



# American Hebrew Academy College Counseling Newsletter

**Inside This Issue:**

Finding Colleges That are Right for You	1
2008-09 Application Statistics	1
Deferred or Wait-Listed: What Should You Do?	2
Exploring Career Interests in Naviance	3
AHA Seniors Hear Back from Colleges	4
Useful and Interesting College Search Websites	4
Top 5 Ways to Impress an Admissions Officer	5
Updates, Notices and Tips	6

## Finding Colleges That are Right for You

In almost any conversation you have with Dr. Tarbox, the topic will keep coming back to creating your college "list." While you may already have some colleges in mind, you will undoubtedly hear about a lot more over the next 12 months. Your peers might tell you about colleges to which they are applying. Current seniors will be getting acceptances from colleges and those may intrigue you. Your parents may talk about colleges they have heard about. Where do you start?

The best way to start creating your own college list is to spend some time doing a little introspection. What things do you like to do? What subjects do you enjoy? Would you be happier at a larger university, a medium

sized institution or would you enjoy a smaller, more intimate liberal arts institution? Is it important for you to be near a larger metropolitan area or is a more rural environment enjoyable? What kinds of Jewish life organizations do you want on campus? (You can check some of this on the Hillel website—[www.hillel.org](http://www.hillel.org).)

A good first step in doing some introspection is to do the PERSONALITY assessment in Naviance (<http://connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew>). When you do the personality survey, the results will discuss your own unique traits and how those might translate into careers. It will give suggestions of different careers you may want to investigate,

and from there you can find schools that offer those majors.

Then make a list of other things that are important in your college decisions. From there, do a COLLEGE SEARCH in Naviance and enter the variables from your list. What colleges did Naviance come up with? You can enter those same variables into other search engines like the one on the College Board web site ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)), or at the Petersons website ([www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)).

Make an appointment to see Dr. Tarbox to discuss your preliminary list. She may have other suggestions and also has resources in her office that can help you

## 2008-09 College Application Statistics

The College Counseling Office sent out a total of 277 college applications for the 36 seniors in the class. As in previous years, the average number of applications per senior was around 8. The number of applications ranged from a low of one to a high of twenty-six.

Five seniors received Early Decision acceptances to colleges. (Early Decision is a binding decision. If a student applies under the Early Deci-

sion plan, they are committing to attending that university if accepted.)

In addition to the five seniors who were accepted Early Decision, twenty-five other seniors have already received acceptances under Early Action and Rolling Admission plans. April 1st is the usual notification date for Regular Decision applicants. We will hear more good news by then!

## Hillel at the University of Chicago



## Deferred or Wait-Listed: What Should You Do?

Once you turn in your college application, one of several things will happen. For Early Action or Early Decision applications, you may get accepted, denied, or DEFERRED. In March or April of your senior year, you may hear from a college that you have been WAIT LISTED. What do these mean and what can you do to improve your chance of getting accepted?

### DEFERRED

If you are deferred (this happens with Early Action or Early Decision Applications in late fall), the college has effectively said that they are not admitting you right now, but want to see what else you can submit that will possibly move you into ACCEPTED status in the spring. There are several things you need to do.

First, you need to make sure you are working very hard in your senior classes, so that your first and second term grades are good. The College Counseling Office can fax these grades to the college.

Second, you need to contact the admissions office at the school and express your continued interest in the college. Let them know you will be sending in additional information to support your application.

Third, you need to keep track of new achievements, recognitions and awards that you have received since your initial application was submitted. Send these updates to the admissions office in a formal letter. You may also submit a

new letter of recommendation, preferably one that talks about your current activities and achievements, either in school or outside of school.

### WAIT LISTED

Most college admissions decisions are finalized in the spring—you either get accepted or denied admission. But occasionally you get a WAIT LIST letter. This is neither an admission or a denial. The letter is saying that you are probably very qualified for admission, but they simply had a large number of great applicants who may have had a slightly stronger record.

If you want to remain on the college's wait list, you need to notify them. At the same time, you will probably be submitting a deposit to another college that has accepted you. Wait lists can be frustrating. You never know if sometime in May, June or July the college may send you a letter saying there is an opening and asking if you are still interested. Alternatively, you may never hear from the college if they receive enough deposits to fill their fall class.

