



CLASS OF 2013  
COLLEGE APPLICATION PACKET  
SUMMER 2012

- College Comparison Worksheet
  - Activities Log—ApplyTexas application
  - College Application Guide
  - Scholarship Application Guide
  - Guidelines for Students Requesting Recommendations
    - ✓ Guidelines
    - ✓ How to stand out from the crowd
    - ✓ Student self-assessment
- **www.applytexas.org** Application for all Texas state funded colleges and universities and many Texas private schools. Download a paper copy and use as a worksheet. The application and essays may contain subtle changes on the new Freshman 2013-2014 edition. NEW online app opens August 1, 2012, but you may access website and create an account NOW.
- **www.commonapp.org** Currently used by 456 colleges and universities in the US. Their names can be found on the website and a paper copy may be downloaded for your review. A video student tutorial can be viewed under Common Questions/For Applicants.
- **ALWAYS** read carefully and review the admissions/application requirements on the website of your selected college(s). Contact the Admissions Office for clarification, if necessary.
- Stuck? Confused? Contact: Mrs. Sharon Strickland  
COLLEGE COUNSELOR  
John Paul II Catholic High School  
[strickland.s@hotmail.com](mailto:strickland.s@hotmail.com)  
[sstrickland@johnpaul2chs.org](mailto:sstrickland@johnpaul2chs.org)

# College Comparison Worksheet

COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET			
COLLEGE NAME			
<b>SIZE/LOCATION</b> — distance from home — enrollment — physical size of campus			
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b> — type of school (2 yr. or 4 yr.) — school setting (urban, rural) — location and size of nearest city — co-ed, male, female — religious affiliation			
<b>ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS</b> — deadline — tests required, including Writing Test — average test scores, GPA, rank — notification			
<b>ACADEMICS</b> — your major offered — special requirements — accreditation — student-faculty ratio — typical class size			
<b>COLLEGE EXPENSES</b> — tuition, room, and board — estimated total budget — application fee, deposits			
<b>FINANCIAL AID</b> — deadline — required forms — percent receiving aid — scholarships			
<b>HOUSING</b> — residence hall requirement — food plan			
<b>FACILITIES</b> — academic — recreational — other			
<b>ACTIVITIES</b> — clubs, organizations — Greek life — athletics, intramurals — other			
<b>CAMPUS VISITS</b> — when — special opportunities			

**Why is this college a good fit for me?**

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Why is this college a good fit for me?

**College Comparison Worksheet**

Social Security Number\* (see note below): \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II. Activities.**

See "General Application Information" on pages ii through v to determine if this part is required for your application to the institution(s) of your choice. Please list, in priority order, the organizations, activities, jobs, and internships that indicate your special contributions, talents, honors and abilities in the areas of extracurricular activities, service and work. Include service and work done in the summer. Please spell out the names and describe the organizations in which you have participated. If you need to attach additional pages, please follow the same format as below and on page 9. In addition, you may also attach a résumé.

Résumé attached:  Yes  No

**Extracurricular Activities**

Organization <i>Examples:</i> Speech/Debate Club Basketball Team	Your Position/Year <i>Examples:</i> Committee Chair/senior Captain/junior	Were you elected to this position? (circle Yes or No)	Level <i>Examples</i> Regional Local	Description of Activities <i>Examples:</i> Hosted Speech Tournament Played Forward	Hours Per Week/Hours Per Year (3/32 = three hours per week/32 weeks per year)			
					Fresh. 3/32	Soph. 3/32	Jr. 6/32	Sr. 6/32
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	yes/no	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Community or Volunteer Service**

Service/Volunteer Work <i>Examples:</i> Habitat for Humanity Hospital Volunteer	Description of Service <i>Examples:</i> Helped build houses Helped nurses and visited patients	From-Thru 5/10-5/11 6/10-8/11	Total Hours 120 112
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Social Security Number\* (see note below): \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Talents/Awards/Honors**

Talent/Award/Honor <u>Examples:</u>	Description <u>Examples:</u>	Level <u>Examples:</u>	Year Received			
			Fresh.	Soph.	Jr.	Sr.
Voice	Sang in school choir	Regional	X	X	X	X
Regional Qualifier (Speech)	1 of 3 chosen for regional team (UIL)	State			X	X
All-State Basketball Team	1 of 5 in state chosen for first team				X	
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Employment/Internships/Summer Activities**

Name of Employer/Sponsor <u>Examples:</u> Grocery Store Exchange Program	Your Specific Role/Job Title <u>Examples:</u> Sacker: Sacked groceries, helped customers Spent two months with host family in Spain	From-Thru	Hours Per Week
_____	_____	6/10-5/11 6/10-7/11	10 n/a
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

# COLLEGE APPLICATION GUIDE

There's a lot that goes in to applying for college. Keep it all organized here.

