



What 5 Factors Positively Impact Your College and University Application?

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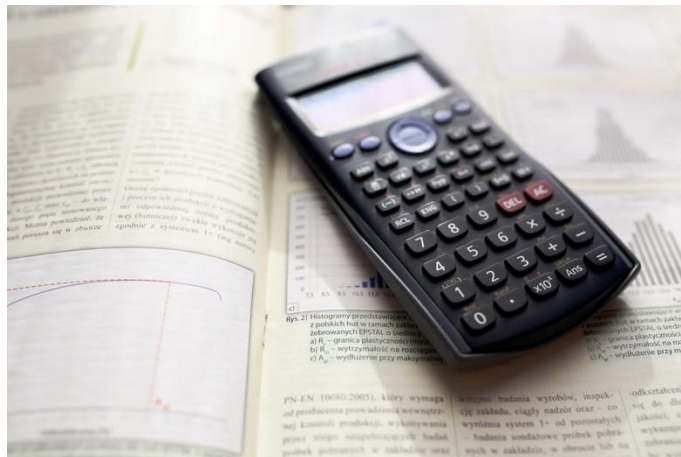
A combination of factors impact the way your college or university application is viewed or reviewed by admission officers in the U.S. Over the four years (Grades 9-12) you spend in high school, it is important to constantly review these factors to assure you are building a case or application file that will impress the admission reviewer when it is time to apply for college or university. What factors matter most, you may ask? There are essentially 5 factors, which impact your college or university application the most, which include the following:

1. Academic Transcript, including Standardized Testing (ACT, SAT and/or TOEFL)
2. Extracurricular Activities
3. Work Experience
4. Community Service
5. Personal Essay

What Does Your Transcript (and Standardized Testing) Say About You?

Although top colleges and universities, including Ivy League institutions look for straight A's on your transcript, a steady trend showing improvement over four years (Grades 9-12) can also positively impact the outcome of your college search. This upward trend in grades demonstrates to Admission Offices that you have faced your challenges and made changes to accrue success in school.

Your transcript, in combination with standardized testing (ACT, SAT and/or TOEFL) which compliments good grades (either over four years an upward trend) will also have an influence on your final admission decisions. Also, depending upon your intended course of study or major in college/university, strong grades and testing in those areas can also have an effect on where you are admitted.



or

As an example, if you intend to pursue Engineering and your best grades, as well as standardized test scores are in Math/Science, this can translate into good final admission decisions or options when admitted to programs which value success in these specific areas.

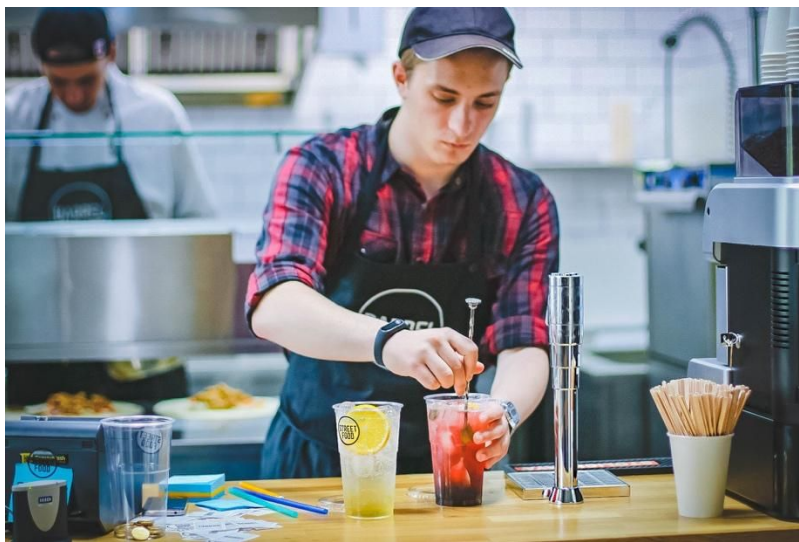
Why Do Extracurriculars Matter?

As it relates to extracurricular activities, think: quality over quantity. Ultimately, colleges or universities are not interested in what you participate in or how many activities you engage in, rather they value why you pursue various activities as an interest or passion and how deeply you are engaged in the activity.

Therefore, rather than a long “laundry list” of activities, it is important to focus the investment of your time and energy, along with the opportunity to engage in leadership roles. Why not try planning an event or launching a new club or project closely associated with one of your interests or passions? It can be very simple--if you like tea, why not launch a “Tea Club”?

For the record, the Common Application provides 10 slots to list your activities. Statistically, the strongest and most successful applicants have 8-10 extracurricular activities, including several with leadership roles at local, regional, state or national levels. Even more impressive is a list with contrasting areas--a 3-sport athlete who manages to snag a lead role in his or her school’s drama production always impresses an Admission Office. Depth and breadth, along with a range of activity will go a long way in the admissions process.

Is Work Experience Important?



Think about it. Why do people go to college in the first place? Ultimately, a good college or university education leads to a first job, which then launches a career path. Therefore, it is important to show colleges or universities that you are disciplined enough to function in the “real world”. Jobs in high school can also allow you to explore a number of possible career paths. Along the way, you also acquire time management skills, with the

ability to stay organized, show that you are responsible as well as dependable!

Colleges or universities want to enroll and graduate students who can juggle “life in process”. Holding down a job while in high school as well as during college/university years, best prepares

you for the next step. It is not only to your benefit, but also your school's to demonstrate that you are a qualified job candidate who has obtained an education along the way.

How Does Community Service Impact Your Application?

Your ability to successfully juggle or manage your responsibilities including your grades/standardized test scores, along with extracurriculars, a job and community service are important to every Admission Office. It demonstrates that you can manage your time, while serving your community. Of course, there is no “magic number” of volunteer hours acquired through community service that colleges or universities require. The involvement in community service or volunteer activity is important and can potentially lead to a leadership role. Some students have even gone the extra step and launched their own non-profit programs.

Community Service or volunteer activity demonstrates your engagement and investment in your community and where you live. What activity you elect also is an indicator of your interests or passions. As a baseball or softball player, you may choose to volunteer coaching in your local Little League. Later on, this may lead to a volunteer role on your local Little League Board, and so on...



How Can You Write a Good Personal Essay?

Your personal essay is your opportunity to “speak” about an experience or topic, which is important to you. It is called “personal” for this reason. This essay is your chance to express yourself and what is important to you. Of course, whatever you write needs to be well written using appropriate language, good grammar and syntax.

Admission Offices always encourage you to write your essay “in your own voice”. If they have interacted with you during high school visits, on campus interviews, etc. and you have presented yourself in a certain way, let's say “casual”, then your college essay is presented in a very “professional” tone it may raise “red flags” about you. We strongly recommend that you write your own personal essay, in your own voice on an experience or topic, which is most important to you. That way, the college or university, will have the best idea of who you are as a person and student.

It is essential to note when going to college that students need to display the greatest representation of themselves and why they believe they are a great match for college. It is significant to begin college admission process soon! At Success Pathway, we can assist using our [High School Action Plan](#), and [College and University Admissions and Application Counseling](#) to keep students on track. For more information on our comprehensive college counseling service, [contact us today!](#)