As with deferrals, you need to send additional information to the college, updating your original application with new information. Stay in touch with the college. Send them an email every couple of weeks with updates. If there ARE openings on the wait list, the college may first look at applicants they believe are seriously interested in them. Do NOT say you want to stay on the wait list if you are firmly committed to attending another college. Instead, send the college that offered you a place on the wait list a polite email thanking them for the opportunity, but letting them know you have chosen to enroll at another college. They will appreciate the courtesy. This reflects well both on you and on AHA .

Pictured at Left:

University of Chicago  
Chicago, Illinois

Percent of Applicants Accepted: 35%

Middle 50% SAT Scores for Students Accepted for 07-08:

Critical Reading: 670-770

Math: 660-760

GPA of 3.5 (90 or higher): 95%

GPA of 3.0 to 3.49 (85-89): 3%

GPA of 2.0 to 2.99 (75 to 84): 2%

Fun Fact: Virginio Ferrari (a socialist) was commissioned to design a sculpture to beautify the Chicago School of Economics, a school known for its conservative economic philosophy. Ferrari secretly designed it to cast a shadow of a hammer and sickle (as found on the flag of the former Soviet Union) ) at noon on May Day (May 1st—International Worker's Day). When this was discovered, the university decided to keep the statue, but the School of Economics moved to another building. Today the building houses the university's International Studies department.





Pictured at Left:  
University of Maryland  
College Park, Maryland

Percent of Applicants Accepted: 47%  
Middle 50% SAT Scores for Students Accepted  
for 07-08:

Critical Reading: 570-680  
Math: 600-700

GPA of 3.5 (90 or higher): 82%  
GPA of 3.0 to 3.49 (85-89): 15%  
GPA of 2.0 to 2.99 (75 to 84): 3%

Fun Fact: The bronze statue of the giant Chesapeake Bay Diamondback turtle, Testudo (the college's mascot), was kidnapped by students at Johns Hopkins University in 1947, causing a riot on campus. The statue was returned 2 years later.

(Continued on Page 3)  
Finding Colleges (Cont. from page 1)

locate colleges that fit your criteria.

Your list becomes more and more critical as the year progresses. Your college lists drives some important elements of the college process such as:

- 1) How many applications will you be completing?
- 2) How many essays will you need to write?
- 3) How competitive is the school? What kinds of grades and test scores do you need for the school?
- 4) How many of your colleges might be Common Application colleges? (With Common Application, you can complete one application and send it to multiple schools).
- 5) Do you need to take SAT IIs?
- 6) Do you need to set up interviews or visits?
- 7) Will you apply to any of them Early Decision or Early Action?
- 8) What kinds of financial aid forms do you need to submit to the school?
- 9) What are the scholarship deadlines?

You should aim to have your list set no later than the beginning of your senior year. Any work on your applications that you can do in the summer will be a big benefit to you. Remember, you will be taking your most rigorous classes at AHA in the 12th grade. If you can have some of your applications well under way before then, it will reduce the

## Exploring Career Interests in Naviance

In the college search process, one question that is often important to students (and their parents) is, "What kind of career do I want after college?" You might not know the answer to this yet. Even if you think you know, you may change your mind! But doing some serious self-analysis of your likes and dislikes and your own personality traits, might give you some good insight into what careers might be of interest. From there, you can explore colleges that offer majors in those areas.

Naviance is a tool you can use to do a career interest profile and to explore careers based on the results of those analyses.

When you have logged into your Naviance account, scroll down the left hand column until you come to the section called "About Careers" In this section, click on "Explore Interests" and you will be presented with a Career Interest Profile

questionnaire. Take the time to complete the questionnaire. It shouldn't take more than about 20 minutes. You have the option of starting it, and if you need to take a break, saving it and going back to complete it later.

When you have completed the Career Interest Profile, you will be given an analysis of your most predominant traits called your "Holland Code." This code determines if you are Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneurial, or Conventional (or some combination thereof).

You can then view matching occupation lists, with careers that involve anywhere from "little or no preparation" to those requiring more education and more preparation. By clicking on any of the jobs and professions in this list, you will be presented with a screen that gives you a brief overview and description of the career, the knowledge and

(Continued on Page 6)

## SOME USEFUL AND INTERESTING WEBSITES

[www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com) - designed as a student-to-student web site. College students post information (videos, ratings) of their own colleges. Just type in the college you are interested in hearing about and see what others have to say!

[www.collegeconfidential.com](http://www.collegeconfidential.com)—for students interested in comments from students and parents about their own experiences with various colleges. Be sure to check out the FORUMS on college confidential, for topics of special interest.

