



Mountain View High School

Counseling Courier

April-May 2019

That's a Wrap!

And just like that, another school year has flown by and summer vacation is upon us. It has been a great year for the counseling department with our two newest department members and we are so delighted that you have found our newsletter informative and useful. In this last issue, you will find many key updates on items such as the Common App essay prompts, summer college visits, summer school, and a campus spotlight. Enjoy!

The 2019 Common Application Essay Prompts

The Common Application is one application that is used by more than 800 colleges for multiple admissions applications. Students can check to see if a college is a member of the Common Application at

<https://www.commonapp.org> The Common Application has announced that their essay prompts for the 2019-2020 application will remain the same as the 2018-2019 essay prompts. This news allows for current juniors to begin the process of brainstorming ideas for their college application essays that they will start writing this summer. The essay prompts can be found on:

<https://www.commonapp.org/whats-appening/application-updates/2019-2020-common-app-essay-prompts>

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 obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
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, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

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Summer School

♦ *Summer School applications are still available*

♦ *In-Seat Session 1:*

6/12-6/25

♦ *In-Seat Session 2:*

6/26-7/11

♦ *Online Summer Session 1:*

6/12-6/25

♦ *Online Summer Session 2:*

6/26-7/11

♦ *Online Summer Session 3:*

7/12-7/25

What should I do with my summer vacation?

At this time of year, it's not uncommon for counselors to be asked this question by students and their families. While we definitely advocate plenty of downtime for relaxing and recharging, 10 weeks can seem like a long time without at least some structured activities other than video game or YouTube marathons. Here are some suggestions that won't break the bank:

Volunteer: Service is a great way for students to learn more about themselves, develop some great real-world skills, and give back to the community. Check out the [College and Career Center's volunteer page](#) for suggestions and MVHS's Volunteer Guide.

Get a Job: Some students may be old enough to get a more traditional summer job in food service, sales, or the like. They shouldn't be shy about pounding the pavement in downtown Mountain View and Los Altos, as many local businesses hire our students. For students who may not be 16, consider other options, such as babysitting or pet sitting/walking. Who knows? Maybe there's a budding entrepreneur in your household.

Take a community college course: High school students can take community college courses for low or no cost at most of our local schools, including Foothill and DeAnza. Summer is a great time to explore a fun class such as art, yoga, computer science, anthropology, film studies, etc. Foothill and DeAnza summer courses start on July 1 this year.

Take a free online course: [Coursera](#) and [edX](#) offer enticing courses from world-renowned universities like MIT, UC Berkeley, Notre Dame, and UCSD. Whether students are interested in philosophy, psychology, social media, peace and justice studies, computer science, or world literature, there is something for everyone. And did we mention it's free?

Look into a job-shadow opportunity: If your student is interested in a particular career, consider encouraging them to shadow someone in that field for half a day, a day, or more. Neighbors, friends, and family members can be great resources in this regard, and many people are very happy to host an interested high school student for a short visit.

Consider test prep: We might hate to admit it, but our students are often so busy during the school year that summer becomes an opportune time for SAT/ACT prep. Whether it's a prep book, online prep through [Khan Academy](#), or an actual course, summer may be a good time to fit this task into your schedule. (Hint: If your student is a freshman, wait until next summer. They'll get more out of it closer to the recommended testing time frame of junior year.)

Visit colleges: So much yes! Check out the detailed piece in this edition of the *Counseling Courier* for great suggestions and tips to make the most of college visits.

Summer: Time for College Visits!

Summer is a great time to participate in activities and catch up on some rest! It is also a great time to begin exploring colleges! This is your opportunity to identify your likes and dislikes for college resources and campus styles!

How to Plan Your Visit

1. If this is your first time visiting colleges, we recommend identifying an area with diverse campus types. In the Bay Area, for example, you can tour a smaller private campus like University of San Francisco and compare it to a larger public college like UC Santa Cruz. This would give you an opportunity to experience different campus sizes as well as urban vs town setting.
 2. Schedule your tour at least two weeks in advance. Many colleges allow you to schedule your tour online, but you can also call the admissions office to do so. Some colleges also have admissions sessions or student panels for Q & A.
 3. Research each college ahead of your visit, so you can prepare specific questions for each school.
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Summer: Time for College Visits! Continued...

Questions to Ask During Your College Visit

Questions for an Admissions Counselor

- Do professors teach most classes or do teaching assistants?
- What is the average class size of introductory classes?
- Are freshmen assigned academic advisors?
- Do all professors hold office hours?
- Are there internship programs available?
- What opportunities are there for undergraduate research?
- How safe is campus?
- What academic support services are available? Tutors or learning center?
- What kinds of career services are available?

Questions for a Financial Aid Counselor

- Does the college offer merit scholarships?
- What is the average merit award?
- What is your average financial aid package?
- Does the college offer need-based financial aid? Is the full need met?
- Is the financial aid guaranteed for all four years at the same financial level?
- Does the college have work-study programs?
- When students graduate, what level of debt do they carry on average?

