



CEEBCODE 311452

COLLEGE GUIDANCE HANDBOOK 2012-2013

The College Guidance and Israel Guidance programs at Ma'ayanot seek to help each Ma'ayanot student make the best possible decisions and choices affecting her years immediately following high school. In choosing a college or university, it is essential to find a school that matches a student's religious development, personal disposition, academic profile, interests, and ambitions. The college guidance counselors are here to offer advice and enthusiastic support to each student in articulating her goals and in evaluating information such as grades, SAT or ACT results, extracurricular activities and outside interests, while encouraging her to take pride in her own particular assets and ambitions.

*The college application process involves the input and support of parents, teachers, administration, and college counselors. Our most important role is to encourage, help, and support students as they approach this task. It is most important, however, to recognize that **you, the applicant**, are responsible for its success. It is incumbent on you, the student, to play the lead role throughout this process. Just as you have been responsible for taking the initiative with your academic work and your co-curricular activities – whether in Ma'ayanot or in the larger community – you must invest yourself in the logistical aspects of researching and applying to colleges.*

Ma'ayanot enthusiastically supports all students at all of the schools to which they apply. Please remember, however, that there are no guarantees that specific students will be admitted to specific schools. We work with students to help them find the schools that are best matched to their needs, desires and academic and personal merits. The best way for them to enhance their chances of admission is to take advantage of the many opportunities that they have at Ma'ayanot, both in and out of the classroom. The lessons they learn and the growth they experience will pave the way for success in their future endeavors.

This handbook is intended to clarify the procedures, explain the policies, and provide relevant information that can help students and their families as they approach the process. The information it contains will provide a general outline to help you structure a process that will help assure you the best outcome.

We look forward to working with each of you. B'hatzlacha!

*Mrs. Abigail Rabin
Director of College Guidance*

*Ms. Leebie Mallin
College Guidance Counselor*



Class of 2013 College Guidance Calendar

March 9, 2012	Registration deadline for April ACT
March 11, 2012	SAT (no SAT SUBJECT TEST on this date)
March 15, 2012	College Guidance Program for Juniors and Parents
March-May, 2012	Meet with Israel Guidance
April 6, 2012	Registration deadline for May SAT & SAT Subject Tests
April 5-15, 2012	Pesach recess
April 15, 2012	ACT
May 4, 2012	Registration deadline for June ACT
May 6, 2012	SAT & SAT Subject Tests
May 7, 2012	Teacher recommendation "Statement of Consent" (1 st of 2) due in College Guidance office
May 7-18, 2012	AP Exams
May 8, 2012	Registration deadline for June SAT & SAT Subject Tests
May 17, 2012	College Panel Program for Juniors and Parents at TABC (Juniors: mandatory attendance)
May 27-28, 2012	Shavuot
June 3, 2012	SAT & SAT Subject Tests
June 6-15, 2012	Final exams
June 10, 2012	ACT
Summer 2012	This is the time for visiting colleges and drafting your college essays. You may schedule a college interview to take place at the time of your visit (even before you submit your application). Research scholarship and competition opportunities. If you are considering an Early Decision application, be sure to visit at least 3 colleges for comparison.
August, 2012	Carefully read through the summer letter from College Guidance. Complete the Senior Biography, the Common Application, and other appropriate forms in the packet.
Day before classes start	Senior class meeting. Senior Biography and Common Application due. Inform your college guidance counselor if you will be applying Early Decision (ED) or Early Action (EA).
September, 2012	Individual meetings with college guidance counselor to discuss the results of summer activities and to develop an appropriate list of colleges. Plan for college interviews.
September 14, 2012	All ED and EA transcript requests must be submitted to College Guidance. Submit ED and EA teacher recommendation forms and stamped, addressed envelopes to your recommenders.
September 16-18, 2012	Rosh Hashana
September 24, 2012	ED and EA applicants submit rough draft of entire application, including all essays, to college guidance counselor for review and discussion.

September 25-26, 2012	Yom Kippur
September-October, 2012	Continuing talks with Director of Israel Guidance
September-October, 2012	College representatives visit with Ma'ayanot seniors at school
October 1, 2012	CSS Profile available on line at https://profileonline.collegeboard.com/index.jsp
October 1-7, 2012	Sukkot
October 26, 2012	Second teacher recommendation "Statement of Consent" due in College Guidance office
October-November, 2012	Additional meetings with college guidance counselor. Submit rough drafts of essays and applications
November, 2012	Israel school representatives at Ma'ayanot
November 1, 2012	Early Decision and Early Action applications due at colleges
November 1, 2012	Priority application deadline for some colleges (including Rutgers and University of MD)
Mid-November, 2012	Financial Aid Workshop for Parents
End of November, 2012	All Israel applications are due
November 16, 2012	Last day to submit all transcript requests to College Guidance office
November 16, 2012	Last day to give your teachers all teacher recommendation forms and stamped, addressed envelopes
November 30, 2012	Rough drafts of ALL applications, including essays, are due in College Guidance office
December, 2012	Israel school interviews
December, 2012	Notification of decisions of Early and Rolling applications begin to arrive
December 1, 2012	Regular application deadline for Rutgers
December 8-16, 2012	Chanukah
January 1, 2013	FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) may be submitted
Mid-January, 2013	Israel schools mail decision letters
February, 2013	Student notifies the Israeli school that she accepts, and declines at remaining school(s)
February-April, 2013	Colleges notify students of their decisions
May 1, 2013	Candidate Reply Date; student must reply to college of her choice, and decline at remaining college(s). Students who plan to spend the year in Israel send a separate letter to college requesting deferral of matriculation.

Self-Evaluation

Evaluate Yourself

The questions which follow can help you focus college selection and admission where it belongs — on you as an individual. You may feel embarrassed or self-conscious when you first consider these questions. However, an honest and thoughtful self-evaluation can reveal what you should look for in colleges and prepare you for statements you will be asked to make about yourself in essays and interviews when you apply to college. If you are willing to look seriously at yourself, you can find colleges which are right for you and present yourself effectively to them.

Your Goals and Values

1. What aspects of your high school years have you enjoyed the most? Have you missed anything during this time? If you could live this period over again, would you do anything differently?
2. What values are most important to you? What do you care most about? What concerns occupy most of your energy, effort, and thoughts?
3. How do you define success? Are you satisfied with your accomplishments to date? What do you want to accomplish in the years ahead?
4. What kind of person would you like to become? Of your unique gifts and strengths, which would you most like to develop? What would you most like to change about yourself?
5. Is there anything you have ever secretly wanted to do or be? If you had a year to go anywhere and do whatever you wanted, how would you spend that year?
6. What events or experiences have shaped your growth and way of thinking?