<http://collegelists.pbwiki.com>—this is a site created and maintained by high school and college advisors. It has a multitude of lists that have appeared over time on the NACAC (National Association of College Admissions Counselors) ListServe. For example, a member of NACAC may have asked the ListServe for a list of colleges that have 3-2 engineering programs or 7 year medical programs. Such lists are found on this “wiki”

<http://www.pbs.org/tenstepstocollege>—this PBS website has excellent advice on the entire college preparation, search and application process.

### DR. TARBOX’S FAVORITE :

<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator>—this is a website from the National Center for Education Statistics. This is a GREAT web site with a WEALTH of informational available - college search, researching how many students graduated in any particular major, retention rates, cost, aid and more!!!

## AHA SENIORS HEAR BACK FROM COLLEGES

While many college acceptance notices do not go out until April, 21 AHA seniors have already heard positive news from applications sent in under Rolling Admission, Early Action, Priority and Early Decision plans. AHA seniors have been accepted at:

Appalachian State U. (NC)	University of North Carolina—Asheville
Austin College (TX)	University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill *
Binghamton U. (NY)	University of North Carolina—Charlotte
Brandeis U. (MA)*	University of North Carolina—Greensboro*
Butler University (MO)	North Carolina State U.
Case Western Reserve University (OH)	Northwestern U.* (IL)
Dickinson College (PA)	University of Pennsylvania*
Elon College	Roanoke College (VA)
George Washington University* (DC)	Saint Louis U. (MO)
University of Hartford (CT)	Shenandoah U. (VA)
Haverford College* (PA)	University of Texas—Dallas
High Point U. (NC)	Tulane U. *(LA)
Lynchburg College (VA)	U.S. Naval Academy
University of Maryland—College Park (MD)	York College of Pennsylvania
University of Michigan (MI)	
University of Minnesota (MN)	
Missouri University of Science and Technology (MO)	

\*Indicates a current AHA senior has committed to enrolling at this institution after graduation.

Pictured at Right:

Syracuse University  
Syracuse, New York

Percent of Applicants Accepted: 51%  
Middle 50% SAT Scores for Students Accepted for 07-08:  
Critical Reading: 540-650  
Math: 570-680

GPA of 3.5 (90 or higher): 59%  
GPA of 3.0 to 3.49 (85-89): 32%  
GPA of 2.0 to 2.99 (75 to 84): 9%

Fun Fact.: The words of the First Amendment guaranteeing freedom of speech are etched in glass walls that wrap around the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse.



# Top 5 Ways to Impress an Admissions Officer

By  
Liluye Jhala

The following is information taken from an article written by Liluye Jhala (<http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/Departments/College/?article=AdmissionOfficerTips>)

Ms. Jhala is a former admissions officer at Brown University. This advice holds true whether you meet the counselor during a visit to campus, or while the counselor is on the road in the fall visiting high schools or at a college fair. Many counselors will be visiting AHA in the fall, and seniors will want to take the time to come visit with them in Dr. Tarbox's office.

Bear in mind that this article was written with group meetings in mind (visits to high schools or college fairs). However, much of it can be applied to individual interviews with specific colleges. Since many of you will be doing spring and summer visits to colleges, this advice should come in handy.

## 1. Be five minutes early

After you've decided which colleges you'd like to get to know better, plan ahead and try to get there early. If you are there first, you might have the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with the admissions officer. If it's a presentation, get a good seat close to the officer and take that time to introduce yourself. If it's a college fair, try to be one of the first individuals to speak with the admissions officer.

## 2. Dress (and behave) to impress

At the end of one of my typical presentations to a classroom of 150 students, most dressed very casually, I wandered to the back of the room and wound up chatting with a soft-spoken man in a suit. He followed every word I said and I assumed he was a teacher. At the end of our discussion, though, he thanked me for my talk and asked for my e-mail address. His whole presentation really

made him stand out from his classmates. Remember, it's your *job* to make a positive impression. So, dress well and speak intelligently. You'll not only impress the admissions officer, but your classmates and teachers as well.

## 3. Ask thoughtful questions

Do your research on each college before they visit. You should be prepared not only to ask the admissions officer a few questions yourself, but to be asked some basic questions in return. Rest assured that unless it is a formal interview, the admissions officer is not interviewing you and, consequently, you probably will not be forced to speak on your greatest disappointments or academic hurdles during your very brief time together. However, you might want to have tentative responses to these very common questions:

- A. What first drew you to this school?
- B. What are your academic interests?
- C. Why do you want to attend?
- D. What do you do for fun?

