

PROVIDENCE GUIDE

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Senior Parent Night October 27!

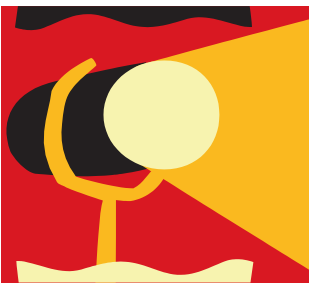


The Providence College Counseling Department invites parents of seniors to attend our Senior Parent Night on Thursday, October 27 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Upper School Media Center. We will be hosting a panel of past Providence parents to share about their experiences in the college admissions process. Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Shirah, the senior college counselors, will moderate and also hold a question and answer session about general college admissions questions. Space is limited, so please RSVP with the Counseling Office at 904-223-5270, option 4.

Providence Counseling Department Attends National Conference

The Providence School Counseling Department attended the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC) national conference September 20-24 in New Orleans, LA. This professional development opportunity centered on workshops highlighting trends and issues impacting the college admissions industry. In addition, it was an opportunity for our department to make contacts with other college admissions representatives from all over the nation. Providence's involvement with this organization enhances the services that the Counseling Department can offer, which in turn directly benefits our students for college admissions. Some of the sessions counselors attended included:

- *Hotspots, Hooks and Hidden Agendas: An Inside Look at the College Admission Process*
- *The Changing Role of Teacher Recommendations in Highly Selective Admission*
- *NCAA Eligibility Center*
- *The Impact of the Wait List in College Admission*
- *The Myths Versus Realities of Successfully Applying for Postsecondary Scholarships*
- *Navigating Musica and Fine Arts Admission*



Senior Spotlight

UF's Innovation Academy

Bright Futures Funds will be able to be used for IA. Please note, however, that Bright Futures covers TWO semesters of school only. For information about the Innovation Academy at UF, including majors and financial aid information, go to <http://www.admissions.ufl.edu/ia.html>.

Students interested in applying to the University of Florida may want to consider UF's new enrollment model, Innovation Academy (IA). IA will provide students with an intellectual and social community within the larger context of UF and their majors, creating a small-college experience in combination with the tremendous resources and opportunities available at a large research university.

Innovation Academy operates on a spring-summer calendar. IA students will take UF courses on campus during the spring and summer terms instead of the traditional fall and spring terms, leaving each fall free for online courses, study

abroad, internships, research, community service and employment. Additionally, students will be able to participate in fall semester activities available to all UF students.

IA will follow this spring-summer on-campus pattern for the entire undergraduate degree program. Under the direction of a faculty coordinator, IA will facilitate participation in focused interactions and small group experiences that explore the dimensions of innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship. This *shared* thematic approach within and across a small group of students with varying academic interests is one of the most exciting features of Innovation Academy. Co-curricular experiences could

include colloquia, seminars, guest lectures and travel.

The University of Florida recognized that more talented students apply to the university than capacity will allow. This situation prompted the university to devise a plan to increase opportunity and access to UF by expanding capacity during the spring and summer when space is available. Innovation Academy is the result of that effort. The academy adopts an enrollment calendar that will allow UF to align resources with capacity and to increase the opportunity for more students to enroll without impacting class size or student/faculty ratio.



It's Star Time for Seniors!

Please keep your counselors in the loop about where you've been admitted. We are hanging stars to show where you have been accepted and celebrate the good news! To get a star, please turn in a copy of your acceptance letter to your counselor.

Recommendation Guidelines and Tips for Seniors

With college applications also comes recommendation letters. Please keep in mind the following guidelines and tips regarding this vital aspect to your application:

- ◆ Give your teacher and/or counselor a minimum of two weeks to complete these letters. There are many requests for these in the fall, and adhering to the two-week rule will ensure that all students can have a thoughtful, specific letter in a timely fashion.

- ◆ Choose a teacher that you have a good relationship with to write you a recommendation. Make sure that you have excellent behavior, attendance and work ethic in those courses.
- ◆ Share with your teacher/counselor points that you would like for them highlight about you, especially if there are specific experiences and characteristics that the college or university may be looking for.

- ◆ Your teacher and counselor can't show you your recommendation for confidentiality purposes. This is a rule of college admissions and scholarships.

Please note that your counselor cannot write for you a recommendation without turning in the Student College Counseling Survey. In addition, the optional Parent College Counseling Survey is a valuable resource for information to highlight your best attributes. These forms can found online at: <http://www.prov.org/counseling/high-school-news.cfm#seniorPacket>.



Senior Conferences Wrapped Up

Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Shirah have wrapped up their individual meetings with all seniors. They discussed with students test scores, choosing a list of colleges to apply to, and general college admissions information.

The next round of individual meetings will be with seniors earning below a C in any subject on their quarter one report card. Seniors are encouraged to make an appointment anytime with their counselor.