Your Education

7. What are your academic interests? Which courses have you enjoyed most? Which courses have been most difficult for you?
8. What do you choose to learn when you can learn on your own? (Consider interests pursued beyond class assignments: topics chosen for research papers, lab reports, independent projects; independent reading; school activities; job or volunteer work.) What do your choices show about your interests and the way you like to learn?
9. How much do you genuinely like to read, discuss issues, and exchange ideas? What has been your most stimulating intellectual experience in recent years?
10. In what areas of skill or knowledge do you feel confident? Or inadequately prepared for college study? Have you been challenged by your courses?
11. Have you worked up to your potential in high school? Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability or potential? What are your SAT/ACT scores? What do you consider the best measures of your potential for college work?
12. Are there any outside circumstances (in your recent experience or background) that have influenced your academic performance? Consider such factors as: after-school job, home responsibilities, illness or emotional stress, parental pressure, English not spoken at home, problems of course scheduling, or other factors that are unique to your background.

Your Activities and Interests

13. What activities do you most enjoy outside the daily routine of school and other responsibilities? Which activities have meant the most to you? Looking back, would you have made different choices?
14. Do your activities show any pattern of commitment, competence, or contribution?
15. How would others describe your role in school or home community? What do you consider your most significant contribution?
16. After a long, hard day, what do you most enjoy doing? What do you do for fun? Relaxation?

The World Around You

17. Do you prefer to continue your Jewish education in a formal educational setting? Do you feel sufficiently committed to seek out learning opportunities on a secular campus?
18. How would you describe your school, family, and home town? How has your environment influenced your way of thinking?
19. Do you have any current heroes or heroines? Historical heroes?
20. What books have you read that have changed your way of thinking?

21. Have you ever encountered people who thought and acted differently from the way you did? What viewpoints have challenged you the most? How did you respond? What did you learn about yourself and others?

Your Personality and Relationships with Others

22. How would someone who knows you well describe you: your finest qualities? your most conspicuous shortcomings? Would you agree with their assessment? How have you grown or changed during your high school years?
23. Which relationships are most important to you and why? Describe the people whom you consider your best friends? your best critics? your best advocates? In what ways are they similar to or different from you?
24. What kind of people do you associate with and admire? Generally, how do you respond to people who think and act differently from you?
25. How are you influenced by others who are important to you? What pressures have you felt to conform? How important to you are approval, awards, recognition? How do you respond to pressure, competition, or challenge? How do you react to failure, disappointment, or criticism?
26. How do you feel about choices and making decisions for yourself? What are the best decisions you have made recently? How much do you rely on direction, advice, or guidance from others? Have you ever chosen anything because it was new or interesting?

College Selection Criteria: Deciding Where to Apply

Key Factors to Consider in Evaluating Your College Preferences

Students and families sometimes 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 number of schools that meet your needs. In your search, focus on your personal criteria - the list of schools will follow. It is important that you, the applicant, take on the burden of researching schools on your own, and not rely on the knowledge or opinions of others as you formulate your own ideas and opinions about schools.

Please be sure to consider the following key factors in considering colleges that may interest you:

1. **Religious observance** – Be certain that you will have an environment that is conducive to your *yahadut*, *shmirat mitzvot*, and *limud Torah*. If you are seriously interested in a particular college, please be sure to spend a Shabbat on campus.
2. **Location** – Location includes the section of the country, the setting, distance from home, distance from a cultural center, and your residential plans – on campus, near campus, at home.
3. **Level of competitiveness** – While it is considered wise to reach for the highest level in choosing a college, the most competitive and high pressured is not always the best for you.
4. **Program of Study** – Select a school with a strong curriculum in your areas of interest. If a student is undecided, she should choose a college with a variety of majors which may match academic and personal strengths.
5. **Size** - The size of the undergraduate population from under 1000 students to tens of thousands creates vastly different educational and social environments. It is important to visit colleges of various sizes in order to assess your adjustment to size as well as the location.
6. **Cost** – College costs vary greatly; therefore a serious consideration of the family's financial situation and the level of eligibility for financial assistance is important.
7. **Campus Life** – Campus atmosphere, activities, and students facilities are important considerations since most time in college is spent outside of class.

8. **Affiliation** – Some colleges are public while some are private. Some private colleges have strong religious affiliation while others are unaffiliated. Religious affiliations are often loose and not reflected in student body composition. Public schools are tax supported and consequently have lower tuition and no affiliations.
9. **Special Features** – Special considerations such as quality of library, housing arrangements, co-operative work study, study abroad, honors programs, sororities, and cultural events are also important items to explore.
10. **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. Other services for learning differences can include support for untimed testing, readers for the visually impaired, and note-taking services. For some Ma'ayanot students, finding colleges offering extensive support services for students with learning disabilities may be an important factor in their college search.
11. **Community College** – Some students develop their academic ability later than others. When the result is a relatively low high school GPA, they may do well to begin their post-high school studies in a community college. Then, after honing their study and scholastic skills for two years, they can transfer into a 4-year college to complete their B.A.

12. **ADVANCED PLACEMENT**

- Do I plan on taking any AP examinations prior to graduating from Ma'ayanot?
- How important is finishing my college study in less than four years?
- 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. Therefore,

- Do not assume that your AP score will advance your standing at every college;
- Do not rely on other students' information. Colleges sometimes change their AP policies from one year to the next;
- Contact each college that interests you for the official and up-to-date AP policy.

College Admission Factors

HOW COLLEGES EVALUATE APPLICANTS

At the most selective colleges, applications often outnumber available places 5, 6, or even 10 to 1. Hence, as a practical necessity, you must consider the relative selectivity of colleges as you make your plans. What factors are most significant in admissions? While colleges differ considerably in how much weight they attach to various factors, the following list (in approximate order of importance) should give you a sense of the chief factors that are most important to admission officers.

1. **Course selection.** College admission officers generally look first to the candidate's course selection during the high school career. Individual schedules will (and should) vary; colleges seek students who have taken advantage of the curricular opportunities at Ma'ayanot. Recently, some of the most competitive colleges have focused increasingly on the student's background in what are often described as "core courses." These colleges encourage students to exceed the Ma'ayanot diploma requirements in science, history, math, and foreign language.

