

FORMAN



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College Counseling Handbook

FORMAN



Dear Parents,

The college search process is a wonderful and exciting time for students. There are so many great schools from which to choose and students have the opportunity to begin thinking about how their unique interests and passions might translate to a career. At the same time, the college search, for both student and parents, can be stressful. The goal of our college office, and all of us at Forman, is to support students in the process and to help students find the “right fit”.

This handbook was compiled to provide you with an overview of the college selection, application, and admission process. Our college counselors and staff will work with your child to help them determine colleges that best match their interests and profile. They will work with students to encourage their ownership of the process and assist them as they manage all the steps along the way.

We hope this handbook will help to answer your questions regarding college admission. We encourage you to check Forman’s College Counseling website for information on the college process (www.formanschool.org/college).

We look forward to helping your child find the right college, and making their college dreams a reality. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam K. Man". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Adam K. Man
Head of School

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College Counseling Office Procedures

College Visitation

Students may be excused from academic or athletic obligations for a college visit. However, the Dean's, Academics, Athletics and College Counseling Office's must be notified at least a week in advance and the proper protocol for students traveling off campus must be followed (i.e. a weekend form must be completed). Parents should accompany the student, and be responsible for arranging transportation. It is the student's responsibility to follow up with their teachers regarding any missed assignments.

College Representatives at Forman

During the fall semester, representatives from colleges and universities throughout the country visit the Forman campus. The College Counseling Office will post notices of upcoming visits on the bulletin board outside our office. The visit schedule can also be found on the Forman website. In addition an email will be sent to juniors and seniors to inform them of upcoming visits at the beginning of each week.

Students may be excused from classes to visit with representatives; however, they need to sign up in advance with the College Counseling Office. It is the student's responsibility to notify teachers if they will be absent and to complete all missed work. Representatives often stay for lunch and students are encouraged to join them.

Letters of Recommendation

Recommendations are collected and submitted to colleges by the College Counseling Office. All administrative, teacher, and counselor recommendations are held in confidence between the school and the colleges. Forman reserves the right to maintain this confidentiality, even after graduation.

Application Materials

Once students notify their College Counselor they have submitted an application, the College Counseling Office will send all application materials within two weeks. Any additional material (résumés, portfolios, supplemental essays, etc.) need to be given to the College Counseling Office before application submission.

Application materials will be submitted electronically to each college. Students and parents can confirm that colleges have received the materials through Naviance and the Common Application.

Official SAT/ACT scores

Forman does not report individual standardized test scores; each student will need to submit these scores directly from the testing agency to all schools that require them. The College Counselors can help identify the schools that require official scores to be sent and determine which scores should be submitted. Please see the standardized testing section of this handbook for more detailed information.

Academic Reports & Transcripts

The grade point average reported to colleges is calculated using only the grades earned at Forman. However, prior transcripts are included in the materials sent to colleges. Forman grades are weighted and we do not provide a class rank.

Disciplinary Procedures

Applications will have a section, which, asks if a student has ever been suspended, expelled or has taken a leave of absence during their high school education. It often will say “ If your education was or will be interrupted, please indicate so here and provide details in the additional information section.” It is expected that students will self-report any infractions that occurred during their high school tenure. The College Counseling Office is obligated to notify colleges if there is an expulsion prior to graduating from Forman.

International Students

Admission requirements for international students vary from one college to another. In general, the following must be submitted in order to apply for an undergraduate program:

- International undergraduate student application (some colleges may allow international students to submit the standard application).
- The results of the TOEFL, if English is a second language.
- It is the responsibility of the student/parent to ensure that all transcripts are translated into English and to complete all Financial Certification Forms.

Student Athletes

If you feel that intercollegiate athletics will play a role in your college experience please visit the Planning Guide For The College Bound Student-Athlete.

College Selection – Factors to Consider

Major/Academic program

A “major” is a specific field of study. Each college major has its own set of requirements for graduation. Many also have prerequisites for acceptance into the program. It is important to do in-depth research on a specific major before coming to a final decision.

When students are undecided (as many high school students are), it is recommended that they select an academically balanced institution that offers a wide range of majors and programs. It is not imperative to declare an intended major before applying to college. Applying as an undecided applicant will not affect the admission decision.

If students know what they want to study, they should start their search by researching academic majors within specific colleges and universities. It is important to have a clear understanding of what is required for entrance and graduation. College search engines such as Naviance and College Board, allow students to search schools based on specific fields of study.