Frequently Asked Questions

As you can imagine, we field a lot of questions for the college counselors. Here is what people have been asking about lately:

- ◆ *What are Fast Apps? Should I fill one out?* Fast Apps are a newer trend among colleges and universities. While the reasons that a college or university may offer a Fast App may vary, the schools generally use them to get more college applications. A Fast App may have some of the student information filled out, be free of charge, or a shortened version of the original application. This understandably causes confusion for students and parents. If a school offers a Fast App as an option, there is no harm in using it. However, if the standard application gives the student an opportunity to highlight his or her accomplishments and character in a way that the Fast App does not, then use the original application.

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REMAINING COLLEGE VISITS

Monday, Oct. 17 at 1:29 Guidance – Presbyterian College with Meredith Biber

Tuesday, Oct. 25 at 10:17 US Media – Mercer Univ. with Kaitlin Schlosser

Wednesday, Nov. 2 at 11:11 Guidance – Sewanee: Univ. of the South with Ryan Cassell

Friday, Nov. 4 at 10:17 US Media – Furman Univ. with Lindsey Walker

Monday, Nov. 7 at 1:29 Guidance – Lehigh Univ. with Maria Asayag

Wednesday, Nov. 9 at 9:09 Guidance – Catawba College with Dana Dolbow

Monday, Nov. 14 at 10:17 US Media – Florida Atlantic Univ. with Justin Duval



Featured Scholarship

The Jefferson Scholars Foundation – The University of Virginia

The Jefferson Scholars Foundation pays a stipend sufficient to cover the full cost of attending the University. Successful candidates have demonstrated uncommon abilities, exceptional leadership talents, and an understanding of the broader community around them. High Schools can nominate one student and the application must be completed by November 1st. Please notify the college counseling office no later than October 25st if you are interested in being nominated.

Junior Classroom Counseling: U.S. News College Rankings

Mrs. Rose went into classes last week to discuss with students the widely known *U.S. News Best Colleges Rankings*. Included in the discussion was exactly what criteria U.S. News uses to rank schools. How does this ranking system work? How much weight do students and parents place on it? How much should students and parents place on this report when deciding upon a college? Whatever the answer is, it is always important to make an informed decision.

How *U.S. News* Calculates the College Rankings

Go to www.usnewsuniversitydirectory.com to view the full report

U.S. News uses four main groupings when ranking: National Universities, National Liberal Arts Colleges, Regional Universities, and Regional Colleges. The schools in the Regional Universities and Regional Colleges and categories are placed into one of four geographic regions: North, South, Midwest, and West.

The indicators *U.S. News* use to capture academic quality fall into a number of categories:

- assessment by administrators at peer institutions
- retention of students
- faculty resources
- student selectivity
- financial resources
- alumni giving
- high school counselor ratings of colleges and “graduation rate performance” (for National Universities and National Liberal Arts Colleges)

The indicators include input measures that reflect a school’s student body, its faculty, and its financial resources, along with outcome measures that signal how well the institution does its job of educating students:

Undergraduate academic reputation (weighting: 22.5 percent for National Universities and National Liberal Arts Colleges; 25 percent for Regional Universities and Regional Colleges): The *U.S. News* ranking formula gives significant weight to the opinions of those in a position to judge a school’s undergraduate academic excellence. The academic peer assessment survey allows top academics—presidents, provosts, and deans of admissions—to account for intangibles at peer institutions such as faculty dedication to teaching.

Retention (20 percent for the National Universities and National Liberal Arts Colleges and 25 percent for Regional Universities and Regional Colleges): The higher the proportion of freshmen who return to campus for sophomore year and eventually graduate, the better a school is apt to be at offering the classes and services that students need to succeed.

Faculty resources (20 percent): Research shows that the more satisfied students are about their contact with professors, the more they will learn and the more likely it is they will graduate.

Student selectivity (15 percent): A school’s academic atmosphere is determined in part by the abilities and ambitions of the student body. We factor in the admissions test scores for all enrollees who took the Critical Reading and Math portions of the SAT and the Composite ACT score (50 percent of the selectivity score); the proportion of enrolled freshmen at national universities and national liberal arts colleges who graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school classes or in the top quarter at regional universities and regional colleges (40 percent); and the acceptance rate, or the ratio of students admitted to applicants (10 percent). The data are for the fall 2010 entering class.

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Sophomore Timeline: What Should I Be Doing Now as a Sophomore?

Fall (August-October)

- ◆ Make an appointment with your guidance counselor to talk about planning for college: Together you can discuss programs, majors, degrees and careers and figure out which colleges offer the degree or major you want. If you've identified some universities you're interested in, make sure you're meeting the academic requirements for admission.
- ◆ Study hard to keep that GPA up. Your grade point average is cumulative and will appear prominently in your school transcript. Universities scrutinize your GPA when considering your transcript for college admission. A higher GPA also improves your chances of being awarded scholarships.
- ◆ Participate in extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts or volunteer groups.



Freshman Focus

In September, freshman classes had the opportunity to attend a presentation by Sarah D'Anna, a former admissions officer at the University of North Florida. Mrs. D'Anna encouraged the 9th grade students to begin preparing for college now by earning high grades, setting goals, and thinking about what type of college they might like to attend. The students were then invited to participate in a discussion about preparing for college. As part of this discussion, Mrs. D'Anna asked the freshman students this simple question: "If you could go back in time and offer advice to your 8th grade self, what advice would you give?" The students offered some very valuable advice, not only for their peers, but for students at all grade levels.