2. **Academic Achievement for the Four High School Years.** Grades are important, and colleges will look closely at your transcript to assess your success in the courses in which you enrolled. Some consideration will be given to the rigor of your course load in assessing your success. The most selective colleges expect students to succeed in the most challenging curriculum. **While improvement in the senior year is helpful, it will not remove the burden of a poor record for the first three years.**
3. **Test Scores.** Your scores on the SAT Reasoning Test or the ACT exam (with the Writing Option - always register for the Writing Option!) are required at most colleges. Some colleges also require two or three SAT Subject Tests*. Most students will take one of the math tests. The other two tests are most often English Literature, history, or science tests. While some of these should be taken after appropriate courses, students should plan to take Subject Tests in May or June of their junior year as well as the fall of their senior year. If you opt to take the ACT (with the Writing Option - always register for the Writing Option), you may be exempt from taking any SAT Subject Tests. You, the student, are responsible for ascertaining the testing requirements of each college that interests you. Individual testing plans should be discussed with your college counselor.
4. **Recommendations.** You will ask individual teachers to write on your behalf. Your college counselor will write the school's "Summary Statement." Colleges are interested in how those who have taught you and know you well evaluate you as a student and as a person, especially considering demonstrations of intellectual curiosity, motivation, engagement with material, and participation in class.
5. **Athletics and Extracurricular Activities.** The emphasis here is upon quality rather than quantity. Talent and genuine contributions to a team or an activity are important.
6. **Application Quality.** Colleges look closely at the student's part of the application, particularly at the quality of the essays. Each year, we see students who gain admission at the college of their dreams because their essays were strong. And each year, students are denied admission to colleges for which they were superbly qualified because their application demonstrated little thought or care. You will be expected to submit to your college guidance counselor the rough draft of any and all college essays and applications in a timely manner (see calendar). **The quality of your application is the one aspect of this process over which you have complete control; take advantage of the opportunity to help yourself.**
7. **Intangible "hooks".** Occasionally, a student will have what is known as a "hook factor" at one or a number of the schools to which she is applying. These include legacy status, development interest, diversity interest, athletic recruitment, artistic talent, even friends who are seemingly in a position of influence at the school. **Always bear in mind that "hooks" account for little of the admissions process, and that only the admissions committee at a particular school can assess the candidacy of a student and the relative importance of those "hooks" at their own school.** Connections that you may have may be useful in the process, but they cannot determine admission any more than other singular aspects of your file.

Two additional factors that vary in importance are your personal interviews (especially where these interviews are evaluative) and your professional background and aptitude (if you are applying to a career program such as business, education, or architecture). In such cases, the colleges will want to know how serious you are about your program choice. See pp. 15-16 for detailed information on interviews.

Your Likelihood of Being Admitted

ADMISSIONS SELECTIVITY

Likely, Possible, Reach

As you think about admissions selectivity, ask yourself these important questions:

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

* For a non-binding list of SAT Subject Test requirements by college, visit http://www.compassprep.com/admissions_req_subjects.aspx. Please read the page carefully, and note the cautionary line that appears just before the list: "Please visit the school website or call the admissions office for the most accurate information."

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 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 ratio' 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 students, the institutions in this category would most likely be classified as "reach" schools for admission selectivity. Colleges admitting more than fifty percent are generally "likely" schools for many Ma'ayanot applicants. Note that the admission rate may not always provide the most accurate sense of selectivity. For example, many nationally ranked state universities 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 and some require two or three SAT Subject Tests. Most colleges will accept the ACT exam. When reviewing potential colleges and universities, keep in mind their 'middle 50%' 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 and how you compare.

Including colleges with a broad range of admissions selectivity is important to a successful start to your college search. Be honest and realistic with yourself, making a reasonable 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 number of choices in the spring of your senior year.

Your academic performance in a challenging, rigorous program of study at Ma'ayanot is the most important factor in determining your admissibility to highly selective colleges. Admissions 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 students have challenged themselves in a competitive, demanding academic program throughout their entire high school career.

In conclusion, as you begin to consider your personal criteria in selecting the college that is right for you, the College Guidance office strongly encourages you to think about three critical points.

First, take plenty of time to choose the colleges that you are considering. 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." Students often tend to focus on the names of colleges rather than the characteristics of the schools behind those names. A college is not "good" only if you have heard of its name. Remember that there are a good number of private and public colleges and universities with well-developed activities and accommodations for Yeshiva high school graduates. 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. Frequently, students forget this simple fact when they begin to compare college lists. Recognize, and celebrate, the fact that you are unique.

Junior Year Timeline

JANUARY-FEBRUARY

Juniors meet individually with college guidance counselors to review PSAT and PLAN results and plan a personal schedule for college admissions testing. Students register for their Naviance account, a College Board account and the SAT Question of the Day, and receive registration material, including Shabbat letter, for standardized testing.

FEBRUARY

Complete and submit the **Mock Application**. When you submit it, **schedule an appointment** for you and your parents to meet with your college guidance counselor between now and April to talk about your background and the colleges that interest you. Establish an initial plan for investigating them and review your **SAT and SAT SUBJECT TEST** schedules. SAT SUBJECT TEST requirements vary from one college to the next. Some schools require two or three SAT SUBJECT TEST scores, others require none. Furthermore, some colleges require that applicants take certain specific SAT SUBJECT TESTS. Colleges enumerate their SAT SUBJECT TEST requirements in their catalogs as well as on their websites. As colleges continue to define their SAT requirements, it is best for you, the applicant, to phone or e-mail each college of interest, to confirm its test requirements for the class of 2013.

Start calling or writing to colleges **now** to request catalogs and applications. Many colleges allow you to download their applications from their websites. Feel free to refer to materials in the college guidance office and in the school library. College catalogs and viewbooks are on file, as are other college resources and guides, including addresses and telephone numbers of admission offices and Hillel contacts on each campus. As you investigate colleges, you may find current information on the home pages of many colleges and universities. Refer to the **Websites for College Planning** and the **Reading List for College Planning** in this handbook.

Keep this handbook for future reference. You will need to have **one reliable location** for all the documents you accumulate as you go through the application process. This is where you can store all of your SAT and/or ACT reports and college application materials. **Keep hard copies of your letters, applications and essays.**

Please be sure to check the **college guidance bulletin boards, your Naviance account, and your e-mail every week for important information and deadlines.**

MARCH - APRIL

As you plan for the summer, allow time for visiting some of the colleges that interest you. By calling admission offices in advance, you can arrange your visits to include tours and group information sessions. We strongly advise you to also call the Hillel offices at the colleges and arrange to meet students who are active in the religious life on campus; they can introduce you to the facilities and programs currently available. Hillel contact information is available on the Hillel website, at www.hillel.org.^{*} In addition, keep a diary about your thoughts and experiences; this can be a great help to you when you write your application essay in the fall.

Please note that some colleges will allow you to schedule an interview at the time of your visit, even before you have submitted an application.

MARCH-MAY

Second meeting with College Guidance

Meet with Israel Guidance

MAY - JUNE

Some colleges require submission of a **graded essay**, which demonstrates your abilities as an analytical or critical writer. English and history papers are most often used for this purpose. You therefore should save your best papers throughout both junior and senior years.

SUMMER

* See the Appendix for more detailed information on investigating Jewish life on campus.

Summer may seem to offer a break in your college search process, but in fact the opposite is true. The summer between your junior 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 Ma'ayanot's school year. The steps you take now during the 'downtime' of this summer can benefit your college search later on.

