



I'm Ready to Apply!

O.K. seniors, so, you've narrowed down your lists of colleges and universities through careful research and you've picked 6-10 schools that you think will be a great fit for you...now what? Now is the time to figure out what application materials schools need and their submission deadlines. Meeting admission deadlines is a critical step in the process. Try having your application ready to be sent one week prior to the actual deadline. Different schools will have different dates, so organization is the key. Keep your deadline dates where you can see them! Set reminders on your cell phone or computer or go the old-fashioned route and use a desk calendar to record the due dates for each school.

(Tip: using different colors could be a helpful way to remind you dates are looming.)

Staying organized is also critical as you prepare the required admissions documents for the schools to which you are applying. Along with an application, most schools will require an official copy of your high school transcript, SAT/ACT scores, letters of recommendation and a personal essay. Some schools may request a personal interview. Check the school's web site for admissions requirements and policies.

The Application

Instead of, or sometimes in addition to having their own admissions application form, nearly 400 colleges and universities across the country use the Common Application. By utilizing the **Common Application**, you can fill out one online application and have it sent electronically to your chosen colleges and universities. The Common Application is widely used and makes the application process quicker and more streamlined as students, teachers and counselors can all submit their pieces of the application puzzle online. Students can log in and track the progress of their applications. Be aware that some schools may require their own institutional supplemental form, which you can find on the school's admissions web site. And, some schools may allow you to use either the Common Application or their own school application.

New Hampshire schools that use the Common Application:
Colby-Sawyer College (you may use the Common Application or the school's own online application)
Dartmouth College (also requires two Dartmouth-specific supplements)
Franklin Pierce University (you may use the Common Application or the school's own online or paper application)

Center for College Planning at the NHHEAF Network Organizations

The Center for College Planning at the **NHHEAF Network Organizations** is dedicated to providing students and families with valuable information about the college planning process—from savings options and college admissions requirements, to applying for financial aid and scholarships. We serve all student populations: traditional, continuing education, graduate and adult learner. We offer college planning materials and coordinate speakers for schools, businesses and community organizations free of charge. We provide dynamic small group workshops in our Concord, New Hampshire office. We also provide a toll free college planning hotline and comprehensive Web site. Our goal is to promote higher education as the means to achieving personal, career and life goals.

The NHHEAF Network Organizations

The **NHHEAF Network Organizations** are comprised of four independent nonprofit organizations dedicated to streamlining the student loan process: **New Hampshire Higher Education Assistance Foundation (NHHEAF)** guarantees, originates and disburses your loan.

New Hampshire Higher Education Loan Corporation (NHHELCO) funds your loan.

Granite State Management & Resources (GSM&R) services your loan.

NHHEAF Network Educational Foundation (NNEF) administers charitable giving.



The NHHEAF Network Organizations
Center for College Planning
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College Tip of the Month:

According to the College Board, 95% of all 21st century occupations will require some type of Postsecondary degree or training. Earning your degree or certificate is the best way to secure employment opportunities after you graduate!

Common Application continued...

Keene State College (also requires the KSC Supplement form)

Plymouth State University (also requires the PSU Supplement form)

Saint Anselm College (also requires the Saint Anselm Supplemental form)

Southern New Hampshire University (you may use the Common Application or the school's own online application)

University of New Hampshire (also requires the UNH Supplement Form)

Application Soup

It is important to portray yourself positively in your application and essay. Admissions officers are looking at grades, standardized test scores, recommendations, your essay and a resume of what you did in high school. They are looking for well-rounded students and they assess students on many different levels. Beyond your GPA and SAT scores, admissions officers are looking at your essay as the face of your application. This is your opportunity to highlight your creativity, experience, values and critical thinking skills. The essay should be an example of your best professional writing. Think of the essay as the soul of your application. An application without an essay is a statistic -- just another faceless person in the crowd. An application with a poorly written essay does not give admissions officers the opportunity to get to know and understand you. Use the essay as an opportunity to introduce yourself to the admissions officer and help them to know you, like you and see your potential as a student in their next freshman class.

Tips for Writing the College Essay

Step One:

Choosing a Topic

Often colleges give students options for writing the essay. We've seen questions ranging from "Who is your hero?" and "Where do you see yourself in five years?" to "What issues would you tackle if you were President of the United States?" and "If given the opportunity, what historical figure would you choose to have dinner with?" The trick is to find the one topic that you can write about most passionately and effectively. If you can identify a theme in the question or prompt, look to essays you may have written in English class for ideas. You may have written about poverty or family when you read *The Grapes of Wrath* or racism when you read *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Referring back to your own ideas from prior work may provide inspiration. Often you'll have an option to write on a topic of your choice. In many cases, you can save time by submitting the same essay to various schools.

Step Two:

Tackling the Questions

Once you've identified a topic, you must now confront the underlying problem of the admissions essay: synthesizing your important personal characteristics and experiences while simultaneously addressing your desire to attend a specific institution.

Here are a few ways to get started:

- **Answer the question.** If you haven't addressed the topic or answered the essay question, you've missed the point. (And, you've proven that you don't follow directions well!)
- **Keep your reader in mind.** Often your essay, your entire application for that matter, will be read by multiple people in the Admissions Office. Remember that they may be reading hundreds, even thousands, of applications. You want to intrigue your reader and keep their interest throughout the essay. You are not writing a research paper; look at it more as telling a story.
- **Brainstorm!** Jot down ideas related to the topic. Think about the details you will use to support the greater message. Write without regard to grammar or mechanics. This kind of informal writing may help you clarify the best way to approach the topic.

Click here to link to
Webbing Strategies for the
College Essay!

Step Three:

Writing Style

You do not need long, complicated sentences. Short sentences often pack the most punch and show that you are a good writer by your ability to write clearly and succinctly.