- ◆ Learn to manage your time
- ◆ Study EVERY night
- ◆ Don't procrastinate
- ◆ Be ready for more homework
- ◆ Get better grades
- ◆ Tests are difficult, study harder!
- ◆ If you are having trouble in a class, ask for help
- ◆ Avoid distractions when you study
- ◆ Learn how to balance your afterschool activities and homework
- ◆ Start thinking about college now because everything you do in high school counts!

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

Do I wait to send my application until my scores are in for my standardized tests? First and foremost, you must adhere to any and all deadlines that a college or university has. If you miss the deadline, you will greatly reduce your chances for admission. With that said, if a school has an upcoming deadline and you are not sure if your scores from a test will be in, send your application now. Send any and all existing scores along with the other required application materials. Send your new scores to that school as well. Typically colleges will automatically take the scores from a September or October test administration and add it to the student file in time for a admissions review. If you take a later test, still send those scores as they may be useful in the event you are waitlisted or denied.

Why doesn't Providence provide a specific rank? Providence School utilizes a quartile system for ranking our students. This is for the benefit of the student since we are small, highly competitive academic environment. Many schools similar to our size and academic rigor use this system all over the country. Colleges and universities recognize this method of ranking and never hold it against a student for any reason. In fact, a quartile ranking system is often a marker of a rigorous academic program and therefore may give the student an edge when a school is evaluating the strength of his or her schedule.

I am afraid that I will not get accepted into my first choice schools. What if I don't get in anywhere?



This is a common fear among students. It is also one that students need to put to rest. There truly is a college for every student, in particular for the students at our school, no matter their current grade point average or test scores. The key is to have a well-rounded list of choices for college applications: a competitive list (a small number selective schools), a foundational list (a few schools that are safe to assume that you will gain admission) and a safely list (if all else fails, I will definitely be able to go here). Your college counselor will be able to help you come up with a realistic, concise list if you are having trouble. A great tool to aid in this process is College Board's College Matchmaker at <http://collegesearch.collegeboard.com/search/index.jsp>.

When I check my admissions status on-line, it doesn't show that they have my high school transcript. Did you send it? If you requested for our registrar to send an official transcript using our pink slip system, it was sent within 24 hours in most cases. We send the transcript, record the date that it was sent and send a receipt to the student for his or her records. Many times a college or university's on-line system takes extra time to update, even after the transcript arrives at the school. If more than a month has gone by since you made your request, check with our office.

I am hoping to get recruited for athletics. Should I wait to apply until after I get recruited? Do not wait to apply. Choose schools that you would like to attend based on other factors besides athletics. Adhere to the deadlines and requirements that those schools have, and do not assume that you will get recruited. Athletic departments at colleges and universities work on a different schedule from admissions, and you may not find out if you can play on a team until very late in the year or even the summer. If you have not yet committed to playing for a college or university, move forward with your applications just like any other student at this time.

As always, if you have questions, please feel free to call or e-mail our department. We are a wealth of information and are delighted to help!



Scholarships requiring a nomination:

Please notify the college counseling office if you are interested in being nominated for any of the scholarships below.

The Lombardi Scholarship and Stamps Scholar Program – UF Honors Program Scholarship

<http://www.honors.ufl.edu/Lombardi-and-Stamps-Scholars.aspx>

Seniors meeting the UF Honors Program requirements are eligible to apply. High schools can nominate one student per year. Please notify the college counseling office by November 1st if you are interested in being nominated.

Nominations will be based on:

- Academic Achievement
- Service to the community
- Extracurricular involvement
- Demonstration of leadership
- Evidence of strong moral character
- Exceptional creativity



How *U.S. News* Calculates the College Rankings, continued

Financial resources (10 percent): Generous per-student spending indicates that a college can offer a wide variety of programs and services. *U.S. News* measures financial resources by using the average spending per student on instruction, research, student services, and related educational expenditures in the 2009 and 2010 fiscal years. Spending on sports, dorms, and hospitals doesn't count.

Graduation rate performance (7.5 percent; for national universities and national liberal arts colleges only): This indicator of added value shows the effect of the college's programs and policies on the graduation rate of students after controlling for spending and student characteristics such as test scores and the proportion receiving Pell grants. We measure the difference between a school's six-year graduation rate for the class that entered in 2004 and the rate we predicted for the class. If the actual graduation rate is higher than the predicted rate, the college is enhancing achievement.

Alumni giving rate (5 percent): This reflects the average percentage of living alumni with bachelor's degrees who gave to their school during 2008-2009 and 2009-2010, which is an indirect measure of student satisfaction.

Please visit : <http://www.usnewsuniversitydirectory.com/undergraduate-colleges/methodology-bc.aspx> to view the full *U.S. News* full report.

School Counseling Department

If you have questions for Providence's School Counseling Department, feel free to contact us at (904) 223-5270, option 4.

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