

got college?

got college? News

Volume 8 Issue 2

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What's New for the UC Review?

What's New for the UC Review?

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Our Philosophy and Services

1 The UC system has established an augmented review policy for this upcoming admissions season. This new system is based on a practice that several UC campuses have used for years, but will now be implemented statewide. This policy allows UC campuses to ask students for additional information prior to making an admissions decision. Here's what you need to know:

- 98% of applicants to the UC system will not need to submit additional information. In the vast majority of cases, students are not asked for anything beyond what was included in their initial application.
- There are 3 types of supplemental information that may be requested: 7th semester grades, responses to a questionnaire, and/or letters of recommendation.

- Each campus individually handles requests for supplemental information. Some campuses may request one piece of information, others two pieces, others none. Students need to respond to each campus and follow the instructions received from that campus.
- These requests will likely come in December or January. As always, students should regularly check their email for any correspondence from a campus and respond accordingly.
- There are specific conditions under which an applicant might be selected for augmented review. These can include the following:

1) A special talent that limited a student's participation in a broad range of activities.

2) A character trait that implies a strong likelihood of a student making a significant contribution to campus life.

3) A significant academic achievement in spite of extraordinary disadvantage, learning or physical disability, or other unusual circumstance.

4) Significant improvement in the academic record, along with evidence of cause and/or in-depth participation in an educational outreach program.

5) Lack of access to college preparatory, honors, AP or International Baccalaureate classes or required college entrance exams.

Students are not required to

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respond to a request for additional information, but submitting this information is in the student's best interest. If a student is contacted, it likely is an indication that a campus is looking for a way to admit that student. However, a request doesn't imply if that student will be admitted or not.

Check out our
website!

got-college.com

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"Like" us on Facebook and follow our timely tips and relevant information.

Small Group Courses in 2018

Next year the format of our popular Classroom Course will be changing. Marna is heading into retirement at the end of the year. Celeste and Lynn will continue to offer the program through Small Group Courses with 5 juniors in each. Priority will be given to students who have already had a [Consultation](#).

Want more info? [See our website](#)

Marna's Look Back at the Last 10 Years

Ten years ago, Celeste and I shared a vision of finding a way to provide public high school students with the support, resources and tools they need to more successfully research, apply for and decide where to attend college. The result—*got college?*. This is my last newsletter before retiring, and I thought I'd share a few of the most important lessons I've learned over the last decade—I hope they ring true for you and your student!

The road to college is not always linear. Yes, sometimes circles, triangles and other types of pathways finally lead to college and a degree. This is now more true than ever, as students see the benefit of a gap year, taking time off from school to work, get an internship or get involved in an extended volunteer program.

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We offer individual counseling for students in 8th—12th grade.

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Some students need a couple of years of community college to mature, others want to save money before heading off to a 4 year college. And then there are those students who have trouble finding their “fit” and may try out several colleges before one sticks. For each student it is different, and while there may be no one clear path, clarity about that path can be obtained through assessing student needs and identifying the “best fit” options.

Kids are capable—if we let them be capable. One of the guiding principles of our business has been to empower the student to be in charge of the college research, application and decision making processes. Students may not always go about the process using the exact time frame or steps we recommend, but they take most of what we provide and tailor it to their needs. Yes they need questions answered and help addressing problems, but overall they can drive the college process. So don't try and micro-manage and take away the student's sense of accomplishment and ownership. “We” are not applying to college—only the student is. The process should result in each student being proud of what he/she accomplished, not what a parent accomplished.

It can hurt to “just apply”. All too often we hear parents encouraging students to apply to colleges that are either academically unrealistic or that don't meet their social, financial, academic and extracurricular needs. While parents sometimes think it can't hurt to apply, we have seen how it can. Students spend time on an unrealistic, difficult-to-complete application, instead of time and energy improving the applications that are realistic. Or time is spent applying to unrealistic colleges when the student should be studying for an

important test. In addition, the disappointment that comes with an almost certain rejection can be very traumatic. Remember, these are teenagers, still learning to cope with disappointment. And if this rejection is coupled with several others, a student can get off-track and be hampered making a final decision.



Just because you get in, doesn't mean you should go. The most important criteria for choosing a college is fit—academic, financial and social. If a college is a good fit, students are more likely to thrive. Poor “fits” results in students feeling more homesick, struggling with the academic rigor, and unable to find friends who share their interests. Just because your student is admitted to a “prestigious” campus, that doesn't imply a great fit. Help your students avoid this pitfall by supporting their efforts to consider and apply to only “good fit” campuses.

Pick the right partner. Just like finding a good fit college, finding a good fit business partner is key to success. Over the last decade Celeste and I have studied, laughed, collaborated, persisted, made mistakes, celebrated and most importantly shared in the excitement of students getting into college. It has been an unexpected joy ride, one that I never dreamed I would have taken. Thank you being a “great fit” partner—I cherish all we have accomplished, and will certainly miss working together.

And thank you families for sharing your students with me—I feel so blessed to have helped guide each one as they reached for their dreams.

Why “fit” is so important to college success

This was originally printed in our March 2013 issue, but “fit” remains the key ingredient in researching and choosing a college.