Don't answer the question in the first sentence. Leave a little mystery for what the rest of the essay will be about. Build on your answer all the while weaving in images of your leadership skills or integrity.

Show, don't tell. Rather than listing a series of statements that "tell" the reader facts, find ways to "show" them through anecdotes about yourself and examples that create memorable images.

Forget the thesaurus. Big words do not make a good essay. Writing simply isn't stupid.

End on a positive note. The idea is to have a positive impression on the reader. This is your last chance to persuade the reader and impress upon them your qualifications. Your essay may just be a deciding factor when students are close in terms of GPA and test scores and the admissions officer is looking for other ways to distinguish between students.

Step Four:

Editing and Revising

PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD! PROOFREAD!

Writing is a process. Once you have completed the first draft, take a break. You will have more insight if you come back to the essay with a fresh perspective. Have your parents, your friends and even your English teacher read and critique your essay. It may take several attempts before you have a completed product. Be sure to spell check your final draft in case any small errors slipped by your "editors".

College Essay FYI:

Most colleges request an essay that is 250-500 words. Don't submit an essay that is longer than required. Admissions officers have to read a lot of essays so keep it manageable for the reader.

College Application Essay Help:

www.collegeboard.com
www.statementofpurpose.com
www.admissionsessays.com
collegeplanning@nhheaf.org

News Around the Nation:

Health Care Careers Still Growing

Despite the unstable economy and gloomy job market, there is one industry that is continuing to grow stronger despite the recession. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in June 2009 the health care industry added 3,700 jobs to the 4.72 million workforce. It doesn't take years of medical school to get there either. Graduates with an associate degree level of training can find themselves with many job opportunities in a field that some would call recession-proof. Associate degrees can be completed in just two years and provide focused training in the field you want. Some popular health care careers available with an associate's degree are: dental hygienist, paramedic, medical secretary, nursing and veterinarian technician. With the number of jobs requiring postsecondary degrees or certificates, going for a two-year health care degree or certificate may help ease the stress of job hunting in a tough market. For more on degrees associated with health care, visit www.nhheaf.kuder.com, for more detail on health care careers and the industry, visit www.bls.gov/oco/cg/cgs035.htm.

Did You Know?

Campus Spotlight

University of New Hampshire: Car Sharing?

In keeping with their continued efforts at sustainability, the University of New Hampshire recently introduced Zipcar to their campus. Zipcar is a car sharing program that allows UNH students, faculty and staff to have access to a vehicle, parked on campus, at any time with a \$35 membership. After the initial membership fees, drivers pay \$8 an hour on weekdays and \$9 an hour on weekends for temporary access to a car located on campus. Gas, mileage and insurance are included. Using the Zipcar service is a welcome transportation option as it saves students from paying to have a car on campus and, from an environmental perspective, takes 10-15 personally owned cars off the road. Students can use the Zipcar option for quick weekend trips home and have extra room for all of that laundry!

The Financial Aid Season Is Right Around the Corner

In December, we'll talk about the financial aid process and talk about the form, or forms, you will need to complete to be eligible for financial aid. Your high school will most likely be hosting a Financial Aid Night between now and mid-January. This is a great opportunity for your family to learn the basics about financial aid before the season begins. If your school is not hosting a Financial Aid Night, come to our Concord offices and attend one of our two Financial Aid Nights on Tuesday, December 15 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. or on Tuesday, December 29 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Register for either of these sessions today at www.nhheaf.org/events.asp!

Attend a NHHEAF Network Webinar!

Log in and learn! Webinars are a great way to get all that the Center for College Planning has to offer from the comfort of your own home. Attend a presentation from your computer, ask questions and get answers in real time. No special equipment is needed, other than a computer and speakers, to attend a webinar. To learn more about NHHEAF webinar offerings or to register [click here](#). Upcoming webinars include:

- College Costs and Funding Strategies, November 23**
- Deter, Detect, Defend- The Crime of Identify Theft, December 10**
- Filing the FAFSA and CSS Profile Applications, December 15**

Scholarship Corner



Take it to the Bank Scholarship

Starting November 2, students in NH were once again able to register to win \$1,000 college scholarships through the NH Higher Education Loan Corporation's (NHHELCO) *Take it to the Bank Scholarship Drawing*. Last year, seven students were the lucky recipients of the \$1,000 scholarships, this year even more students will benefit! Each month, students can log onto www.nhheaf.org and click on the *Take it to the Bank Scholarship* logo and enter to win. The scholarship is open to NH residents either currently attending a Title IV college or university or registered to attend by September 2010. For profiles on prior winners, visit the "news" section of our web site.

Interested in \$1,000?

If you answered yes, then the Destination CollegeSM Speech Contest may be your ticket! The Center for College Planning is looking for seniors to write a ten minute speech regarding their experiences with college planning. The first place winner will be awarded \$1,000, address participants at Destination CollegeSM as the keynote speaker on Saturday, March 27, 2010 at Southern New Hampshire University. The winning speech will be published in the 2010-2011 *New Hampshire Next* magazine. The deadline for contest entries is February 8, 2010. For more information about the contest, visit www.destinationcollege.org.



Upcoming:

Upcoming: December – “Show Me The Money” - Applying for financial aid and scholarships

Your next Dean's List will be sent in December. We will begin to discuss the financial aid application process. Meanwhile, continue to work on your college essay drafts and remind the teachers and counselors writing letters of recommendations that those deadlines are approaching fast!

The NHHEAF Network Organizations are comprised of four 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that provide students and families with the resources and funding to pursue higher education aspirations. Funds generated by the Organizations make their charitable mission possible as student loan earnings are reinvested in programs and services that benefit citizens of New Hampshire. For more information, visit www.nhheaf.org.