- 1) **The College Visit:** The campus visit can 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 catalog and look at the web site. That way the visit will be more meaningful in the context of what you have already learned. Keep notes of your impressions. *Chol Hamoed Sukkot* is also an excellent time to visit colleges, as college classes are in session and you have free time. Schedule your campus visits and interviews well in advance. Call the campus Hillel (or Chabad) office at the same time, and arrange to meet with students who are Yeshiva high school graduates; they are your best resource for accurate information about Orthodox life on campus. Seniors are allowed two college visit days during the academic year. Visit forms are available in the College Guidance office and your college counselor's signature is required.
 - a) **Preparing for Your Trip**
 - i) Always call the college's admissions office to find out what type of campus visit arrangements are available well in advance, at least three weeks, of your intended visit. Call the college's Hillel and/or Chabad office at the same time, to familiarize yourself with religious life and learning opportunities on campus. Ask the Hillel officers for the names and contact information of Yeshiva graduates who attend the college, in order to hear their first-hand experience of Jewish Orthodox life on campus. 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.
 - ii) **Overview of Visit Options**
 - (1) **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 (kosher dining facility, Jewish student activity center, *Bet Midrash*, 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, give you some general information, and you can always go back on your own. Be sure to wear comfortable walking shoes.
 - (2) **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.
 - 2) **Interviews:** A personal interview with an admissions officer is an evaluative, information-sharing exchange with a member of the admission 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. In both cases, the interviewer generally writes a summary 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 Handbook.
 - 3) **Class Visits:** During the academic year, a prospective student may attend a class or two of her choice. The student generally stays the entire class period and can approach the instructor afterward with any questions.
 - 4) **Overnights:** Ask Yeshiva high school graduates who attend the college to help you find an overnight host. While it is important to see the campus in action, it is at least equally important to experience Shabbat at the college. If you need help in identifying a potential host, please see college guidance counselors.
 - 5) **Meetings with Coaches, Music Teachers, Learning Specialists:** Plan to arrange these meetings on your own. While the admissions 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.
 - 6) **Keep a Journal:** Write down every piece of information you are able to gather about a school. Write down your reactions about schools immediately following your visit. We encourage parents to do the same; this is a great way for parents to react on their own without being too influential early on in the process. Often parents find it helpful to allow their children to share their thoughts about a school first. The ground rule is that you do not talk about the school until after you have had a chance to write down your own reaction. See the Appendix for a sample worksheet that you can use to help keep a track of the schools you see.

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.

1) *Types of Interviews*

- a) **Personal Interviews:** These usually take place on the college campus and are held with a representative of the admissions office. The conversation usually lasts about 30 minutes. Parents are generally not included in the initial conversation but will be approached afterward to see if they have any additional questions.
- b) **Alumni 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 in the student's home area. The local alumni chapter of the university works with the admissions 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 admissions offices directly to see about arranging alumni interviews. Alumni interviews are given the same weight as on-campus interviews in the admissions process.
- c) **Interviews at Ma'ayanot:** We are fortunate to have the majority of Stern interviews held at Ma'ayanot. Seniors sign up for their interviews in the College Guidance office a few days before the interview date. Applicants to Stern's Honors Program are responsible for setting up their own appointments at either Yeshiva University or at Stern College. In addition to your interviews, you are strongly encouraged to visit the Stern College campus to experience the school first-hand. Call the admissions office to schedule your visit.

2) *Sample Questions From College Admissions Interviews*

Even if you are not asked any of the following questions, if you have thought about them, you will be well prepared.

- a) How do you like Ma'ayanot? What has been the most positive experience you have had? the most negative? What would you like to change about Ma'ayanot?
- b) What is your role in the school community? What would your teachers say about you as a person? as a student?
- c) What is the most significant contribution you have made to your school?
- d) What are you looking for in a college? Who interested you in _____?
- e) What are some of your goals — personal or career — for the future?
- f) Tell me about a particular class or assignment in which you found yourself most stimulated intellectually.
- g) What is your reason for participating in athletics/theater/student government/dance/newspaper, etc.?
- h) Since you are interested in science, math (where appropriate), why are you interested in a liberal arts college rather than a more technical institution?
- i) How, and in what ways, do you expect, plan, hope, to transfer your secondary school contributions, achievements, activities to the college level?
- j) What has been your favorite subject in high school?
- k) What might you study in college?
- l) What books or authors have made a lasting impression on your way of thinking? Have you read deeply into any one author or field?
- m) What events, if any, would you deem critical in your life thus far? Who has most influenced you?
- n) What pressures do you feel operate on you at Ma'ayanot to conform? Describe ways in which you "go your own way."
- o) How have you spent your summers?
- p) What are your reactions to current events?
- q) Describe something that you have really become indignant over in the past year?
- r) How would you describe yourself as a person?
- s) Have you ever thought about not going to college? What would you do?
- t) How do you spend your free time?
- u) Do you have any questions? (Be sure to have some in mind.)

3) ***Tips for Success***

- a) Take interviews seriously. It is important to come across as interested and engaged in both the learning process and the institution you are visiting.
- b) 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?
- c) 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 be familiar with the offerings of the school.
- d) 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 or reticent, we strongly encourage you to do some practice interviews before your interviews. You will naturally become more comfortable with the interview format once you have done a couple and know what to expect.
- e) 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.
- f) During the busiest times of the year, staff members may be doing numerous interviews in one day. Or you may have an alumnus 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.

4) ***Some Thoughts About the Interview***

- a) **Dress neatly.** You don't need to wear a suit, but you should be neat and clean. Rule of thumb: no denim, no t-shirts.
- b) **Plan ahead.** Read the college guidebook before the interview and think of some questions that are not answered in those publications. In other words, a question about the number of library books would be inappropriate, but you might want to know whether the library has a particular strength in one part of its collection.
- c) **Think about yourself.** Be prepared to answer many of the questions listed earlier.
- d) **Be yourself.** Be honest about your talents and your interests. Interviewers spend a lot of time talking with students, so it does not make sense to pretend to be something that you are not. You are accustomed to talking with adults. Try to enjoy the interview; relax and learn from the experience.
- e) **Remember that you are assessing the interviewer's college at the same time that he or she is assessing you.** That is not to suggest that you should be arrogant and demand why this college should be graced with your presence. Still, you are entitled to expect honest, straightforward answers to your questions.
- f) Some colleges hire seniors to help with summer interviews. Treat these people as you would a professional college interviewer.

5) ***Impact on the Decision Making Process***

- a) 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 refused. Rather, all information is examined, and typically the interview evaluation reinforces or clarifies other aspects of the file.
- b) Occasionally, when the interview is optional, a student may be hesitant to interview. In such a case, please see College guidance counselors to discuss whether interviewing is appropriate for you.

Colleges value students who demonstrate initiative outside of the classroom. Your **extracurricular profile** will be an important part of your college application. Exemplary performance and leadership in areas such as sports, the arts, debate, publications, *chessed* or student government are ways to distinguish yourself as an applicant. Colleges often ask how the applicant has made an impact on the school community or what is unique about the applicant. Looking ahead to next year, carefully plan how you will spend your time outside the classroom. You will be busy with college applications and demanding coursework, so choose activities that you enjoy and give balance to your busy life.

SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

Toward the end of the summer, you will receive a mailing from school which will include:

1. A **questionnaire for rising seniors**, to update information about you and your summer experiences as well as your developing interest in colleges. Be sure to answer the questions thoughtfully and completely,
2. The **Common Application**. This will serve primarily as a practice application and allow you the opportunity to assemble the various data that you will ultimately need for every application you write. Remember, the more time you spend in the summer, the easier it will be to put together comprehensive applications later. **Answer all questions, including essay questions. College guidance counselors will want to review the completed application with you in September.**
3. Your academic **transcript**. You should review it meticulously to **confirm that all information is accurate.**

This three-part assignment will be **due the day before school starts, at Senior Orientation**. This information will be useful during the continuing discussions with College guidance counselors prior to filling out actual applications. Always photocopy your completed assignments so that you can use them as reference.