Selectivity

College selectivity refers to how difficult it is to gain admission to a particular school. In order to determine the selectivity of a college, consider the percentage of applications admitted the lower the percentage, the more selective, the average SAT/ACT score and GPA; more selective schools will have higher average scores and GPAs. Many schools are becoming test optional, in which case they weigh more heavily on the GPA, extra-curricular activities/leadership positions, essay and recommendations. By looking into these factors, students can better determine their chances of admission. The ultimate goal should be to have a balanced list of eight-ten colleges with varied levels of selectivity.

Types of School

Community College – Community colleges offer an alternative approach for students to enter a four-year college and/or the work force. They help prepare students for the job market as well as serving as a bridge for students from high school to college.

Vocational-Technical College – These are schools that offer a practical focus to the learning experience including specialized job training programs.

Military- Federal military academies prepare officers for the armed forces—Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Their degree programs offered are usually in the areas of business, engineering, technology, and military science.

Four year College or University - Four-year programs include general education requirements with an emphasis on developing a broad intellectual foundation. In addition, they require courses that are related to specific fields of study and majors.

Public vs. Private – Public schools are subsidized by the state, meaning that students who wish to attend a school in their home state will be charged a lower tuition than those who are out-of-state. Private schools are funded through endowments, tuition payments, and donations. These schools are not state-affiliated and there is no distinction between in or out-of-state students; everyone pays the same tuition to attend the school.

Religiously affiliated – These are private colleges that have a historic connection with a specific religion. For a majority of these colleges, the sponsoring denomination plays a limited role in the campus life, and students of all denominations and beliefs are welcomed.

Academic Atmosphere

Other academic factors that are important to consider:

- *Student to faculty ratio* - the smaller the ratio the more individual attention one can expect.
- *Student retention rate* - how many students return for their sophomore year.
- *Graduation rate*
- *Average freshmen class size*
- *Internships offered*
- *Type of academic calendar* (semester, trimester co-op)
- *Study abroad options*
- *Academic requirements* (for both entrance and graduation)
- *Level of academic support* offered to students with learning disabilities and ADHD (please see the academic support section in this handbook for more information).

Key questions to consider when seeking an appropriate academic atmosphere: How much time do you want to spend on academics each day/week? What level of academic support will you need to be successful, and is it available at the school you are considering?

Foreign Language Requirements

It is important to pay particular attention to the foreign language requirements of each college, especially if a student has taken American Sign Language (ASL) or has been exempt from a foreign language in high school. There are colleges that will not recognize ASL as a foreign language, and those credits will not meet the requirements for admissions. Additionally, some colleges will not recognize the foreign language exemption that they received in high school. However, contacting admission offices will determine whether or not they accept ASL and/or have a foreign language requirement.

Size of School

Generally, a small college has between 1,000 to 2,000 students. A medium- sized college ranges from 3,000 to 10,000 students, and a large college is considered anything above 10,000 students.

At a small college, one is likely to receive more individual attention, discussion-based classes, and smaller class sizes taught by the professors themselves. Larger colleges usually offer more research opportunities, large lecture-based classes (especially within the general education requirements,) and classes taught by teaching assistants, who are usually mentored by the faculty themselves. Larger schools can provide individual attention; however, it requires more initiative from the student.

Key questions to ask when identifying an appropriate sized college: Can you picture yourself in a large auditorium with 250 people, or would you prefer to be in smaller classes with fewer than 30 students? Do you want regular access to and contact with professors? Do you want faculty to know you by name? Do you prefer lectures or small group discussions? Do you want your classes to be within easy walking distance of each other?

Location

When determining the geographic location of a college, students should start by thinking about where they will feel the most comfortable. Some already know they want to stay close to home, some want a little distance, and some can't wait to live in an entirely different part of the country. It is important for students to choose an area that appeals to them, a place where they can see themselves living for the next four or five years.

Key questions to ask to identify an appropriate location (geographical and physical): How close to home do you want to be? Do you want to stick to a setting you're used to or try something new? Do you want to live in a rural, urban, or suburban area? Do you prefer to be in a warm or cold climate? East? Midwest? West?

Student Life

Students should be looking to find an environment that is right for them, one that *fits* their personal, social, and academic interests and needs. They should strongly consider what they want their life to be outside of the classroom as much as inside of the classroom. The following are important components of a student's life outside of the classroom:

Extra-curricular activities and clubs: Most colleges offer a variety of student activities both on and off campus, such as: clubs and organizations, community service opportunities, performing arts, student government, and community based events.