One of the most important aspects of indentifying colleges to apply to and eventually attend is finding the right “fit”. A good “fit” means that a college meets the majority of a student’s interest and needs. The concept of “fit” is one that most parents didn’t consider when applying to college, at least to the extent that it is emphasized today. So why has college fit become a concept that we as college counselors find to be so critical to the decision-making process?

Finding a good fit increases the chances that the student will be happy and thrive. A student who attends a college that meets his or her academic, social, financial and extra-curricular needs is generally less stressed, happier, and better able to focus on academic studies.

Attending a good fit college increases the chances that a student will graduate within about 4 years. By starting at a college with a strong fit, students are more likely to find majors and academic programs that meet their needs. For example, a student who thinks he or she is interested in business, but not ready to declare that major when choosing a college, should still be considering colleges that have a business major option. By researching and applying to colleges with that major, the option of choosing to pursue business will be available. If a student decides to ignore this interest, and instead just focuses on a college near the beach with many days of sunshine, they may be disappointed once they enroll to learn that business is not even offered at that college. By the end of the first year, this student is more likely to transfer, drop out, or spend several semesters switching among majors. A good fit college offers academic options that the student thinks might be of interest.

Students entering college with a strong academic fit are more likely to return for their second year of college. A recent study by the Strategic Data Project indicates that students who choose colleges that closely fit their academic level are more likely to persist to the second year of college. Students who enter colleges where they are academically “overqualified” are more likely to not re-enroll for the second year. While the reasons for this are not clear, it may be because the student transfers to a more challenging environment or drops out because they are feeling unchallenged.



Finding strong fit colleges improves the decision making process in spring of senior year. Students are famous for changing their minds, and the college decision is no different. Students who consider fit as part of their research, and apply to a broad range of colleges that meet their academic, social, extracurricular and financial needs, are more likely to have great options to choose from spring of senior year. And even if that college that was #1 on their list in fall doesn’t accept the student, there are several other colleges on the list that meet their needs. While the student may be disappointed that he/she wasn’t accepted to their first choice, that disappointment is short lived because of the

Focusing on fit increases the quality of the apply list. Students who focus on what particular aspects of a college “fit them” best are less likely to rely on what others think or say, or on rankings. A focus on fit empowers the student to search for colleges that meet his or her individual needs and wants.

A multifaceted approach to fit means the student is looking beyond “one dimension” of a college and seeking colleges that meet academic, social, extracurricular and financial needs. It is easy for students to get caught up in one aspect of college — the highly ranked basketball team, access to the beach, the active Greek system, warm and sunny weather, and even the “best” academic program available in their major. However, focusing on that one aspect of a college can lead to disappointment. The basketball team no longer plays well, studying is so intense that they rarely visit the beach, friends aren’t interested in the Greek system, and their major isn’t exactly what they had thought it would be. Students who focus on only 1 or 2 aspects and are disappointed when their expectations aren’t met are more likely to struggle, be stressed and not succeed. However, students who have focused on a multifaceted approach to fit from the start have found a group of colleges that meet a number of their needs. So he or she may be disappointed when one of their college activities or goals falls through, but because the college meets so many of their other needs, this student can rebound and still thrive.

How does my student know what a “good fit college” is for them. High school juniors who enroll in our [Small Group Course](#) will take part in self-assessment exercises that provide the foundation for determining good fit. If you want to help your student get a head start on this process, consider a [Consultation](#), (required prior to enrolling in a Small Group Course) or utilize resources on the [Research Your Interests](#) page of our website



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*Practical help for searching,
applying and choosing*

Q

How does my student stand out when it seems like everyone applying has strong grades and test scores? She is just a “normal” kid, and I worry she will get overlooked in this impersonal selection process.

A

Often students, as well as parents, think that they must have accomplished a major project, survived a life-threatening disease, or overcome an incredible challenge to stand out in the admissions process. The truth is, most kids are just “normal” kids. However, the ones who are admitted to colleges more often are those that can demonstrate a love of learning and a “good fit” through their short answer and essay responses, as well as via recommendations (for colleges that accept these).

Here are a few suggestion for how a student stands out and shows that their interests, values and talents are a “good fit” for a campus:

1. Read the colleges mission statement. What do they emphasize? How does that match your values and interests? Include that in your written responses.

2. Do you have a specific academic area that intrigues you? What have you done in high school that demonstrates this interest? Write about that experience, and how you will explore that area in the specific program at that college. This “evidence” will make your “fit” to the program come alive in the admissions reader’s mind.

3. Discuss letters of recommendation with the teacher or counselor you have chosen. Make sure they know what your academic and extracurricular interests are so they can highlight those in the letter. Better yet, share your essay and short answer responses with them in advance so they can build upon your responses and corroborate your story.

Our Philosophy and Services

We believe that all students can find colleges where they can be successful academically and socially, and where they can grow and mature in aspirations, experiences and confidence.

Our goal is to help students develop lists of colleges to apply to that best-fit their unique interests and needs. And while the admissions process has become more complex and selective over time, we guide students and parents through steps to identify options and reduce stress, while enabling students to build their confidence and life-long decision-making skills.

For 8th-12th graders:

Consultation

For Juniors:

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