Questions to Ask Random Students

- What do you like best about this college? What do you like the least?
- How easy is it to talk to professors? Are they available outside of class?
- How many hours a week do you study?
- Are there activities on the weekends or do most students go home?
- How is the Greek system/athletics here on campus?
- Is Wi-Fi available throughout the campus/dorms?
- What made you choose this school? Would you choose this school again, given what you know now?
- Where do freshmen live? How are the dorms, are they crowded?
- Do you like the food here?
- What activities are offered to students?

After Your Visit

Keep track of your impressions. Consider your initial impressions, campus size and campus culture.

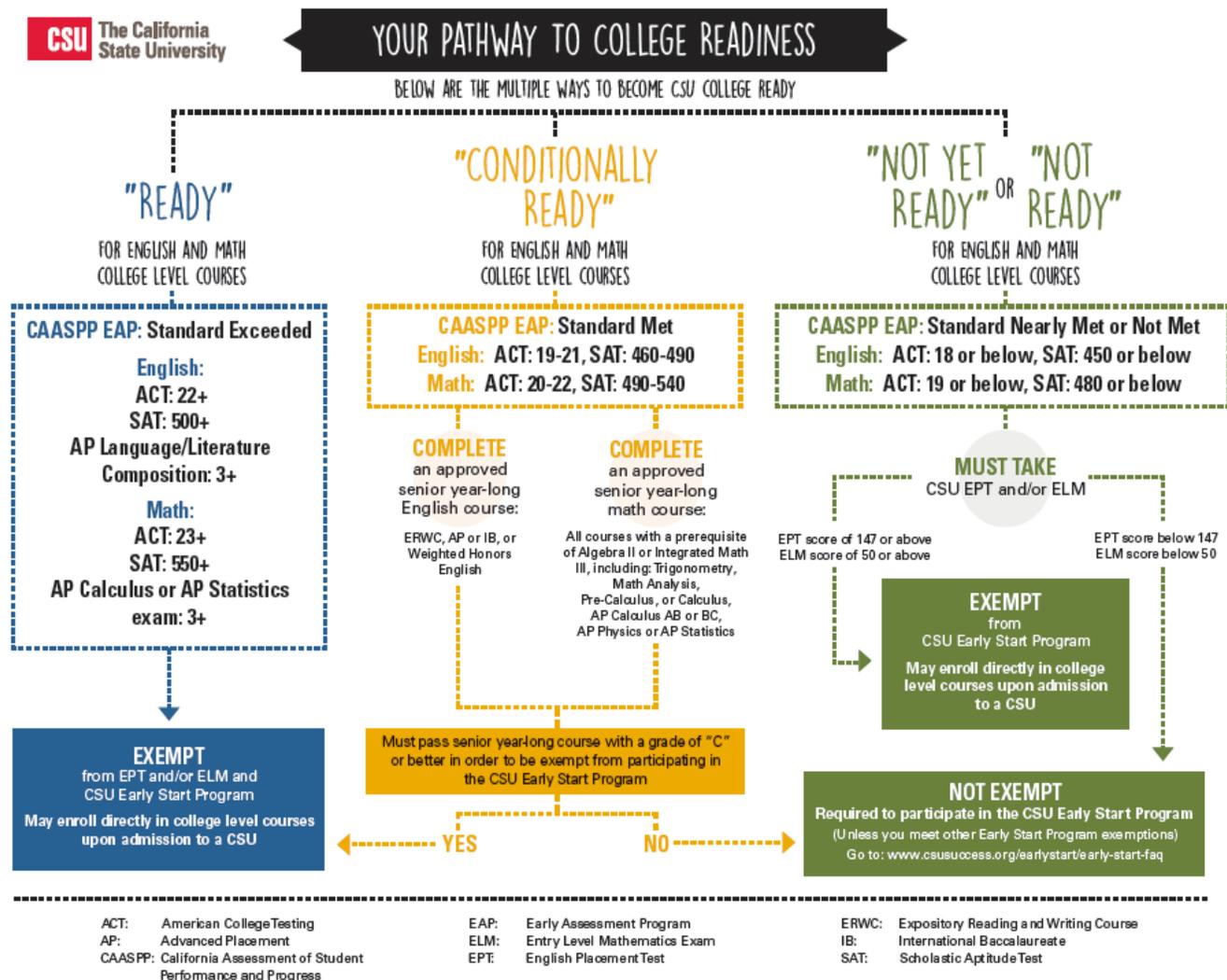
Consider your interactions with students and staff and the overall attitude of the student body around you.

1. What important points about the academics did you learn?
 2. Can you imagine yourself living there?
 3. Did you feel safe and comfortable on campus and the surrounding area?
 4. Did the school have your major and resources to support you?
 5. What did you like and dislike about the college?
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CSU Readiness

In spring of junior year students participate in the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) in English Arts /Literacy and Mathematics.

