



# The Savvy Applicant:

## Your Insider's Guide to Selective College Admissions



For colleges that receive thousands of applications to remain organized as they attempt to create an interesting and diverse class, they often create a system to rank applicants. These 11 distinct yet highly interrelated aspects of your application are evaluated in a "holistic review"



1.

### Rigor of Curriculum

Rigor of Curriculum refers to the number and level of high school courses completed in the five core subject areas (Math, Science, English, Social Studies and Foreign Language) and academic electives.

2.

### Grade Point Average (GPA)

Colleges often have a system to recalculate your GPA that involves unweighting your grades and removing non-academic courses. It should go without saying that colleges value students that maintain a high core GPA. They are however, also interested in your grade trend.

3.

### SAT / ACT

The SAT and ACT are the most used standardized college admission tests. While some colleges are "test optional" most selective colleges continue to place significant value on them. Colleges may use SAT and ACT scores to compare applicants from different high schools where rigor and grading vary.

4.

### SAT Subject Tests

SAT Subject Tests correspond to core subject areas and sometimes specific courses within core subject areas. While most colleges do not require SAT Subject Tests, some selective colleges require a minimum of two and many more "suggest" them.

5.

### Extra-Curricular Resume

Applicants to selective colleges must complete an extra-curricular resume or "activity sheet." It may include co-curricular participation and recognition, volunteer and / or paid work experience, community service, athletics and hobbies. Selective colleges want to know what you are passionate about outside the classroom and how you pursue those interests.

6.

### Application Essays

College applicants are typically required to write a "personal statement". The prompts for this essay may vary slightly, but students are typically asked to reflect and write about a meaningful experience. This essay is important to colleges because it is a representation of a student's character, perspective and writing ability. Most selective colleges will require one or more additional essays.

7.

### Letters of Recommendation

Applicants to selective colleges are typically required to submit 2 letters of recommendation from teachers and 1 from a guidance counselor. In some cases an additional letter may be appropriate. Letters of recommendation are important to colleges because they provide personalized evaluations of applicants from an outside perspective.

8.

### Admission Interview

Most colleges consider an admission interview "optional," but value another chance to learn about an applicant. Admission interviews can be either "on campus" with an admission representative or "off campus" with an alumnus.

9.

### Demonstrated Interest

Selective colleges seek to admit students that are highly interested in attending their college. There are many ways to demonstrate interest, but choosing to apply through an "Early Decision" program can be one of the most convincing.

10.

### Socioeconomics

Selective colleges seek to build a student body that is diverse in as many ways as possible. This may include race, religion, household income, region town, state, country, sexual orientation, academic/extra-curricular interests and much more.

11.

### VIP Status

There are some students that are considered VIPs in the college admission process. They may include celebrities, children of major donors, winners of elite academic contests, authors, founders of successful businesses and most commonly recruited athletes.

## READY TO GET STARTED?

Request a FREE 20 Minute Phone Consultation

877.454.8511 | [college@princetoncollegeconsulting.net](mailto:college@princetoncollegeconsulting.net)



**Princeton College Consulting**

Navigating Students Through Admissions