## COLLEGE APPLICATION CHECKLIST

TASKS	MY COLLEGE CHOICES		
	1	2	3
College Name:			
<b>College Application Form</b>			
Early Application Deadline	/ /	/ /	/ /
Regular Application Deadline	/ /	/ /	/ /
Application Fee	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____
<b>Grades</b>			
Request official sealed copy of academic records/transcripts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Test Scores</b>			
Standardized Test Scores (SAT and ACT)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced Placement (AP) Test Scores (if applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Letters of Recommendation</b>			
Requested from: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requested from: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requested from: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Essays</b>			
Write admission application essay(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proof essay(s) for spelling and grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have someone else review and proofread essay(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Additional Information</b>			
List extracurricular, volunteer and work activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make copies of all college application materials and file for my own records	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>DATE APPLICATION SUBMITTED:</b>	/ /	/ /	/ /
<b>AFTER YOU SEND YOUR APPLICATION</b>			
Receive decision letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Receive financial aid award letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Make final college choice</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send deposit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Send final transcript	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# COLLEGE APPLICATION GUIDE

## ☐ FAFSA CHECKLIST

DOCUMENTS YOU NEED TO FILL OUT THE FAFSA	✓
Your most recent income tax return (or your parents' return if you are a dependent)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your current bank statements	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your current investment records (if any)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Records of any untaxed income you may have received	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your driver's license (if you have one)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your Social Security number	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your alien registration or permanent resident card if you are not a U.S. citizen	<input type="checkbox"/>

If all items are checked, then you have all the necessary documents to fill out the FAFSA online.

1. Visit <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> to start your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after January 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Know your Student Financial Aid deadlines
  - a. Federal Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. State Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. College Choice #1 Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. College Choice #2 Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. College Choice #3 Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

Date FAFSA completed & submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Note: To get the best financial aid award possible, submit all the required applications before the earliest due date of the schools you are considering.*

### REMEMBER YOUR STUDENT AID PIN!

Your PIN can be used each year to electronically apply for federal student aid and to access your Federal Student Aid records online. Never give your PIN to anyone!

MY PIN IS: \_\_\_\_\_

# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

There's a lot that goes in to applying for scholarships. Keep it all organized here.

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION CHECKLIST

INFO YOU MAY NEED WHEN APPLYING FOR SCHOLARSHIPS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Personal Background Information</b>	
Personal Information – name, full address, phone number, date of birth, parents names & employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email Address (one that you check regularly)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Statement - list of goals (education, career, personal)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resume or Curriculum Vitae	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Academic Information</b>	
Current School Info - name of high school, class rank, expected graduation date	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Transcripts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recommendation Letter(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
College Choice(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intended Academic Major(s)/Area(s) of Study	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Information – GPA, AP, honors courses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Six digit school code (for high schools)	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Financial Information</b>	
Parents' Income - most recent federal tax return if you are a dependent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Completed Student Aid Report (SAR) from your completed FAFSA	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Miscellaneous Information</b>	
School Activities - list of extracurricular activities, clubs, organizations, sports	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Activities - volunteer, community or public service activities + # of hours volunteered	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment - list of internships, assistantships, summer jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>
List of any awards or honors you have received	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scholarship Essay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Portfolio	<input type="checkbox"/>

Once you have all the items listed above, you are ready to start searching and applying for scholarships. Keep in mind that every scholarship is unique and may require different information.



# SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

## SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION "TO DO" LIST

TASKS	✓
Check your college choices to find merit-based scholarships and other scholarships available to incoming students	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create a free profile on a scholarship search web site like Scholarships.com	<input type="checkbox"/>
Once your Scholarships.com profile is complete:	
1. Sort list of scholarship search results by deadline	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Select the scholarship with the earliest deadline and visit the scholarship provider's web site to verify the eligibility requirements, application guidelines and deadline to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Read the application guidelines and follow the instructions on how to apply	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Begin your online or paper application	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have someone else review and proofread your scholarship application	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Submit your completed application	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Make a list of scholarships you will be applying for and keep track of the dates you applied and dates the winners will be announced	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Go back to your list of scholarship search results and select the next scholarship with an upcoming deadline; Repeat steps 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Guidelines for students requesting recommendations

