

# SUMMER TO-DO LIST // SENIOR YEAR SURVIVAL GUIDE

(AKA a list of things you should know and do to save yourself from all kinds of stress this fall)

## BUILD YOUR COLLEGE LIST

- Do your research! visit [www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://www.bigfuture.collegeboard.org) to explore colleges and majors
- If you get free/reduced lunch, chances are you're going to get **4 free** CSU applications and **4 free** UC applications
- Have realistic choices of schools and remember to always keep your options open
- Be aware of DEADLINES! CSU & UC applications are due **NOVEMBER 30**
- Common Application deadlines vary by school but they are always due EASTERN TIME

## CREATE AN APPROPRIATE EMAIL ADDRESS AND REMEMBER THE PASSWORD

- Gmails are highly recommended!!
- Make sure the email you'll be using does not receive SPAM, it'll be hard to filter through important emails
- Keep a list of ALL usernames and passwords for college applications and portals
- **Lifhack:** using the same username and password for everything will save your life
- Develop the habit of checking your emails frequently (including your loopmail), otherwise you will miss important information and deadlines

## CREATE A RESUME

- Many things on a resume can be used to fill out a college application
- Make a list of awards/honors/achievements
- Make a list of all the clubs and organizations you've been involved in as well as any leadership experience
- Calculate your hours from involvement in sports, community service, work, & other extracurricular activities
- You can always refer to your resume for college apps and scholarship apps & give this to people writing your letters of recommendation

## TRANSCRIPT

- Create an account and request it through [www.parchment.com](http://www.parchment.com)
- Have it ready before you start college applications
- When in doubt, ask Ms. Tang or someone from the counseling office to print you an unofficial transcript
- **HORROR STORY:** a senior didn't apply to CSUs because he was waiting for his transcript through Parchment 2 weeks before the deadline... DON'T BE THE SEQUEL TO THIS STORY

## A-G REQUIREMENTS

- Make sure that you're ACTUALLY on track with your A-G requirements. Have you made up your Ds?
- If you're unsure, ask Ms. Tang to go over your transcript with you
- **HORROR STORY:** a senior wanted to apply to CSULB but never made up a D in freshman English, so she had to enroll into a second English class (Eng 1-2) during her senior year :/ \*\*\*\*\* but she made it to CSULB!! \*\*\*\*\*

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Have 2 solid people who will write you letter after letter
- Make sure these people know you well either academically or socially (like in your extracurriculars)
- You should always give at least 2 weeks in advance when requesting a letter

## SAT/ACT

- If you're 4-yr bound and haven't taken SAT yet or if you want to (aka you really should) take it a second time – register **\*FOR FREE\*** at [www.studentbusd.lbschools.net](http://www.studentbusd.lbschools.net). The District has your back!
- December is the last test date most schools will accept scores from
- SEND YOUR SCORES BEFORE DECEMBER ENDS via [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). To save \$\$\$\$\$ :
  - 3594 = magic code to send to ALL CSUs
  - send score to 1 UC = all UCs receive it
- **HORROR STORY:** a senior didn't send in scores by the mid-January deadline and her application was withdrawn from CSULB... DON'T BE THE SEQUEL TO THIS STORY

## EAP SCORES IN THE SUMMER

- If you received a score of 'Conditionally Ready' for:
  - Math: enroll into a math course higher than Alg2 and get a C or better both semesters
  - English: enroll into an AP or honors English class or ERWC and get a C or better both semesters
- Refer to roadmap you received during SBAC practice – otherwise talk to Ms. Tang if you don't understand scores

## APPLICATION ESSAYS AND PERSONAL STATEMENTS

- Prompts are already available – START writing them and getting them revised (see below)
- **MILD HORROR STORY:** a senior waited so long to do her personal statements that she ended up not applying to any UCs because she didn't have the time or energy to anymore!!

## FINANCIAL AID

- You can start applying for scholarships NOW!!!
- Also start researching what scholarships you QUALIFY for, so you have a list of scholarships to apply for as a senior
- Financial aid applications (FAFSA and Dream Act) are available January 1, 2016
- Make sure you apply for the 2016-2017 school year → deadline is MARCH 2, 2016
- REMEMBER YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER – THE CORRECT ONE!!
- **VERY HORROR STORY:** a handful of seniors applied for financial aid under the wrong social security number and/or applied for financial aid under the incorrect academic year... they didn't realize any of these mistakes until after the deadline, so they no longer qualified for Cal grants!!!! DON'T BE THE SEQUEL TO THIS STORY

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## UNDERSTANDING CSU MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY INDEX

$$\text{GPA} \times 800 + \text{SAT (Reading + Math)} \geq 2900$$

To be guaranteed admission to CSULB this past year, you had to have an index of 3200

or

$$\text{GPA} \times 200 + \text{ACT Composite Score} \geq 694$$

\*GPA = University GPA on your transcript which calculates grades in A-G classes from 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> grade

## UC PERSONAL STATEMENT PROMPTS (250 WORD MIN EACH, 1000 WORD MAX FOR BOTH)

1. Describe the world you come from — for example, your family, community or school — and tell us how your world has shaped your dreams and aspirations.
2. Tell us about a personal quality, talent, accomplishment, contribution or experience that is important to you. What about this quality or accomplishment makes you proud and how does it relate to the person you are?

## COMMON APPLICATION PROMPTS (250-650 WORDS, CHOOSE ONE)

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from failure can be fundamental to later success. Recount an incident or time when you experienced failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you challenged a belief or idea. What prompted you to act? Would you make the same decision again?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma—anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment or event, formal or informal, that marked your transition from childhood to adulthood within your culture, community, or family.

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IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS DURING THE SUMMER, DON'T EVER HESITATE TO CONTACT MS. TANG

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