Register for Fall SATs and ACTs

Once you have mailed in a Shabbat letter and taken at least one SAT, you may register on line for all subsequent SAT exams. If you are interested in taking SATs in the fall, you may register throughout the summer at www.collegeboard.com. The Ma'ayanot CEEB code number is 311452.

If you are interested in taking the ACT (with the Writing Option - always register for the Writing Option), we strongly urge you to do so. The ACT online registration does not require a Shabbat letter. The Ma'ayanot CEEB code number is 311452.

Senior Year Timeline

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER

Upon submitting your senior questionnaire and Common Application, schedule a meeting with your college guidance counselor to review the list of colleges that you are considering. It is important to meet during the month of September, before the demands of school mount, to clarify where you are applying and to organize your personal timetable.

Visit colleges and schedule interviews where appropriate. If possible, try to visit the campuses that interest you over Shabbat, to experience the quality of Jewish life and to determine that you will be comfortable in that environment.

College representatives will visit Ma'ayanot and meet with interested students. Prepare for these meetings by reading about the colleges in their literature and on their websites and by talking to students who are enrolled there. *Ask educated questions; they will demonstrate your serious interest in the visiting college.*

You may use up to **two** school days for college visits. You will be responsible for any schoolwork that you miss on those days and will be expected to submit a form to the college guidance office for approval, with written permission from your teachers, *two school days prior* to each visit.

College Application Options

- After thorough investigation, if a specific college emerges as a clear first choice, you may want to apply **early decision**. Deadlines for early decision applications usually are in early November and college decisions are mailed in mid-December. Please note that as part of your early decision application, the college of your choice will require you to make a **written commitment to attend that college** if accepted.
- Students may choose **early action** plans at schools that offer them. Such plans give you the advantage of an earlier notification date without a prior commitment to enroll if accepted. Early action is far less common than early decision.
- If you decide to apply early, you must inform College guidance counselors of your decision **no later than Friday, September 14, 2012**, in order to allow sufficient time for the processing of your application. You are **strongly advised to visit several other colleges before making the commitment to apply early**. Please remember that the college guidance office is here for you; please discuss the pros and cons of applying early with College guidance counselors and/or with faculty members who know you well, as well as with your parents.
- Early applicants should have all the necessary requirements, including SAT and SAT SUBJECT TEST exams, or ACT exams, completed by the November test date. It is the student's responsibility to direct ETS and/or ACT to mail her score report to the college to which she is applying.
- Some colleges adhere to the policy of **rolling admissions**, i.e., they accept qualified applicants throughout the year, as their complete applications are reviewed and approved, on a first come, first served basis. For these schools, it is advisable that you submit your complete application as early as possible, in order to increase the likelihood of your acceptance.
- Most students will apply **regular decision**, and many of these deadlines are in January and early February. You and your college guidance counselor will discuss your preliminary list of colleges during the months of September and October. A final list of these schools and the completed Secondary School Report forms (which are included in almost every school's application) will be due in the college guidance office on **Friday, November 16, 2012**. Be sure your list includes "likely" schools as well as "possible" schools.

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER-NOVEMBER

The Directors of Ma'ayanot's Israel Guidance Program will meet with each student during the fall semester, to discuss the student's goals and plans, and to advise her about the various opportunities for a year of *limudei kodesh* in Israel. Seminary representatives will visit the senior class for guest *shiurim*, and seniors and their parents will be invited to attend an Israel Night program, to learn more about the *yeshivot*.

Please Note:

- It is important that you ascertain a college's policy regarding deferral if you intend to spend a year in Israel.
- Each applicant should have three supporting **letters of recommendation**, including the college counselor's letter. The college counselor's letter will present you as a candidate in academic, extracurricular and personal terms. This letter is intended to complement and expand on information in your application and personal essay.
- You should choose **two teachers** from your junior and/or senior year who know you well and can write about you as a student of their subject. Give the **teacher recommendation forms together with stamped, addressed envelopes** for each of the colleges to which you apply to both of the teachers who will write for you. The envelopes should show Ma'ayanot as the return address. In their recommendations, the teachers will discuss you in terms of their experience with you as a student in their academic discipline. The final day to give your recommenders all completed and necessary forms is **Friday, November 16**.
- If you intend to apply for **financial aid**, you will need to file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). FAFSA forms are available at the school and can be used for institutional aid, the Federal Basic Opportunity Grant Program and, in many states, for state aid funds. The FAFSA should be filed no earlier than January 1, but as soon after January 1 as possible. Some college financial aid offices also require submission of Financial Aid Profile, no later than January 15. Profile forms are also available at Ma'ayanot. See the Websites list in the Appendix for more information.

SAT and SAT SUBJECT TESTS/ACT

Students may wish to retake the SAT or ACT and to take additional SAT SUBJECT TEST exams in October, November or December. The timing of these exams and the release of scores are important to consider in accordance with each college's deadline.

You, the college applicant, are responsible for **directing ETS (or ACT) to send your SAT and SAT SUBJECT TEST scores (or ACT scores)** to each of your colleges in a timely way, at least six weeks before the application deadline. Each SAT score report will include your complete SAT and SAT SUBJECT TEST history. ACT allows you to select the date(s) of the test results that appear in the ACT score report; thus, if you scored higher on one ACT test date than on another, you may direct ACT to report the scores for that date alone.

Sending Scores

It is the student's responsibility to send standardized test scores to colleges. When you direct ETS to send out your scores, your entire SAT testing history for all SAT and SAT SUBJECT TEST tests will be included.

Sending SAT Test Scores by Phone:

1. Before calling ETS (Educational Testing Service), gather the following information:
 - Score reports for each test
 - College CEEB codes
 - Credit Card
2. Call 1 800 SAT SCORE
3. ETS will ask for your name, registration number (on the bottom of the score report) or your Social Security number, and date of test.
4. Your SAT SUBJECT TEST scores will automatically be sent with your SAT scores.

Sending SAT Scores Electronically:

Follow the directions online at www.collegeboard.com

Sending SAT Scores by Mail:

Follow the directions in the SAT Registration Bulletin

Sending ACT Test Scores Electronically:

Follow the directions online at www.actstudent.org/scores/send/

Sending ACT Test Scores by Mail:

Follow the directions in the ACT Registration Bulletin

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

The time has come. You have made your college list, reviewed it with your parents and with your college guidance counselor, and are ready to put pen to paper and start filling out your college applications. Before you begin the process, it is important to keep in mind a few things.

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. Always submit your applications 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.