1. Think about who knows you and can attest to the quality of your work. If you need a recommendation from a teacher, request one from a teacher in an academic subject who knows your strengths. That may be a teacher in whose class you've gotten top grades, but it could also be a teacher who knows how hard you've worked to get B's and C's.  
If you need three recommendations — one from a counselor, an academic teacher and another person — consider requesting one from someone who knows you well: a coach, employer, adult co-worker, or religious or youth-group leader, or an adult in the community with whom you have had regular and positive contact.
2. Ask the person if that individual would be willing to write a letter for you. Remember, the person is doing you a favor.
3. Submit information about yourself (résumé, brag sheet), the recommendation form (if there is one) and other pertinent information to the writer at least two weeks before it needs to be completed. Remember, the deadline is the last possible day the letter/application may be **received** by the admissions or scholarship committee, not the day you put it in the mail.
4. Set your own deadline at least one week before you need to mail your application letter.
5. If the writer is to send your letter separately, provide a stamped, addressed envelope with a note attached listing a deadline for mailing that is at least five days before the application deadline. Politely check with the writer to be certain your letter was mailed (“How’s my letter coming? Do you need any more information?”).
6. Write a brief thank-you note to the writer.
7. If you receive the scholarship or are accepted to the college for which the letter was written, let the writer know.
8. Copy all parts of your application, essay, letters and other materials for your own records.
9. Let the guidance office know when you have a response from the college or scholarship committee, one way or the other.

*Source: The College Board*

### Handout 5H



## Letters of recommendation: How to stand out from the crowd

### How to stand out from the crowd

Most college applications request two or three recommendation letters from people who know you in and out of the classroom. *Texas A&M does not require letters of rec, but they are recommended. No more than two*

#### Whom should I ask?

*The Common Application includes its own form for Teacher/Counselor Evaluations.*  
Read the application carefully. Often colleges request letters of recommendation from an academic teacher (sometimes a specific discipline), your school counselor, or both. If a non-specified academic teacher is requested, your English or math teachers usually make good candidates.

Also, you should use a teacher from junior year, or a current teacher if they have known you long enough to form an opinion. It is best not to go back too far, as colleges want current perspectives on their potential candidates. All the better if you get a recommendation from a teacher who's also been involved with you outside the classroom, but unless a college specifically requests it, don't use a coach or someone who can't speak to your academic achievements and potential.

*Some colleges do not require letters from teachers but anyone who knows you WELL. (Clergy, be not relativ.)*

**When should I ask?** Make sure to give your recommendation writers plenty of time — at least one month before letters are due — to complete and send your recommendations, but as with anything, the earlier the better. Many teachers like to have the summer to write recommendations, so if you asked last spring, you're doing great. If you apply under Early Decision or Early Action plans, you'll need to ask at the start of the school year, if you didn't request one last spring.

### How can I get the best possible recommendations?

Talk to your recommendation writers. For teachers, it's important that they focus on your academic talents and accomplishments within their classroom, because that's what colleges are looking for in teacher recommendations. Talk to them about what you remember about their class and your participation in it. Highlight a particular incident, paper or anything else that might help them provide anecdotal information and specific examples of your achievement, rather than just vague praise.

It's also important that you spend time talking with your counselors and ensure they know about your plans, accomplishments and involvements. You may want to provide them with a brief resume of your activities and goals; a resume can provide the best overview of your high school involvement and contributions. Also, if there is some aspect of your transcript that needs explaining — perhaps low grades during sophomore year — it's helpful to talk with your counselors to explain why and how you've changed and improved.

# Letters of Recommendation: How to stand out from the crowd (page 2)

## Helpful Tips

- Don't be shy. Teachers and counselors are usually happy to help you, as long as you respect their time constraints. *At LEAST 2 WEEKS!*
- Include addressed and stamped envelopes for each school to which you're applying. *Teachers mail letters directly to school.*
- Provide teachers and counselors with deadlines for each recommendation that you are requesting, especially noting the earliest deadline. *Include time for mail.*
- On the application form, waive your right to view recommendation letters. This gives more credibility to the recommendation in the eyes of the college.
- Typically, you know your teachers well enough to know who can provide favorable reviews of your accomplishments. If in doubt, don't hesitate to ask if they feel comfortable writing a recommendation. In some cases, you may have no choice as to who to use, but when you do, make the best choice possible.
- Follow up with your recommendation writers a week or so prior to your first deadline, to ensure recommendations have been mailed or to see if they need additional information from you.
- Once you have decided which college to attend, write thank-you notes to everyone who provided a recommendation and tell them where you've decided to go to college. Be sure to do this before you leave high school.



