

How applications are reviewed

As we consider each individual application - and rest assured, we do consider each one - we look beyond grades and test scores. We spend time evaluating your academic achievements in light of the opportunities available to you and your demonstrated capacity to contribute to the intellectual life **at UC**. The 14 factors we weigh are:

1. Academic **grade point average in all completed "a-g" courses**, including additional points for completed UC-certified honors courses.
2. Scores on the following tests: **ACT with Writing or the SAT Reasoning Test**.
3. **Number of, content of and performance in** academic courses **beyond the minimum "a-g"** requirements.
4. **Number of and performance in UC-approved honors, Advanced Placement**, International Baccalaureate Higher Level and transferable college courses.
5. Identification by UC as being ranked in the **top 9 percent of your high school class** at the end of your junior year (Eligible in the Local Context, or ELC).
6. **Quality of your senior-year program** as measured by the type and number of academic courses in progress or planned.
7. Quality of your academic performance relative to the **educational opportunities available in your high school**.
8. **Outstanding performance in one or more specific subject areas**.
9. **Outstanding work in one or more special projects** in any academic field of study.
10. **Recent, marked improvement in academic performance** as demonstrated by academic GPA and the quality of coursework completed or in progress.
11. **Special talents, achievements and awards** in a particular field, such as visual and performing arts, communication or athletic endeavors; **special skills**, such as demonstrated written and oral proficiency in other languages; **special interests**, such as intensive study and exploration of other cultures; **experiences** that demonstrate unusual promise for leadership, such as significant community service or significant participation in student government; or **other significant experiences or achievements** that demonstrate the student's promise for contributing to the intellectual vitality of a campus.
12. **Completion of special projects undertaken** in the context of your high school curriculum or in conjunction with special school events, projects or programs.
13. **Academic accomplishments in light of your life experiences and special circumstances**, including but not limited to: disabilities, low family income, first generation to attend college, need to work, disadvantaged social or educational environment, difficult personal and family situations or circumstances, refugee status or veteran status.
14. **Location** of your secondary school and residence.

SELECTIVE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

It is the responsibility of the **student** to provide a *thoughtful, thorough, and authentic application*.
It is the responsibility of the **college** to be *fair and to make the right decision about the match*.

Academic background/academic performance

Transcript is by far the most important document in the entire application

Challenge of Program (AP, Honors courses)

Within the context of the HS, did the student choose challenging curriculum? Did the student achieve?

Choose "appropriate rigor". Take classes because they are right for you, and you are interested in.

Students will not be penalized for taking CP

Top of the pool will max out in AP's and extra-curricular– every student doesn't have to be that.

PLEASE get sleep, as well.

High School Profile provides level and variety of courses available.

Letter of Recommendation (LOR)/Written Evaluation

Counselor Written Evaluation: Puts the student in the context of the school

Compare student to peers.

Make the case for your kid, show intelligence, curiosity, engagement.

Teacher LOR: Puts the student in the context of the classroom

Show quality of mind, writing ability, enjoyment for a challenge, response to setbacks. Use anecdotes.

Do not use the resume, teacher needs to address performance **within** the classroom.

Essay

Provides evidence of a **student's ability to express** him/herself in writing and complexity of thought.

Good: Can the student put together a sentence?

Better: Can the student form a thesis, provide detail and prove a point?

Best: Can the student write with nuance, creativity, and a distinctive voice?

Voice: Write with a 17-year-old voice. Not mom's voice. Provides a sense of who the student is – beyond numbers – and how the student thinks.

Focused, no need to reiterate accomplishments (that info is available in other parts of the application)

Short answers are very important!

Students spend hours of time and energy on the long essay, but breeze through short answers.

This is where you can see the *true* writer (because long essays are often edited by adults).

Application Readers look at the **voice** in the long essay compared to the short answers – do they match?

Testing

The more national/competitive the college, the more important the scores. Most colleges don't employ cutoffs.

Other Factors

Interview: For the student and the college. More weight on the student bringing *something* to the class

Co-Curricular: Depth over breadth. Things that occupy the heart and mind outside the classroom

Demonstrated Interest: Will you come if admitted? Did you attend MCHS info session? Did you interview?

Art/Athletic/Music/Legacy: supplement sent to that particular department, can't hurt. What kind of legacy: Only parents? Grandparents? Siblings?

Extra Info

Never answer the question: **What other colleges are you applying to?** The school might not accept you if they think you'll get in elsewhere, and they lose a lot of their acceptances to another school. They try to "protect their yield", which is the # of students admitted vs # of students who matriculate.

ED edge? Ask college about ratio. EX 1: UPenn – if legacy, apply ED. Legacy won't matter RD. EX 2: Amherst caps ED.

Learning Disability: Disclose. EX If you're awkward in the interview, an autism diagnosis would be a good thing for admissions officer to know.

Know financial aid during admission process. Need blind vs. Need aware. Go to sessions in CCC.