Remember, be as specific as possible. The first and second questions are similar; the difference, however, is that the second question asks you to define what exactly makes a particular school special (i.e., the New Curriculum at Brown). Your response to the first question, however, could be based upon your own personal experience with a school (i.e., "It was so beautiful and I just loved the small community.") Also, be sure to include why a particular feature is appealing to you. The admissions officer is, after all, trying to get to know you as a person. Be honest.

For your part, ask the admissions officer a few qualitative, not quantitative, questions. A quantitative question might be about Brown's average SAT score, an answer to which you could easily find on Brown's Web site or in any college guidebook. As a matter of fact, before you attend any kind of university function for prospective students, you should already know the following about the school:

A. Required tests and courses. Do you have to take SAT II subject tests or four years of a foreign language?

B. The school's general curriculum and grading basics. A university may offer a range from a core curriculum to an open curriculum to a Great Books program. Also, familiarize yourself with the university's grading system.

C. Their current admission stats: the academic and standardized test averages of admitted students (i.e., the mean class rank, GPA, SAT, etc.).

D. The majors, minors or concentrations offered. After all, you cannot study Egyptology everywhere.

E. Their financial aid and/or work-study programs.

If you have a firm grasp on all of the above, you won't be tempted to ask questions you should already know the answer to. Here's an example of a qualitative question that impressed me: "How has President Simmons' push for globalization influenced the research areas in the international relations department or expanded study-abroad options?" Try to ask a question that digs deeper into the academic and social experience of being a student at that specific school.

## 4. End the conversation on a good note

Harassing the admissions officer by dominating the conversation or monopolizing his or her time will leave a bad impression. Instead, after asking your three thoughtful, qualitative questions, end the conversation by saying, "I do have more questions, but let me give you time to meet with other students. Can I have your e-mail/business card so I can keep in touch?" Be sure to say thank-you and goodbye with a firm handshake.

## 5. Follow up within 48 hours

When you get home, review your notes from the day. Then, write the admissions officer a short thank-you e-mail, mentioning a few details from your prior conversation. Make sure

Career Interests  
(Continued from Page 3)

skills needed, the tasks and activities you might do in that career, and what the average wages are (by state) for those occupations. It will also give you a list of related occupations, and related college majors, with links to colleges that offer those majors. Also, the web site will provide a brief video describing the job.

The sooner you do this kind of research, the more knowledgeable you will be about what you are looking for in a college when your senior year rolls around.

5 Ways to Impress an Admissions Officer  
(Continued from Page 5)

you include your first and last name, high school and the date of your conversation. This will help your admissions officer remember your face out of the hundreds, maybe thousands, of students from his or her fall recruitment travels. Use this e-mail to ask another follow-up question and make sure you convey how genuinely enthusiastic you are about the possibility of getting into their school. Don't be dis-

appointed if you don't get a response. Remember, you are demonstrating sincere interest and that leaves a lasting impression.

Armed with these tips, you will make a great first and lasting impression on the college admissions officers of your top schools. Work hard this semester and remember to have fun while researching schools.

Good luck!

UPDATES, NOTICES and TIPS for JUNIORS

⇒ **Mandatory Meeting for Juniors**—Wednesday, March 18th, 6:00 p.m. in the Student Union. Pizza will be served. A panel of five seniors will present their thoughts and advice on the college search and application process. All Juniors need to attend!

⇒ **A quick and colorful college timeline for Juniors** is available in Naviance—go to the DOCUMENT LIBRARY and click on INFORMATION. Look for “College Timeline Junior Senior Year. It will outline everything you need to do month by month from now until next January.

⇒ **In Outlook, create an email box and call it College Info.** When Dr. Tarbox sends important emails (about college related items), read them and then save them in this e-folder. You can also keep things from the College Board (like your SAT ticket info), etc. This will help keep you organized!

⇒ **Juniors—when you receive your SAT ticket, visit Dr. Tarbox** to get advice on setting up your on-line College Board account. Your SAT registration number on your ticket will help with this process. Keep your ticket in a safe place for the upcoming March SAT.

⇒ **Congratulations** to Zalima Barazani who was named a Finalist in the National Achievement Scholarship Program and to Sam Frafield who is a Finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Competition!

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*“Is this the story you want to tell  
on your college application?”*

From the 9/15/08 edition of New Yorker Magazine  
by Lee Lorenz

To access NAVIANCE, go to <http://connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew>. For login help, contact:

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