored by the Federal government for students enrolled at least half-time. Loans can be both subsidized (for students with demonstrated financial need) and unsubsidized (for students who do not qualify for need-based financial aid). While the U.S. government will pay the interest on subsidized Stafford Loans until six months following a student's final full-time semester enrolled, students pay the interest (no principle) on unsubsidized Stafford loans.

**Student Aid Report (SAR):** The electronic form returned to a student following the completion of the evaluating process-

ing of the FAFSA (q.v.) by the U.S. government's Central Processing Agency. If no valid e-mail address is on file with FAFSA, a paper SAR is mailed to students.

**Student Contribution:** An estimate of the student's ability to contribute to his/her college education, typically up to 35 percent of savings and up to half of student summer earnings above \$1,750.

**Student-Faculty Ratio:** The ratio determined by dividing the number of students by the number of professors. The student-faculty ratio is often of questionable value; "average class size" frequently provides more useful information about faculty-student interaction.

**Subsidized Loan:** Student loans on which borrowers do not have to pay interest until after their grace period expires, usually within six months of completion of a terminal degree.

**Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG):** Federally-funded grants, with priority funding going to students receiving Pell Grants (q.v.). The maximum annual SEOG is \$4,000.

**1040/1040A/1040EZ Form:** Federal income tax form frequently required by colleges to verify accuracy of financial information submitted on FAFSA and Profile (q.q.v.) forms.

**Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL):** Examination providing a more accurate assessment of non-native verbal ability than the SAT I (q.v.) Critical Reading and Writing Sections.

**Three-Two (3-2) Program:** Degree program where a student begins their studies at one institution, generally a smaller liberal arts college, and after three years, transfers to another larger institution to complete his or her studies. Most of these programs are in business, engineering, computer science, or a related field. Three-two programs can be either single or dual undergraduate degree programs; others are undergraduate and graduate B.A./M.S. or M.B.A. combinations.

**Title IV Programs:** Federal student aid

programs authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, such as Pell Grants, PLUS Loans, Perkins Loans, and Stafford Loans (q.q.v.).

**Title IX:** Federal government law requiring that any college or university that receives money from the U.S. government must have roughly the same proportion of female athlete opportunities as female undergraduates. Schools must also demonstrate a continuing history of expanding athletic opportunities for women.

**Transcript:** Official school record of grades and courses.

**Trimester:** Academic calendar divided into three roughly-equal terms (i.e., the Exeter academic calendar).

**Tuition:** The portion of college expenses which covers the cost of a student's academic program and enrollment. For full-time students, tuition is calculated at a set figure; part-time students pay a prorated amount calculated per class or credit hour (q.v.).

**Unmet Need:** Difference between cost of attendance and the student's available resources, including his/her financial aid package.

**Verification:** Review process in which the financial aid officer requests all documentation from a federal aid applicant to verify accuracy of information.

**Waitlist:** Limited number of freshman applicants who are neither admitted nor denied admission, but are told they will be notified after May 1 of their final decision as spaces within the freshman class become available during the summer. Waitlists are utilized by most selective institutions to ensure that they will meet their target enrollment numbers.

**Yield:** The percentage of students offered admission to a college or university who matriculate as depositing students.