



Spring Quarterly Update

For 2018-2019 Juniors

Making School Count

- **Stay motivated.** Having trouble staying focused as you return from spring break? Perhaps you've already taken the SAT or ACT, or you are preparing to do so soon. You may be anticipating AP tests as well. Either way, this last quarter presents a long final stretch in the school year, and an important period of time on your way to college applications. The University of Iowa suggests [10 ways for students to stay motivated after spring break](#) that are as relevant for high school students as they are for college students.
- **Make the most of your summer.** Colleges want to build a well-rounded incoming freshmen class, and so will look for students who dedicate themselves to activities and projects in areas where they have some passion. Here are [10 summer activities that will turn admissions' heads](#) –the key is to find something that shows depth of interest, initiative and commitment over time.
- **National Honor Society (NHS) spring packets.** NHS recognizes students who have demonstrated excellence in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Gaining membership is a great way to build your credentials for college as well as gain access to college preparation resources. Membership is open to juniors and seniors with a GPA of 3.6 or higher. Spring applications for [Hanford's NHS chapter](#) are due April 10 – contact Mrs. Fenton to learn more.
- **AP tests and college credit.** You don't need to take the AP test in order for AP courses to help you stand out in college admissions. However, students who take and pass the AP test can earn college credits that will create greater flexibility in their college curriculum. This blog explains [how AP tests are scored](#) and how those scores translate to college credit. When considering your test decision, keep in mind that colleges differ in their policies regarding what students must score on their AP test in order to receive college course credit – use this [AP credit policy search](#) tool to explore college-specific policies on AP test scores.
- **Reminder: Consider SAT subject tests.** Last quarter, we suggested you consider taking the SAT subject test that corresponds to your AP curriculum while the subject is fresh in your mind. While most schools do not require SAT subject tests, a good test score can add value to your admissions package. Subject tests are offered at the same time students take the standard SAT assessment (May 4 and June 1). Learn about [SAT subject tests](#) and [what colleges require them](#).

Looking Ahead to College

- **Register for the SAT or ACT.** Most students heading to college will take their first college entrance exam during the spring of their junior year, with an option to take it a second time in the fall of their senior year. There is still time to register for the SAT in May, or the SAT and/or ACT in June. Information about the SAT test, registration, fees, etc. can be found at the [CollegeBoard website](#). Information about the ACT can be found at the [ACT website](#).
- **Still considering which test to take?** In case you missed last quarter's newsletter, here are some resources you can use to help you decide which test(s) to take. Learn [how the ACT and SAT differ](#), take a look at an [ACT practice test](#) and [SAT practice test](#), and then check out free [ACT test prep resources](#) and free [SAT test prep resources](#) to find out which test might be best for you. Almost all colleges accept either or both ACT and SAT scores.
- **Call Sage for professional tutoring!** Sage College Prep services offers prep classes for both the SAT and the ACT, including a combination class for the back-to-back SAT and ACT tests in early June. We bring university-level teaching experience into small, customized classes to teach both content and strategies for success. [Visit the Sage website](#) for more details. **CLASSES BEGIN ON APRIL 30.**

Careers & Majors

- **Learn when most students choose a major.** You don't have to know what you want to study now, but it's not too soon to learn the basics about college majors and explore your options. This article talks about [The College Major: what it is and how to choose one](#).

Finding Colleges for You

- **Get to know colleges.** Visiting colleges, especially those on your application list, is an important step in selecting the right college for you. Here are some [tips for college tours](#). For those schools that don't quite make the travel cut, virtual tours are a good way to get a feel for the school's layout, most visible programs and campus life without stepping on campus – most college websites offer a virtual campus tour, or [tap into a long list of virtual campus tours here](#).
- **Planning college visits.** As you look ahead to applications this fall and a college choice in the spring, decisions about which colleges to visit and how to plan those visits become increasingly important. Read here about [two mistakes to avoid as you consider campus visits](#).
- **What to see on a college tour.** Here's a list of [10 things to see on a college visit](#) – while campuses may be quiet during the summer, these will still be valuable stops on a college tour.

Applying to College

- **Beat the letter of recommendation rush.** College admissions open in August (just five months from now) and many require at least one teacher recommendation in addition to your high school counselor's recommendation. Don't wait until the last minute to contact your recommendation writers. Believe it or not, high school teachers are busy people, and can get overwhelmed with requests in the fall. Here are some [tips for requesting recommendations](#).
- **Draft a college essay.** Most college applications ask students to write a personal essay telling something about themselves that is not accessible elsewhere in the application. Selective colleges may ask for several additional essays. College applications will be easier this fall if you've already written a personal essay. For students who will submit a Common Application, [here are the 2018-2019 Common App essay prompts](#) and for students who will submit a Coalition Application (UW uses this platform), [here are its 2018-2019 Coalition App essay prompts](#). Now is a good time to start drafting an essay, perhaps in conjunction with your Language Arts class or with the help of your Language Arts teacher. Here are some [tips for writing an effective application essay](#).

Paying for College

- **Get started on your scholarship search early.** There are so many scholarship search engines available that picking one and getting started can be daunting. Start early and set up your profile on multiple search sites so you catch as many good opportunities as possible. Click here to find a [useful review of scholarship search sites](#) with tips on getting started. [Hanford's Career Center](#) includes a list of local and regional scholarships and deadlines. One or two hours of systematic searching during your summer weeks may pay off!

Mark Your Calendar!

- **April 8, 2019 – Start of 4th Quarter.** Spring break marked the end of 3rd quarter and the beginning of the final quarter for the 2018-19 academic year. Now is a good time to make any mid-course corrections needed to reach your GPA target.
- **April 13, 2019 – ACT Testing.** Registration for this test date is closed.
- **May 4, 2019 – SAT Testing.** Register by April 5; late registration (online) closes April 24.
- **May 6 -17, 2019 – AP Testing.** Learn more about AP tests and testing schedule [here](#).
- **June 1, 2019 – SAT Testing.** Register by May 3rd.
- **June 8, 2019 – ACT Testing.** Register by May 3rd.
- **July 13, 2019 – ACT Testing.** Register by June 14th.
- **August 24, 2019 – SAT Testing.** Registration deadline not yet published.