

College Admissions and Readiness Pt. 2

College Admission Testing

What is Required to Apply to Most Colleges?

- Application
 - Can be found on the college website or the Common App
- Official High School Transcript
 - Must be requested and sent by the guidance office
- Official Test Scores
 - Preferably comes from the testing center
- Personal Essay
- Application Fee
 - Free if student is on free/reduced lunch or is a 21st Century Scholar

Testing

- What tests are used in college admissions?
 - SAT & ACT
 - SAT is produced by The College Board
 - ACT is produced by ACT Incorporated
- Why are tests required?
 - Tests give additional information into student performance
 - Grades can indicate not only ability, but also work ethic
 - Tests are a stronger indicator of ability & content knowledge

Testing

- What do they cost?
 - SAT=\$52.50/ACT=\$54.50
 - Free if student is on free/reduced lunch or 21st Century Scholar
- When do I take the tests?
 - College admission testing should be completed during the spring of the junior year ideally
 - Don't wait until the fall of senior year if possible because sports prevent testing for many students

Testing/SAT

- What do the tests cover?
 - SAT
 - Three Main Sections
 - Critical Reading, Mathematics, and Writing
 - Ten Total Tests
 - Three Reading, Three Math, Three Writing, One Variable
 - » Critical Reading
 - All questions are multiple choice
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point is deducted for wrong answers
 - 67 total questions, 70 minutes in length
 - Sections are 20 or 25 minutes each in length
 - Depending on student reading speed, about 30 seconds per question
 - 48/67 passage based (analyzing information, logic, evaluating author's assumptions, comprehension)
 - 19/67 sentence completion (meaning of words & sentence structure)

Testing/SAT

» Mathematics

- Multiple choice and student-response
- $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point is deducted for wrong answers on multiple choice section
- 54 total questions, 70 minutes in length
- About 1 minute per question
- Sections are 20 or 25 minutes each in length
- 44/54 multiple choice, 10 student response
- 11-13 numbers and operations (percent, ratios, number series)
- 19-21 Algebra and functions
- 14-16 Geometry
- 6-7 data analysis and probability

Testing/SAT

» Writing

- 49 multiple choice, 1 essay; 60 minutes in length
- About 45 seconds per question
- $\frac{1}{4}$ of a point is deducted for wrong answers
- Sections are 25 or 10 minutes each in length
- Multiple choice includes improving sentences, fixing sentence errors, and improving paragraphs
- Essay is meant to test writer's ability to develop a theory, support a point of view, and check proper usage of grammar

Testing/ACT

– ACT

- Five sections

- English, Reading, Mathematics, Science, and Writing

- No point deductions are given for wrong answers. It is good to guess

- » English

- 75 multiple choice questions, 45 minutes

- About 30 seconds per question

- Tests grammar, sentence structure, organization of thoughts

- » Reading

- 40 multiple questions, 35 minutes

- Depending on reading speed, about 30 seconds per question

- Tests reading comprehension

Testing/ACT

» Mathematics

- 60 multiple choice questions, 60 minutes
- About 1 minute per question
- Tests PreAlgebra (15-20%), Algebra I and II (30-40%), Geometry (15-35%) and trigonometry (10-15%)

» Science

- 40 multiple choice questions, 35 minutes
- Depending on reading speed, about 30 seconds per question
- Tests skills in analyzing data, interpreting data, and problem solving

» Writing

- 1 essay, 30 minutes
- Tests proper use of standard written English, ability to make a clear point, organization of content, etc.

Testing

- What is a good score?
 - National average SAT score is 500/800 per section
 - National average ACT composite score is 21/36
 - Each section of the ACT is assigned a score out of 36 points. The composite is an average of those sections besides Writing.
 - There is no passing, but every college has an average score based on students they have admitted
 - Big state schools like IU and Purdue would expect above national average for admission
 - GPA is a factor when determining an admissible scores. Higher GPAs can usually mean lower test scores.
 - It sometimes helps to have higher math scores if planning to study in a field that uses math such as engineering

Testing

- How do you prepare for the tests?
 - SAT
 - Take PSAT as a sophomore/junior
 - SAT Prep books are available at bookstores
 - Khan Academy
 - www.collegeboard.org
 - Complete free SAT
 - Review PSAT scores and questions
 - Sign up for Question of the Day
 - An online course is available (\$70)

Testing

– ACT

- PLAN test is offered, but not at Western Boone
- ACT Prep books are available at bookstores
- www.actstudent.org
 - Online prep course (\$20)
 - Official prep book available (\$30)
 - Question of the Day
 - Test Tips
 - Practice questions

Testing

- Other Preparation Options
 - SAT Prep Course at Western Boone
 - Usually runs from March-May (the day before the May test date)
 - Cost \$225 last year
 - Meets 3 mornings per week from 7-8am
 - Services provided by Sylvan, Princeton Review, Kaplan all cost \$\$\$
 - www.number2.com
 - Free
 - Practice questions and test tips

Testing

- Which test do I take?
 - Both, if finances allow
 - Both tests are accepted at colleges and universities
 - Both tests take approximately 5 hours with breaks and answer sheet completion included
 - SAT is more popular in Indiana, but the ACT is widely used in the Midwest. East and west coast states typically use SAT more

Testing

- Which test do I take? (cont)
 - Think about the content, format, and scoring method and decide which would be better for your needs/skills
 - Ask yourself...
 - » What is the highest math course I have taken so far?
 - » Am I a quick reader?
 - » Do I understand what I read easily?
 - » Do I get bored with reading easily?
 - » Can I make good assumptions or am I better at understanding facts?
 - » Am I a good writer?
 - » Do I understand scientific facts?

Practice