

# College Applications 101

Sr. Connection Night  
CHS Guidance Dept.



# How to Apply to College :

- There are three ways to apply to colleges:
  - Common Application
  - CFNC
  - School Website

THE COMMON  
APPLICATION

College   
Foundation  
*of North Carolina*



# Common App

The logo for The Common Application, featuring the words "THE COMMON APPLICATION" in a serif font, with "THE" in a smaller size above "COMMON". The text is tilted slightly to the right.

- What is Common App?
  - an undergraduate college admission application that applicants may use to apply to any of 517 member colleges and universities in the United States
- Advantage?
  - One application with other supplementary components for each school.
  - You don't have to enter demographic and academic info for every application.
  - Transcripts uploaded through Common App by counselor
  - Recommendations online

# NC Schools on Common App:

- Davidson College
- Duke University
- Guilford College
- Meredith College
- Salem College
- UNC Asheville
- UNC Chapel Hill
- UNC Wilmington
- Wake Forest
- Warren Wilson College

# CFNC ([www.CFNC.org](http://www.CFNC.org))

- Why use CFNC?
  - CFNC will also repopulate your personal data for applications.
- There are some “linked schools” that will have links to their preferred application. (You cannot apply to these schools directly through CFNC)
  - Davidson, UNC Chapel Hill, NC State, Duke, Wake Forest, Campbell, High Point, Warren Wilson

# Using School Portals to Apply

- Some schools have their own portal for you to apply. This portal is accessed through the admissions website for each school.



# Early Decision VS Early Action

- **Early Action plans are *nonbinding***-students receive an early response to their application but do not have to commit to the college until spring
- **Early Decision (ED) plans are *binding***-students who are accepted as an ED applicant must attend that college. Under this plan students submit their credentials early and declare that the university is their top choice.



# Who should apply for Early Decision?

- A student who has researched colleges extensively (visited campuses) and are absolutely sure that College X is their first choice.
- A student who is willing to withdraw **ALL** other college applications upon acceptance from College X.
- A student must meet or exceed the admissions profile of students at College X.
- A student who has completed their SAT/ACT exams by October of his/her senior year. Some college, will accept November test scores if the score are rushed to the admissions office.
- A student who has an academic record has been consistently solid.



# What are some common mistakes student make in choosing ED?

- Applying to a college for ED when they have not researched/visited any other colleges
- Applying early to a college just to avoid the paper work and stress
- Applying early because a friend is doing so.

*Applying ED may or may not make your odds better for admissions. It is best to do your research on each ED school!*

# What are the advantages of ED?

- Your application is reviewed early and you receive notification of your admission in December
- Once accepted you avoid having to complete other applications.
- Your application is reviewed against a smaller (but stronger) applicant pool.
- Many prestigious universities use this applicant pool for the majority of their incoming freshman class

# If you are pursuing a ED program

## Do Not:

- Apply to binding Early Decision program at more than one college. Many colleges require counselors and/or parents to sign off on the application.
- Send transcripts to another university once you have been accepted into a ED Program
- Fail to withdraw you applications from other colleges one you have been accepted into a ED program.
- Attempt to gain release from an ED decision because you have changed your mind.

If you have specific questions  
about your university's ED or EA  
program contact your college  
directly

# Transcript Procedure

- In-state (public or private) – transcripts will be sent through CFNC. Directions available on the School Counseling Website
  - [www.CFNC.org](http://www.CFNC.org)
- Common App – counselor will upload transcript.
- Out-of-State (if not on Common App or other electronic portal) – Please complete the transcript request form. Cost is \$3 per transcript. Student will pick up transcript and mail.