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 Rutgers and 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 Guidance office strongly encourages all seniors to submit state applications by early October. Students applying to the University of California system need to complete the application by November 30th. **Rutgers and the University of Maryland applications must be mailed in by November 1st.**

The Common Application: Over 450 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 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 send photocopies to participating institutions. The disadvantage is that students are often required to complete a **supplementary application** once the university has received their Common Application. Sometimes, students hastily complete or don't return this additional information and thus jeopardize their applications.

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 are available in the College Guidance office or can be found online at 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.

NOTE: Do not use the institutional application for a college that accepts the Common Application. Whenever possible, you must use the Common Application.

FEBRUARY

Your academic performance in your senior year is an important part of your application package. In February, your mid-year grade report will be sent to the colleges. In addition, unofficial third-quarter grades are important to admission offices in determining wait-list priorities.

SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR: Decisions, Waitlists

In late March or early April, colleges send out their admission decisions. Students who are accepted are invited to visit colleges before making final decisions. Students needing financial aid should not make a final college choice until they have received **all** financial aid information from all of the colleges that have accepted them.

You have until **May 1** to notify **only one college** of your intention to enroll and to contact the other colleges whose offers you will decline, so they can offer admission to others. Ma'ayanot does not support "double-depositing" at the end of the school year. Your final transcript will be sent to **only one college**. Over the summer, if a college that had you on its waitlist should accept you, you must notify the school that you previously accepted of your change of plans. Please be sure to ascertain whether or not you will be allowed to defer your attendance at the school that had wait-listed you, if you intend to study in Israel for the year.

MORE ON 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, business-size 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 goal for the number of students in their freshman class. College admission 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 heard back from admitted students and 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 waitlists or how many students they will admit. The status of the waitlist 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 letter for clues about past waitlist activity. A telephone call to admission offices can also provide students with valuable information.

Being placed on a waitlist can be both a blessing and a curse. The good news is that it could be worse; you might have received a simple letter of denial. Yet there are downsides. Accepting a place on a college's 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 students may be offered admission from the waitlist, 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 and should 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 remain active on a waitlist only 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 a particular admissions office in the waitlist letter. The letter may also give an indication 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. 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 students can take. After thoughtfully considering the above points, if you choose to remain on a waitlist, then you should follow the steps listed below:

- 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 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 Guidance 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 Guidance 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.

If you have any questions or concerns about any of this, please do not hesitate to speak with your college guidance counselor.

Before you know it, it will be your turn to serve as a college counselor. Your input is valuable! Please answer any and all questions that younger students may have about the college process, by sharing your experience, ideas, impressions and suggestions.

At this point in the college admissions process, you may feel a bit confused and nervous. Please relax! Remember that *kol hatchalot kashot!* The two simplest things you can do right now as a junior are: first, be sure you have a calendar that you refer to on a regular basis, and second, begin to store all of your college-related material in one place. If you pay close attention to your calendar and are able to calmly find the papers you are looking for whenever you need them, you will be off to a great start. Remember that you have advocates and we are here for you, both at home and at school, as you begin to take charge of your search for the right college for you.

Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School for Girls Of Bergen County is a member of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) and endorses the principles in NACAC's *Statement of Principles of Good Practice*.

A P P E N D I X

RELIGIOUS LIFE ON THE COLLEGE CAMPUS

Your name _____

When you research a college, be sure to investigate how it meets your religious needs. How do you see your religious requirements (kashrut, learning program, social life, chessed opportunities, Bet Midrash, Bet Kneset, Shabbat) being met at each of the colleges that you are considering? To get started, choose one college to research right now. Visit www.hillel.org and contact the Hillel office of that college; ask your questions of the contact person and ask for the phone number(s)/e-mail addresses of yeshiva graduates attending that school. What have you discovered? Answer the following:

Name of college:

Name and phone number of contact in Hillel office:

Name(s) and contact info of yeshiva graduates attending:

Kashrut:

Shabbat:

Learning:

Bet Kneset:

Bet Midrash:

Social life:

Programs of Jewish interest:

Programs about Israel:

Chessed:

Other considerations:

MA'AYANOT מעיינות

The following are some of the colleges that are popular among yeshiva high school students:

Barnard College

3009 Broadway
New York, New York 10027-6598
212-854-2014

Bergen Community College

400 Paramus Road
Paramus NJ 07652-1595
201-447-7857

Boston University

121 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215
617-353-2300

Brandeis University

415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02254-9110
800-622-0622

Columbia College and School of Engineering

212 Hamilton Hall
New York, New York 10027
212-854-2521

The Cooper Union

30 Cooper Square
New York, New York 1003-7183
212-353-4120

Cornell University

410 Thurston Avenue
Ithaca, New York 14850
607-255-5241

FIT

7th Ave. at 27th St.
New York, New York 10001-5992
212-760-7675

Harvard University

Byerly Hall, 8 Garden St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-495-1551

Johns Hopkins University

3400 North Charles St.
140 Garland Hall
Baltimore, MD 21218
410-516-8171

Rutgers University

P.O. Box 2101
New Brunswick, NJ 08903-2101
908-932-3770

Touro College

160 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10016
(212) 213-2230

University of Maryland at College Park

Mitchell Building
College Park, MD 20742
800-422-5867

University of Massachusetts Amherst

37 Mather Drive
Amherst, MA 01003-9291
(413) 545-0222

University of Pennsylvania

1 College Hall
Philadelphia, PA 19104-6376
215-898-7505

City University of NY (CUNY):

Baruch

17 Lexington Avenue
New York, New York 10015-5585
212-802-2300

Brooklyn

2900 Bedford Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11210
718-951-5001

Hunter

695 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10021
212-772-4490

Queens

65-30 Kissena Blvd.
Flushing, New York 11367
718-997-5600

Yale College

P.O. Box 208234, Yale Station
New Haven, CT 06520-8234
203-432-1900

MIT

77 Massassuchetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139
617-253-4791

New York University

22 Washington Square N.
New York, New York 10011
212-998-4500

Polytechnic University

6 Metrotech Center
Brooklyn, New York 11201-2999
718-260-3100

Princeton University

Box 430
Princeton, NJ 08544-0430
609-258-3060

Ramapo College

Office of Admissions
505 Ramapo Valley Road
Mahwah NJ 07430-1680
201-684-7300

Bar Ilan

011-972-3-531-8274

Stern College

500 West 185 Street
New York, New York 10033-3299
212-960-5277

State University of NY (SUNY):

Albany

1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, N.Y. 12222
518-442-5435

Binghamton

Vestal Parkway East
Binghamton, N.Y. 13902-6001
607-777-2171

Rockland Community College

145 College Road
Suffern, NY 10901
(845) 574-4000

Stony Brook

Stony Brook, N.Y. 11794-1901
516-632-6868

MA'AYANOT מעיינות

<u>Application Checklist</u>	College Name	College Name	College Name
Applications			
Request info/application			
Regular application deadline			
Early application deadline			
Likely? Possible? Reach?			
Grades 4 WKS PRIOR TO DUE DATE			
Request HS transcript sent			
Test Scores YOU (THE STUDENT) ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR CONTACTING ETS TO SEND YOUR SCORES TO THE COLLEGES			
SAT/ACT required			
SAT Subject Tests required			
Send SAT/ACT scores			
Send AP [®] scores			
Letters of Recommendation			
Request recommendations			
Send thank you notes to recommenders			
Essays			
Write essay/s			
Proof essay/s for spelling and grammar			
Have two people read your essay/s			
Show college guidance counselor your rough draft (during Oct/Nov)			
Interviews			
Interview at college			
Alumni interview			
Send thank you notes to interviewer/s			