The California State University (CSU) will, and the California Community Colleges (CCC) may, use CAASPP results to determine your readiness to take college level courses before you enroll in college. The CSU campuses to which you apply will notify you of the next steps necessary to satisfy English and/or math requirements based on your assessment results.



AP Exams

May 6th	AP US Gov't., AP Chinese Lang. and AP Environmental Science
May 7th	AP Spanish Lang., AP Japanese Lang., AP Physics 1
Math 8th	AP English Lit., AP Euro. History, AP French Lang.
May 9th	AP Chemistry, AP Spanish Lit., AP Psych.
May 10th	AP US History

May 13th	AP Biology, AP Physics C
May 14th	AP Calculus AB and BC
May 15th	AP English Lang., AP Macro
May 16th	AP World History and AP Stats
May 17th	AP Computer Science

Summer School

If you received a D or an F in an academic class, we expect that you will take the class during summer school. Please see your counselor for a summer school form. Summer school classes are not available to be used as a way to advance in a subject area. It IS possible to take health via our Adult Education Summer School. Please read below for more information.

IN-SEAT SUMMER SCHOOL

Where: This summer it will be hosted at Los Altos High School (7:30 am-2pm)

When: Semester 1 runs from 6/12-6/25 and Semester 2 runs from 6/26-7/11

How: Please pick up an application from your counselor. **They are due 4/19/19.**

***Attendance is required everyday; failure to do so could result in being dropped from the course.**

More questions? Please contact: bill.pierce@mvla.net or debi.rudd@mvla.net

ONLINE SUMMER SCHOOL (all courses EXCEPT for Health)

1. Complete the Online Summer School 2019 Application available at your school's Counseling Office. **(Must be signed by your Counselor and Parent)**

2. Follow information & instructions via the

Online Summer School Website:<http://www.mvla.net/AS/HSD/Summer>

3. Register Online (only Waitlist will be available)

4. **Turn in your completed Online Summer School 2019 Application to your school's Counseling Office Secretary by May 24, 2019.**

More questions? Please contact your counselor or call the Adult Education School at: 650-940-1333

HEALTH (only offered online)

1. Follow information & instructions via the Online Summer School Website:

<http://www.mvla.net/AS/HSD/Summer>

2. Register Online (please only register for one session unless you are waitlisted or unable to register for your first choice session.)

3. Complete the Online Summer School 2019 Application (Can be printed from the AS HSD Summer website or picked up at the Counseling Office. **Must be signed by a Parent.**)

4. Turn in your completed Online Summer School 2019 Application to your school's **Counseling Office Secretary** by May 24, 2019.

Once you have registered, you will have a place in the class. To keep your place, submit your completed application by May 24, 2019, with a Parent signature. Note: a Counselor's signature is NOT required for Health.

****Please note that all online classes at adult education require the student to be in town when taking the class. Students need to go in to the Adult Education center a minimum of 4 times during the length of the course. ****



Mark your calendars!

March 27th	Countdown to College @ LAHS 6pm
April 4th	Foothill College App Workshop in the CCC
April 15th- 18th	Spring Break
April 25th	Foothill Orientation in the CCC

May 6th-17th	AP Testing
June 3rd-5th	Senior Finals
June 7th	Graduation Last Day of School

Campus Highlight: UC Merced

Quick Facts:

- Newest UC Campus; opened in September 2005
- Approximately 6200 undergraduate students, 450 graduate students
- 61% of applicants are admitted
- Located in a small town in California's northern Central Valley; 2 hours away from Yosemite National Park, the Golden Gate Bridge, Santa Cruz, Monterey Bay, Dodge Ridge and China Peak, Sacramento, and Gold Country.
- Tuition is \$13,598; Room/board is \$16,790
- Starting with the Fall of 2019, all incoming freshmen will be required to live on campus for two years.
- Strong focus on conservation and sustainability



Academics:

- Merced is broken up into three schools: School of Engineering; School of Natural Sciences; and School of Social Sciences, Humanities, & Arts
- There are 24 majors, 25 minors, and 17 graduate programs. Most popular majors are: Biological and Biomedical Sciences; Engineering; Psychology; Social Sciences; and Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services.



Campus Life:

- UC Merced has over 200 clubs, anything from the alliance with animals club to the American Red Cross Club.
- UC Merced is part of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) and compete in the California Pacific (Cal Pac) Conference. There are currently 8 varsity sports including men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, men's and women's volleyball, and men's and women's cross country.
- Merced's emerging downtown area is home to a number of quaint boutiques, coffee houses, a cinemplex, eateries, historic buildings, cultural centers and the beautifully restored Merced Theater.
- The city hosts a number of parades, annual events, and celebrations such as Shakespearefest and the Merced Art Hop.