Athletics: For many campuses athletics are the heart of the college and local community, and fan participation is an integral part of student life. It is important to determine the impact that athletics has on the culture of the college community.

If you are interested in playing at the collegiate level, it is important to determine which level is most appropriate, NCAA, varsity teams, clubs, intramurals. Please see the NCAA section for more information on the requirements.

Fraternities & sororities: Some college campuses can be dominated by the Greek life, while others will have no Greek life at all. Ask alumni, current students or the admission office about the influence the Greek system has on life at the college.

Housing: The first place to start when researching dorm life is to look at the percent of students who live on campus. This will help to determine if it is a "commuter campus" or a "residential campus." It will also give an insight into whether or not students stay on campus for the weekends. Other aspects to look into are whether or not housing is guaranteed all four years and how many different housing options are offered. Ask about laundry services, wireless connectivity, a kitchen, or other amenities that make students feel comfortable with their living situation.

A living/learning community is a dorm or learning community that houses students who share a similar interest and are actively engaged in learning together. For example, many colleges house all of the students in the honors program together; others have a living learning community for a specific major or interest such as an environmentally friendly dorm, drug and alcohol free, or foreign language dorms. These are specific to each college and vary in types.

Meal Plans: Meal plans vary at each school. It is important to get an idea of what options a specific school offers. Schools that require freshmen to live on campus, recommend (sometimes require) the highest level of a meal plan where students eat all of their meals on campus and pay a higher, all-inclusive fee. Many schools have a separate card/account for the students to use at venues outside of the campus.

College Visits and Interviews

Before students commit years of their life to a college or university, it is important to make sure they are choosing a place that is a good match for them personally and academically. One of the best ways to determine if a college is the right fit is by gaining insight through a campus tour, admission information sessions and/or interview. Visiting can help to narrow down college lists and to gain an informed perspective of the school. It is important for each student to select colleges to visit that best fit their needs, interests, lifestyle, and personal or professional goals.

If possible, we recommend students to schedule college visits during March break of junior year and/or during late August or early September of senior year. We recommend late summer because most colleges are in session and the students are able to gain a true sense of what the campus feels like.

Important tips for students to remember during the college visit

- ***Schedule the visit in advance*** - Many schools will require you to schedule a visit either online or by phone.
- ***Be prepared*** - Complete your own research in advance and know the basic facts about the school.
- ***Request to visit a class*** or to meet with a professor or chair of the major in which you are interested.
- ***Schedule a visit with the Student Disability Office***
- ***Talk to students*** - Take advantage of the students around you. They will give you the most honest and insightful information about dorm life, social events, quality of food etc. The tour guides aren't involved in the admissions process; they are there to answer your questions.
- ***Explore on your own*** - Try to walk the extra mile to get a taste of the campus that was not part of the tour. An official tour will often show you the most impressive parts of campus; take time after the tour to walk around on your own.
- ***Tour the Library*** - As a college student this is a place where you will spend a lot of time. Is this a place where you can study? Is the technology current?
- ***Read the bulletin boards & campus newspaper*** - You can gain a lot of useful information about what's happening on campus and outside of the classroom.
- ***Eat in the dining hall*** - Visiting the dining hall will give you the opportunity to observe students outside of the classroom, and get a sense of what options they provide their students with regards to food.
- ***Take pictures and lots of notes*** - You will most likely visit many schools and it is easy for all of the schools to start blending together and students often forget details. Use the following college visit sheet to help remember the specifics of the school.

Interview Do's & Don'ts

Many colleges will allow you to interview while visiting campus or when they visit Forman. Therefore if an interview is recommended, it is to your advantage to arrange one. An interview will put a face and personality to your application; it will provide the college with better insight and understanding of you. If you are applying to a college with a specific program for students with learning disabilities and/or ADHD they often require an interview.