Finalize Your Application			
Submit rough draft of all applications to college guidance			

Send and Track Your Application			
Make copies of all application materials			
Apply online			
Include application fee			
Sign application			
Mail application on time			
Confirm receipt of application materials			
Send supplemental material, if needed			
Financial Aid Forms			
Priority financial aid deadline			
Regular financial aid deadline			
Mail FAFSA			
Mail PROFILE, if needed			
Mail institutional aid form, if needed			
Mail state aid form, if needed			
After You Send Your Application			
Receive admission letter			
Receive financial aid award letter			
Send deposit			
Notify college guidance of your college decision			
Write to the colleges where you are declining admission			
Write to your college to request deferral			
Good luck!			



College Visit Summary Sheet[∞]

Before visiting a college be sure to review carefully the information in the school brochure or Web site. Upon completion of your visit, write your responses to the following issues. Do this for each college visited and then compare your summaries for each.

College or University: _____ **Location:** _____
Date of Visit: _____ **Interviewer:** _____

Student Body

(Impression of student body in terms of appearance, style, friendliness, degree of interest and enthusiasm, diversity of social, religious, and ethnic background.)

Academic Factors

(How serious about academics are the students; how good are the facilities for academic pursuits; how varied is the curriculum; how strict or flexible are the requirements; how appropriate is the college for your interests?)

Religious Life on Campus

(Does the college meet your needs for kashrut, Shabbat, learning program, social life, chessed opportunities, Bet Midrash, Bet Knesset?)

Name and phone number of contact in Hillel office: _____

Name(s) and contact info of students who are yeshiva graduates: _____

Campus Facilities and Social Life

(How complete and modern are the facilities, such as dorms, library, Internet system, student center, athletic complex; how active is the social life; how diverse is it; is it a suitcase or commuter campus?)

Specific Impressions

(Describe a course, major, minor, club, or special experience that is not available at any of the other schools you are considering)

Overall Impressions

(What did you like least and most; what seemed different or special. What type of student do you feel would be happiest there? Are you the type?)

Rating

(On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the top grade, rate the college on the basis of your interest in it.)

[∞] Based in part on Greene, Howard and Matthew, *Making it into a Top College*, HarperCollins, p. 49



Office of College Guidance

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO FILLING OUT APPLICATIONS

Read the directions thoroughly and follow the instructions.

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 on transcript and on 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.

Ma'ayanot Information: Our CEEB number is 311452. The College Guidance office address is Ma'ayanot Yeshiva High School, 1650 Palisade Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666. The phone number is 201-833-4307 ext. 105. The fax number is 201-833-0816.

Fee/Fee Waiver: Personal checks or money orders are acceptable. If you receive substantial financial support from Ma'ayanot, see your college guidance counselor for application fee waivers. Be sure to request them 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 want to see your full senior schedule. Be sure to denote Honors-level or AP-level courses.

Influences On Your Decision To Apply: This question is sometimes 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. The most selective schools, however, often look at your answer to this question as an indication of your familiarity with the school, and your understanding of how this particular school matches up with what you are looking for.

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 long list of schools still under consideration.

Language, If Other Than English: If a student has a low SAT verbal 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 that 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: Students are responsible for contacting the Educational Testing Service directly and requesting that scores be sent to their university choices. At certain times in the admission process, universities may contact Ma'ayanot and request scores. Students who want to report only ACT scores are likewise responsible for contacting ACT directly and requesting that scores be sent to their university choices.

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 in being involved in a variety of activities, admission officers tend to look for students with distinction.

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 take on a leading role, perhaps in clubs/organizations or on athletic teams. If an organization does not exist at Ma'ayanot, 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 Ma'ayanot's Chessed Committee, 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 9th grade.

Disciplinary Violations: When an application inquires about any disciplinary violations (academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct), you are expected to answer the question frankly and honestly. Be sure to review your response with your college counselor.

Recommendations

College Counselor or Secondary School Report (SSR): Most colleges and universities require the College Guidance 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 College Guidance counselor. In the applications that you receive from most colleges, you will find a Secondary School Report form.

Class Rank: Many schools request information on class rank and ask the counselor to compare students within certain categories. Ma'ayanot does not rank its students.

Midyear School Report Forms: Students do not need to submit the midyear report forms found in most college applications. Ma'ayanot sends final winter term grades, which are usually available in early February, to all schools on a student's list, even if a student was accepted under an Early Decision plan. 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 junior or senior year. Some schools will require an English teacher and one other instructor, but be sure to read each application closely. Be sure to ask your teachers early – at least one month in advance, and absolutely no later than November 16, 2012. Fill out the top portion of the form with your name, address, and Social Security number and provide your teachers with pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelopes, with Ma'ayanot as the return address. Share your interests with your teachers, either through conversations or by providing an outline. Ma'ayanot faculty 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!

Recommendation Waiver: Students are advised to opt to waive the right to see the recommendation because it implies that the recommendation was written candidly.

Additional Recommendations: If you have one or two additional people 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 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 art or music may want to send samples of their work. Speak with the admissions office to find out the format the college prefers.



Office of College Guidance

WRITING YOUR COLLEGE ESSAYS*

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 admissions committee. It is an interview on paper. Colleges ask these essay questions for two reasons:

1. To learn more about you. Who is the real person behind these credentials?
2. 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 Junior 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 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. With practice you can find that voice. The college admissions committees expect 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 and being flippant or cute. Avoid gimmicks, 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 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.

* All students should purchase, read and absorb Harry Bauld's *On Writing the College Essay*



College Glossary

ACT

The American College Testing Program Assessment is comparable to the SAT I and II. It includes tests in English, mathematics, reading and science reasoning. Many colleges accept ACT (plus Writing) scores in place of SAT scores. **Students with special needs must apply for accommodations specifically for the ACT. SAT accommodations do not work for ACT. See Mrs. Vitow for information and assistance.**

Associate's Degree

A degree awarded by community colleges, junior colleges, and some bachelor's degree-granting colleges and universities upon completion of a course of study usually lasting two years

Bachelor's, or Baccalaureate, Degree

A degree received after the satisfactory completion of a four- or five-year, full-time program of study at a college or university. Includes Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS).

Candidates Reply Date Agreement

A college subscribing to this College Board sponsored agreement will not require any applicants offered admission as freshmen to notify the college of their decision to attend (or to accept an offer of financial aid) before May 1.

CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE

A supplemental financial aid form used by some private colleges to award their own private financial aid funds. Schools indicate if they require this form. Forms are available at Ma'ayanot in the fall.

