

Selecting a college is a big decision. Take the time to do the research so that you make a good decision in finding a school that is the best fit for you. Here are some questions you might want to consider when looking at different colleges:

- Do you want to attend a two- or four-year institution? Co-ed or single sex?
- What size school do you want to attend?
- What programs of study are you considering?
- How far from home do you want to go?
- Do you wish to participate in any specific extra-curricular activities or athletics?
- Do you want to attend a school in an urban, suburban or rural environment?
- Do you require any special services (i.e. tutoring, note takers, readers, TDD or interpreters)?

The University of Wisconsin System starts accepting college applications on September 15th of a student's senior year. This is also a good guideline for other colleges as well. We encourage students to send their information out early to avoid missing deadlines or running into a problem when colleges fill up before the deadline date. At some schools housing is a big issue so applying early will help you to ensure that you have a spot. Students wishing to have their application material sent prior to winter vacation should give everything to their counselor by December 1st . The application process works as follows:

**1. College Application** - the easiest way to apply to a school is through their website. Applying online does speed up the processing of the application. Paper applications are also accepted by most colleges and should be given to your counselor upon completion.

**2. Application Fee** - this can be paid online with a credit card, or a check (made out to the college) can be sent with the application packet.

**3. Applicant Statement/College Essay** - these are often typed and saved in a Microsoft Word document and cut and pasted into the online application. You can also print it out and attach to your paper application. When writing a personal essay, think about past events that have changed or influenced your attitude about people, education, career goals, employment, and long held beliefs. Some topics to write about include, but are not limited to:

- Who or what has influenced you to value educational success and encouraged you to pursue your academic and career goals?
- Describe a situation where you took a leadership role and explain how this benefited others and contributed to your personal growth and development.
- Share a situation where you helped others and explain how this experience has positively affected your life and career goal.
- Explain what steps you have already taken to prepare for your academic and career goals? What is your plan to continue the pursuit of your goals?
- Share a difficult experience in your life and how you demonstrated responsibility through perseverance.

**4. Counselor Section** - for online applications, you must print this section and give it to your counselor to complete.

**5. Transcripts** – Please include \$2.00 (cash or check made out to Whitnall High School) with each application so that an official transcript can be sent to the college along with your application.

**6. Letters of Recommendation** – Please allow teachers two weeks to write the letter. Ask them to save it so can use it again. Make copies. Teachers will give their recommendations directly to the counselor, who will send them along with the rest of your application materials.

**7. ACT/SAT Scores** - YOU must notify the testing company to send your scores directly to the colleges. The guidance office is not responsible for this part of your application. You can do this online at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org) (ACT) or [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com) (SAT).

Students will need to bring any needed application documents to their counselor. Counselors will fill out the counselor section and send all your application materials that you have provided them with along with your official transcript (\$2) and test scores.