Do's

- **Call to arrange an interview** - In some cases, if you are unable to travel to campus, they will arrange a local representative to interview you or schedule a phone interview.
- **Arrive at least ten minutes early** - Never be late for an interview.
- **Dress for success** - Business casual is appropriate dress.
- **Know the facts** - Be prepared for your interview by researching the basic facts about the school.
- **Make a list of questions before arriving** - Ask insightful questions that display your interest in the school.
- **Bring your best manners** - Greet the interviewer by name, make eye contact, and have a firm handshake.
- **Be honest and stress your achievements** - This is your opportunity to tell the representative anything that is not displayed on the application. Use this opportunity to sell yourself and to show the admissions representative why you would be an asset to the school.
- **Bring an unofficial transcript, resume, and portfolio.**
- **Elaborate when answering questions** - Don't answer with a simple yes or no. The interviewer is there to get to know you.
- **Send a thank you note.**

Don't

- Don't bring your cell phone into the interview.
- Don't exaggerate.
- Don't be negative; always turn a negative into a positive.
- Don't be afraid to pause to gather your thoughts and think about how you want to answer a question.
- Don't stress out; an interview is simply a conversation in which you have the opportunity to share information about yourself, while also learning about the college. There are no right or wrong answers.

Questions to Ask During a College Visit

Admissions / Academics:

- What elements are considered in the admission process?
- What is the freshman retention rate?
- What is your four-year graduation rate / six-year graduation rate?
- What teaching methods are used in classes?
- How is technology used in the classroom?
- What is the level of interaction between faculty and students?
- Can students participate in research projects as undergraduates? If so, what departments offer undergraduate research?
- How easy is it to change majors?
- What tutoring, counseling and support services are available on campus?
- What is the average freshman class size? Who typically teaches the freshman classes?
- What type of calendar does your school follow? (4-1-4, 3 terms, block)

What to ask current students:

- Why did you decide to attend this school?
- If you could change anything about the school what would it be?
- What do you like the best about your school?
- How easy is it for you to meet with professors?
- How much time do you spend on academics each night?

General questions to ask:

- What type of housing is available for freshman?
- What are the distinctive/unique features of your college?
- What special interest groups, clubs, organizations are on campus?
- Does the campus have a Greek system? If so, what percent of the student body participates in Greek life?
- In what ways does the school support students looking for a job after graduation?
- What is the job placement rate?
- What intramural sports are on campus?
- Are there transportation options available to and from campus for students?
- Is housing guaranteed for all four years? What percent of students live on campus all four years?
- What living/learning communities are available?

Questions to Ask During a College Visit

What to ask about the college's disability services?

- Is there a fee associated with any of the services offered for students with learning disabilities?
- What is the process used to determine eligibility to receive accommodations and services?
- How current must my testing be to apply for accommodations?
- What common types of accommodations and support services are available for students to utilize? (*i.e. extended time on tests, a distraction free testing environment, note taking assistance, audio books, priority registration, study skills training*)
- Are substitutions available for particular required courses, if they are needed based on the specific nature of a disability? (*i.e. substitutions for required world language courses*).
- Once accommodations are granted what is the procedure for receiving the accommodations? Do students arrange accommodations with professors or through the Disabilities Office?
- What Assistive Technology is available to the students?
- How many staff members work in the Office of Disability Support Services? What are the main roles of the staff members?
- How does your office collaborate with other departments of the school?
- Are there services provided to assist freshmen students with the transition from high school to college?
- What is the four-year graduation rate for students with learning disabilities?
- Do you track students who have used your services after graduation? If so, what do your findings show about their success after graduation?

Financial Aid:

- What is your average financial aid package?
- What percentage of financial need does the school typically meet?
- What is the average merit award?
- What work-study opportunities are offered?

Colleges Visiting Forman (2016-2017)

Specific dates of the visits can be found on the College Counseling website. They are also emailed to the students and parents weekly. Please be advised that this list changes yearly.

Bryant University	Mount Ida College
Champlain College	Nichols College
Chapman University	Plymouth State University
Clark University	Roanoke College
Colby Sawyer College	Roger William Smith Colleges
Curry College	Sacred Heart University
Dean College	Saint Anselm College
Elon University	Salve Regina University
Emmanuel College	Springfield College
Goucher College	St. Lawrence University
Green Mountain College	St. Michael's College
High point University	Stetson University
Hobart & William Smith Colleges	SUNY at Geneseo
Hofstra University	The University of Scranton
Iona College	University of Arizona
Johnson and Wales	University of Connecticut
Keene State College	University of Hartford
Lasell College	University of Maine
Lesley University	University of Maryland
Lynchburg College	University of New Haven
Lynn University	University of Redlands
Manhattan College	Wentworth Institute
Manhattaville College	Western New England University
Marist College	Wheelock College
Merrimack College	Whittier College
Mitchell College	