Deferred Admission

The practice of permitting students to postpone enrollment, usually for one year, after acceptance to the college.

Early Action

Students who apply under a college's early action plan receive a decision earlier than the standard response date but are not required to enroll at that college or to make a deposit prior to May 1. Prepare your applications to other colleges, ready to be mailed in December (should the need arise), as well.

Early Decision

Students who apply under early decision commit to enroll at the college if admitted and offered a satisfactory financial aid package. Application deadlines are usually in November or December with a mid- to late December notification date. Prepare your applications to other colleges, ready to be mailed in December (should the need arise), as well.

Early Decision Plan

A student applying under EDPA must withdraw applications from all other colleges as soon as she is notified of acceptance by the first-choice college.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

A form completed by all applicants for federal student aid. May be filed any time *after* January 1 of the year for which one is seeking aid (e.g., after January 1, 2008, for academic year 2008-2009 assistance).

Grade Point Average (GPA)

A measure of the student's academic achievement calculated by averaging the final grades in each subject.

Major

The student's academic field of specialization. In general, most courses in the major are taken during the junior and senior years.

Rolling Admission

An admission procedure by which the college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision without delay.

Selective or Competitive College

A college that has more applicants than it is able to accept. The more competition there is for a place in a particular college, the more selective that college is.

TAP

Tuition Assistance Program. Provides financial assistance to New York State residents who attend college in New York State. Applications are sent by the state to the students in late spring.

Transcript

A copy of a student's official academic record listing all courses taken and grades received at an institution. A transcript is usually required as part of the college application. Ma'ayanot transcripts are sent to colleges through the college guidance office. **Students who have completed coursework at other high schools must request official copies of the transcript from those schools.** Those copies should be sent to the college guidance office at Ma'ayanot, which will mail them together with the Ma'ayanot material.



Websites for College Planning

This list is a compilation of the best of different kinds of websites that offer information, advice, and interesting articles and link you directly to college and university home pages.

The best place to start your college process is at

<https://connection.naviance.com/fc/signin.php?hsid=maayanot>

Please be advised that many sites change locations. These are current as of January 3, 2012.

Comprehensive Sites

These sites offer many links and resources for admission, financial aid and testing. Many require you to sign in.

www.collegeboard.com College Board Online. Excellent resource for every phase of the college application process.

www.PrincetonReview.com The Princeton Review's website. Links to college home pages and to electronic applications. Also offers information and tips on financial aid and scholarships; search alphabetically for any college on the www.

Direct Links to College Home Pages

[www.\(college name\).edu](http://www.(college name).edu) Home page for most colleges and universities.

www.biu.ac.il Bar Ilan home page.

<http://overseas.huji.ac.il/> Hebrew University's Rothberg International School home page

Financial Aid

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/PORTALSWebApp/students/english/index.jsp> Student financial assistance programs from the U.S. Department of Education. Includes links to FAFSA, colleges and summary information.

www.educationplanner.org An award-winning website that assists the student in choosing a career or finding a school. Also offers online applications for admission and student aid as well as financial aid calculators and award analyzers. Home to one of the world's largest free databases of scholarship money.

www.finaid.org A comprehensive list of links, including financial aid forms and scholarships; provides the best links to sources of information about student financial aid on the Internet.

<http://www.cityofcollegedreams.org/> Online counseling service which offers advice on financial aid.

<http://weeklyschorshipalert.com/> Delivers 1 to 5 college scholarship announcements to your inbox each week.

www.hesaa.org Higher Education Assistance Authority of New Jersey's website. Provides downloadable applications for NJCLASS loans, which help bridge the gap between financial aid, scholarships, federal student loan eligibility and family contributions.

www.nelliemae.org Information on loans.

www.students.gov Created by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Student Financial Assistance, this website connects students with U.S. government services and information, including information on careers, planning an education and paying for college.

<http://www.campusvisit.com/amtrak/> Discount tickets for train travel to colleges. Print the form a week ahead of your planned trip, as it requires an official school signature.

Jewish Life on Campus

www.hillel.org Information about religious life on individual campuses, e-mail addresses, direct links to websites. A good jumping off point to connect with students at the colleges that interest you.

<http://www.jliconline.org/index.php> JLIC (Orthodox Union) places orthodox rabbinic couples to serve as torah educators within the hillels on local college campuses.

<http://www.chabad.edu/> Information on Chabad on Campus.

<http://www.ou.org/publications/college.html> At this website, you may order Rabbi Joseph Polak's important and informative pamphlet, "Choosing a College – a Guide for Observant Students", which answers many questions that parents and students have about serious issues for the orthodox student who is contemplating college choices.

College Applications

<https://www.commonapp.org/CommonApp/default.aspx> Common Application home page

http://www.compassprep.com/admissions_req_subjects.aspx SAT II requirements (and options) at American colleges. Please read the page carefully, and note the cautionary line that appears just before the list: **"Please visit the school website or call the admissions office for the most accurate information."**

<http://students.berkeley.edu/apa/personalstatement/index.htm> Practical help with writing your application essay

www.njtransfer.org Helps community college students transfer community college credit in the state of New Jersey

<http://www.maayanot.org/files/TRANSCRIPT%20REQUEST%20FOR%20GRADUATES.pdf>

Ma'ayanot alumnae transcript request information and protocol

College Information

<http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/apcreditpolicy/index.jsp> AP credit policy at colleges. Important: always double-check with the college itself for its most current policy on accepting AP credit.

Career Websites

If you are interested in defining your interests more clearly, you may find some of the following websites helpful.

www.mapping-your-future.org/planning

<http://services.aamc.org/postbac/> Post baccalaureate premedical programs



OFFICE OF COLLEGE GUIDANCE
Reading List for College Planning

Barron's Profiles of American Colleges, Barron's Educational Series

*Bauld, Harry, *On Writing the College Application Essay*

Coburn, Karen L. and Treeger, Madge L., *Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years*

Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADD, Thomson/Peterson's

The College Board College Handbook, The College Board

Elster, Charles Harrington and Elliot, Joseph, *Tooth and Nail: A Novel Approach to the New SAT*, Harcourt

Greene, Howard and Matthew, *Making it into a Top College*, HarperCollins

Index of Majors and Graduate Degrees, The College Board

Leider, Anna and Robert, *Don't Miss Out: The Ambitious Student's Guide to Financial Aid*, Octameron

Peterson's Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities, Peterson's

Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges, Peterson's

Sandler, Michael, *College Confidence with ADD: The Ultimate Success Manual for ADD Students, from Applying to Academics, Preparation to Social Success and Everything Else You Need to Know*

The Official Study Guide for All SAT Subject Tests (Real SATs), The College Board

Schneider, Zola, *Campus Visits and College Interviews*, The College Board

The K&W Guide to colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADD, The Princeton Review

The Official SAT Study Guide, The College Board

The Real ACT Prep Guide: The Only Guide to Include 3 Real ACT Tests, ACT Org

* This is far and away the best manual on writing the college essay. Every student should own it and read it.