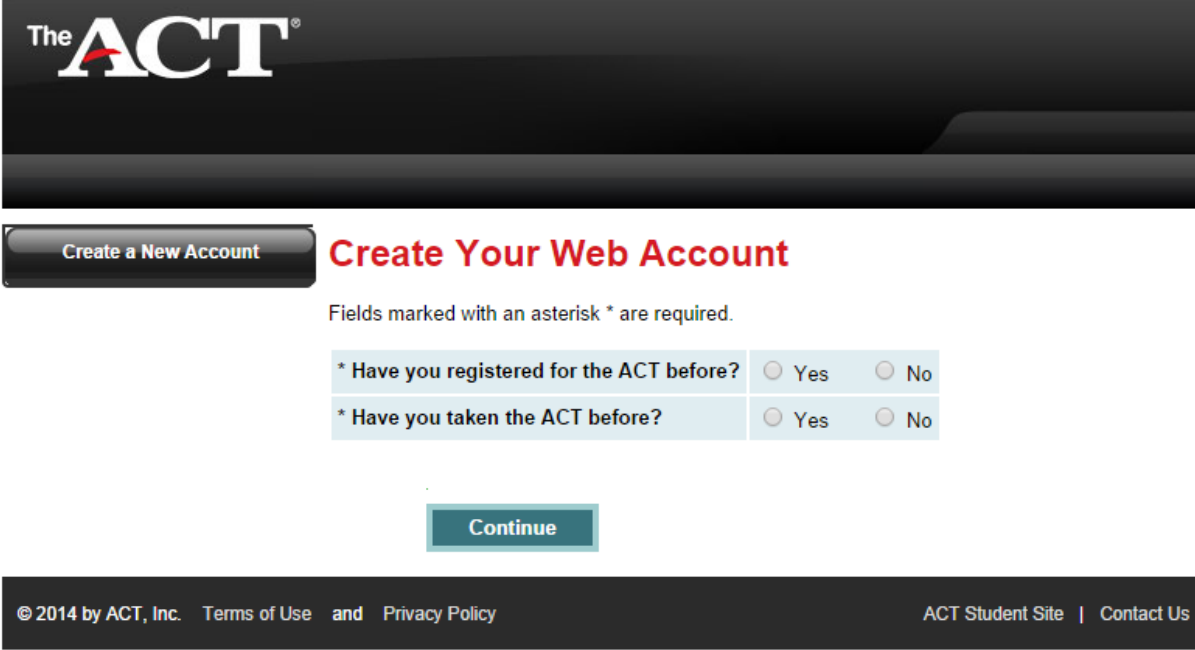
# Sending ACT and SAT Scores



- ACT and SAT scores are not part of your high school transcript.
- There are two ways to send your ACT/SAT test scores:
  - Bubble in the school code when you take the test and send scores immediately for free.
  - Send your SAT/ACT scores to the universities electronically through [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org) and [actstudent.org](http://actstudent.org). There is a cost of \$11-\$12 per school.
- When you send your scores, you will send all of the reports from that testing agency. So if you have taken the SAT 3 times, you will pay \$11.25 and send all three sets of scores at one time. You may be able to choose which scores to send (Ex. See SAT Score Choice) Please see the websites for more details.

# Viewing / Sending ACT Scores online

- To access the ACT test scores that you received from the CHS Administration, please create an ACT account and answer the following questions accordingly:



The screenshot shows the ACT website's account creation page. At the top is the 'The ACT' logo. Below it is a button labeled 'Create a New Account'. The main heading is 'Create Your Web Account' in red. A note states 'Fields marked with an asterisk \* are required.' There are two questions, each with 'Yes' and 'No' radio button options: '\* Have you registered for the ACT before?' and '\* Have you taken the ACT before?'. A teal 'Continue' button is centered below the questions. The footer contains copyright information '© 2014 by ACT, Inc.' and links for 'Terms of Use', 'Privacy Policy', 'ACT Student Site', and 'Contact Us'.

**The ACT**

Create a New Account

**Create Your Web Account**

Fields marked with an asterisk \* are required.

\* Have you registered for the ACT before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

\* Have you taken the ACT before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Continue

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- If you have any problems linking you account, please contact **319-337-1270**

# Resumes

- Components of a High School Resume
  - Personal Contact Info
    - Name, Address, Phone Number
    - A Professional Email Address
  - Objective: College admissions, major, career goals
  - Academic Information: GPA, Class Rank, AP and Honors Courses, SAT/ACT Scores
  - School Involvement: Sports, Clubs
  - Community Service
  - Work Experience
  - Awards and Recognitions
  - Skills





# Resume Tips

- Resume should be neat and organized.
- Organize components to highlight your assets.
- Include dates/years of involvement with most recent first
- Show leadership!
- Give resume to those writing your recommendations.
- Send resume with scholarship applications.

# PROOF YOUR RESUME!



This is your chance  
to make a good  
impression!

Proofread your resume.

# RECOMMENDATION ADVICE



# Recommendation Advice (cont.)

## 1) Who do you want to ask for recommendations?

- The best letters are those that:
  - provides an interesting or touching story
  - paints a picture of your personality to the admissions counselor
  - presents growth and accomplishment
- In order to get those recommendations you need to ask individuals who you have a great relationship with.
- A letter from a prestigious person will not overshadow a letter from someone who truly knows you!

# Recommendation Advice (cont.)

## 2) Have a resume ready!

- Recommenders may know you well, but they do not know everything about you!
- Provides more concise and consistent content by the writers.

# Recommendation Advice (cont.)

## 3) **Develop a process that maximizes time and effort.**

- Do you want the recommender to mail the recommendation or would you rather send them out yourself?
- If you are applying to all of your schools at once, provide the recommender with all the necessary envelopes, pre-labeled as followed:
  - If you want them to be sent by the individual, make sure you provide addressed and stamped envelopes.
  - If you want to send them on your own, provide an envelope that is labeled with: “Recommendation Letter”, the school, and your name.

# Recommendation Advice (cont.)

## 3) Develop a process that maximizes time and effort (cont.)

- If you plan on applying to schools throughout the year, remind the recommender to save the file because you may need to ask for more letters in the near future.
- Have a small slip of paper attached to resume and envelopes with typed instructions for the recommender.

# Recommendation Advice (cont.)

- 4) Always waive your right to access the recommendation letter.**
  - Admissions realize that if a recommender is aware that the student can access the letter at any time, they surely are not going to be as honest as one may like to be.
- 5) Provide ample time for the recommender to complete the letter.**
  - Teachers, counselors, and staff are extremely busy!
  - More time equates to a more thought out and planned recommendation
  - Less time equates to a general recommendation that has no personality
  - Please allow a minimum of two weeks.



# COLLEGE ESSAY TIPS



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## TOP 5 TIPS:

### 1) BE PREPARED!

- Before you read your first essay prompt, sit down and generate thoughts about significant life experiences or events that you can potentially write about and distinguish yourself from the majority of the pack.
- If you had to describe yourself in 3 words, what would they be and why?



# Top 5 Essay Tips (cont.)

## 2) BE YOURSELF!

- You know yourself better than trying to emulate what you think admissions would like you to be.
- Do not embellish achievements, events, or stories in your essay.
- Do not plagiarize a good essay found on the internet.

## 3) BE CONCISE!

- More is not better; admissions have hundreds to thousands of essays to review and evaluate.
- Be sure to stay under the word limit if the school requests one.
- If there is no limit, stay under 700-800 words per essay.

# Top 5 Essay Tips (cont.)

## 4) BE WILLING TO TAKE A RISK!

- Do not take the safe route in your response; universities enjoy an open minded and well thought out idea expressed on paper.
- The danger lies not in writing a bad essay but instead writing a common essay.
- Ask what your friends are writing and DO NOT write about that!

# Top 5 Essay Tips (cont.)



## 5) **BE OPEN TO WRITING and REWRITING!**

- After finishing your first draft, have someone you trust read it to offer advice and corrections.
- Proof read your essays by reading it out loud.
- Read your essay from ending to start.
- Do not use words such as “very”, “really”, “many” or any extra words in a sentence that is not needed.
- Some essays have more punch when the introduction and conclusion paragraphs are taken out if there is a repetitive theme and the essay seems redundant....get to the point!
- If you find your essay to be boring, it will be magnified ten-fold by an individual who has read two dozen essays that day!

# Deadlines!

- All applications components must be submitted for your application to be complete. All parts must be in by deadline!
  - Application
  - Application Fee
  - SAT/ACT Scores
  - Essays
  - Transcript



\* Counselor recommendation deadlines are flexible

# CFNC

## Admissions Deadlines at a Glance

- <http://chs.ucps.k12.nc.us/documents/CFNCAdmissionsDeadlines2013.pdf>

# Contacting Admissions

- Don't be afraid to contact admissions offices!
- Can call/email to make a connection with your admissions counselor
  - You will have a more personal experience with small/private schools.
- Can call and ask an anonymous questions
- Check out FAQs on websites before your contact admissions





# COLLEGE TOURS



# College Tours

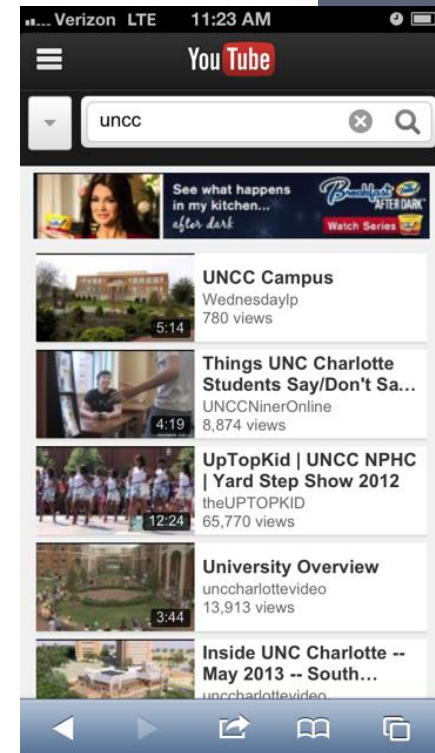
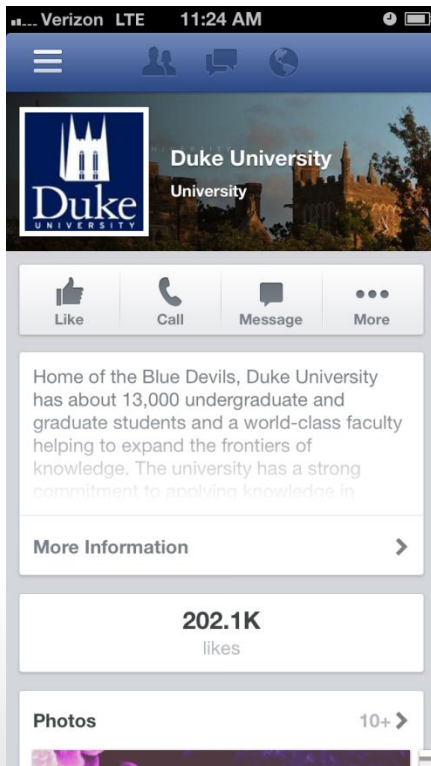
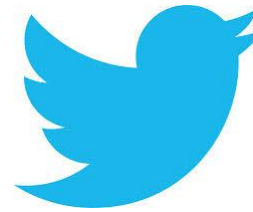
- 1) It is never too late to visit colleges
- 2) Plan an itinerary; you will be surprised how you could potentially visit several schools in one/two days
- 3) Visit the school's website and search the admissions page for "campus tour" links. Plan ahead and schedule a tour
- 4) If you cannot get to a campus, utilize the school's virtual tour function

# Visiting College Campuses

- Make a plan!
- Talk to current students
- Dine on campus
- Visit the bookstore
- Ask questions!
- Grab a school newspaper
- Call ahead of time to schedule tour or class visit.
- Participate in a school tradition



# Connect with Colleges Through Social Media





# The Levine Scholarship



- Full tuition, room and board
- A grant to implement a service project of the Scholar's own design
- Four summers of experiences that will develop leadership skills, social awareness, and an international perspective.
- The total value of this four-year package is estimated at \$90,000 per in-state student
- Please email Mr. Miller by Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm If you would like to be nominated for this scholarship.

# CHS Private College Visits

- We have many college admissions reps coming to our campus!
- Sign up online from the [CHS School Counseling Website](#)
- Must sign up for each school
- 45 minute presentations
- Responsible for work you miss while at the presentation
- Check back weekly for newly added colleges

# Upcoming Senior Connection



Thursday October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014  
6:30 pm

NC Public / NC Private / Out-of-State  
Community College Panel

Guest speakers will be university admissions officers and you will have the chance to ask them questions throughout the session!

# Upcoming Senior Connection



Tuesday January 6<sup>th</sup> 2015

6:30 pm

Financial Aid 101 Presentation

A financial aid officer from Davidson will be  
here to



# Look for Cavs Counseling Corner

Our monthly newsletter in E-News:

