



COLLEGE CORNER

College counseling at the American Hebrew Academy (AHA) begins when a student joins the community whether in grades 9, 10, 11 or 12. During the Success 101 elective, students will complete an Interest Assessment, Career Assessment and a university focused resume. Students are also introduced to Naviance, “American college and career readiness software providing students with college planning and career assessment tools.” This program assists as students compile information about themselves, search universities, careers and majors. In grade 12 Naviance is utilized to track and support the application process of each student.

Guiding students in small groups and individually, during the school day and two evenings per week is only part of the College Counselor’s role. The College Counselor also collaborates with students to select summer enrichment opportunities, the university admission process, including essay review, application review and financial aid, including scholarship application assistance.

The College Counselor facilitates multiple venues for students to interact with university admission counselors, including tours to North Carolina university campuses, attending National College Fairs, small group and individual visits by university admissions counselors. Over 40 International and US universities per year visit with AHA students in person or via Skype.

The American Hebrew Academy offers a college preparatory dual curriculum. The curriculum combines rigorous secondary school courses in the humanities, the arts, including Visual and Performing Arts, natural sciences, mathematics, social sciences, technology, physical education, including Sports and Fitness, Hebrew and Judaic Studies courses which incorporate the history, traditions, texts, practices and beliefs of the Jewish people. Students may choose from 22 AP courses, Advanced or College Level courses as well as a dual enrollment option with Guilford College.



American Hebrew Academy students spend a 10-week trimester at the Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI) during the first trimester of the 11th grade, where they are immersed in the history, geography and culture of Israel while continuing their classroom study. AMHSI is fully accredited and students receive a separate transcript for completion of this program.

The AMHSI study abroad experience is recognized by colleges and universities for the depth of study it provides, personal growth, independence and responsibility it demands of students all in preparation for university.

Since 2005, AHA students have consistently earned designations as scholars, finalists, or semi-finalists in The National Merit Scholarship Program. This is the single most prestigious academic competition for high school students in the United States. Academy students have also been awarded Albright Scholarships, Bronfman Fellowships and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division 1, 2 & 3 scholarships. The American Hebrew Academy is recognized for excellence in academics, the arts, Judaics, athletics, leadership and social service thereby affording it’s graduates the opportunity for admission into the top universities worldwide.

Simple Steps for Students Success

- Attend all classes.
- Use the best efforts to derive maximum benefit from each class (e.g. maintain attention, minimize distractions, use effective note taking techniques, ask relevant questions, participate fully, be present, etc.)
- Establish and maintain a tutoring schedule for teacher assistance.
- Plan well-ahead for assignments, exams, etc.
- Get rid of “procrastination”.
- Become organized and remain organized.
- Expose yourself to English vocabulary, over and above the usual classroom requirements....READ, READ, READ, and READ.
- There is no such thing as “I have no homework today.”
- Use the summer to reinforce academic skills.
- Establish good consequences for work completion. Deprive yourself of positive consequences for work non-completion.

Is Applying Early Right For You?

(Kaplan College Admissions)

Do you know the difference between the early application options? Before you can choose the appropriate option, it is important to understand the terms.

Early-Decision - Submit your application by November 1st or November 15th of your senior year. When you apply early decision, you sign a binding agreement that if you are admitted, you will attend the college and you will withdraw any other college applications you have sent. You may not apply to any other school under an early decision plan or a single-choice early action plan.

Early Decision Round II - A relatively new option offered by universities for students who are committed to applying early decision to their top choice school, but were not ready to apply in November. This allows you to include senior grades and additional standardized exam results. If you are admitted, you must attend.

Early Action - Submit your application by November 1st or 15th of your senior year. When you apply early action, the college communicates a decision usually in December but by the end of January. The decision can be: accept, deny or deferment to the regular decision pool. However, you are able to apply to additional universities and do not need to accept an offer until May 1st.

Single-Choice Early Action - This option is offered by a few universities (for example, Harvard, Tulane, Baylor, Stanford and Yale). You agree to apply to only ONE early application, but may apply to as many colleges as you want during regular decision. This option is advantageous if you need to compare financial aid packages. If you receive an offer of admission, you are not obligated to attend. Some colleges exchange lists of admitted students, once they have made decisions. If you apply early and are admitted, then other colleges will see your name on the list.

Don't Apply Early If:

- > You are confused about which college is your first choice.
- > You need to compare financial aid packages.
- > You have not completed the standardized exams requirement.
- > You do not meet the school's academic profile or have a special talent.
- > You believe that this is the only opportunity you will have to attend a 'top' school.

Are you a Candidate for Early Application?

- > I will have completed all of my college visits and research before my senior year begins.
- > At the end of my college search, only ONE schools stands out as the perfect match for me.
- > I MEET or EXCEED the academic profile of my first choice school.
- > I have challenged myself academically throughout secondary school and my grades have been consistently strong.
- > My parents feel that I do not need to be able to compare financial aid packages.
- > I will have completed my essays and other application materials before October 1st of my senior year.
- > I have completed the ACT, TOEFL and/or SAT exams required by my first-choice college and my score(s) MEET or EXCEEDS the average scores of the incoming freshman to that school.

If you have responded 'yes' to all of the points above, then you are a strong candidate for early decision.

If you have responded 'yes' to at least 4 of the points above, you might wish to consider an early decision opportunity.

If you responded 'yes' to 3 or fewer points above, then you are NOT ready to apply early decision.

Always consult with your parents and College Counselor before applying early to any college or university.

College Corner Tip

Managing Test Anxiety

Test anxiety consists of two components—one is mental and the other one is physical. The mental component includes all of your thoughts and worries about tests while the physical component includes your feelings and tensions about tests.

Although nothing takes the place of studying and being prepared, several techniques are suggested below to help you deal with both the mental and physical components of test anxiety:

Dealing with Thoughts:

- **Think Positive Thoughts:** When your mind is filled with positive thoughts about the test, there will be no room left for anxious thoughts. Imagine yourself writing quickly and confidently. Think about how you feel when you find that you have done well on the tests! (Use these techniques whenever you begin to feel anxious. The more you practice this one, the better you get.)
- **Focus On the Task At Hand:** When taking the test, keep your mind or thoughts on the task at hand. Answer the questions. Don't spend time thinking about how you feel now or how you will feel if you don't do well. "Worry" thoughts take time and divert your attention from the real task.

Dealing with Feelings:

- **Breathe:** Calm the physical sensations within your body by focusing your attention on your breathing. Concentrate on the air going in and out of your

body. Experience it as it passes through your nose and mouth. Do this for three or four minutes. If you notice that you are taking short shallow breaths, make yourself take longer and deeper breaths. You will begin to feel yourself calm down.

- **Do A Body Scan:** Being Aware of the tension in your body is an effective technique to reduce it. Sit comfortably and close your eyes. Begin with your feet. Focus your attention on the muscles in your feet and notice if they are relaxed. If they aren't, tell the muscles that they can relax. Move neck, face, and scalp muscles. Make sure that each muscle group is relaxed before going on. Sometimes you may find that first tensing then relaxing your muscles will permit you to relax more completely.
- **Use Guided Imagery:** Relax and take a quick imaginary trip. Close your eyes, relax your body, and imagine yourself in a beautiful peaceful setting. Create as much of the scene as you can. For example, you might imagine yourself at the beach. Listen as the surf rolls in and the birds call to each other. Feel the sun on your face and the sand on your feet. Smell the clean cool air. (Find whatever calm place works for you and practice getting yourself there when you feel anxious. When you become good at taking "imaginary trips," you can use them to relax and gain control of your anxious feelings.)
- **Don't Be Too Hard On Yourself:** Some people expect too much from themselves and are always worrying because they are not achieving as much as they should. Don't try for perfection in everything. Don't take yourself to task if you don't achieve top honors or break records.

JUNIORS: YOUR ADVENTURE BEGINS

Your junior year grades are VERY important! As you apply to Universities and Colleges during the fall of your senior year, these grades stand out the most. This is the time to focus on your classes, work hard, and do your best.

During the December break:

Access your WORKSPACEK12 NAVIANCE Account!
<http://connection.naviance.com/americanhebrew>

Click on the 'about me' tab

- Complete the 'personality type' assessment
- Complete the 'career interest profiler' assessment
- Work on your 'resume'

When you return to the American Hebrew Academy in January, schedule an appointment during your free period or after school to discuss your results and begin your university search.

CONTACT AN INDIVIDUAL IN YOUR
PROFESSION OF INTEREST.

CONDUCT AN INTERVIEW TO EXPLORE
THAT CAREER IN MORE DEPTH AND
CONFIRM YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

PARTICIPATE IN AN EXTERNSHIP!



Six Words of Advice for Parents of College-Bound Juniors

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“One group is more anxious about this year’s college admissions decisions than the parents of this year’s seniors -- and that’s the parents of next year’s seniors. Junior parents love their children, and they would welcome any advice colleges could offer that would give their child’s application an inside edge.

To support that effort, here’s what a college admissions officer told me when I asked for advice I could give to junior parents:

“Let your child drive the bus.”

The explanation she offered for this counsel, combined with long-standing conventional wisdom, gets to the heart of the college application process, and shows what admissions officers are looking for in a successful applicant beyond the numbers:

Initiative

From start to finish, a college application has to send the message that applying to this school was the student’s idea, and the student is excited enough to do something to bring that idea to life. This is why so many colleges want students to visit campus or meet the admissions representative at a local college fair; it shows the student is serious about their application.

That seriousness is questioned when the application is completed in what is clearly the handwriting of an adult, or when parents call the admissions office to ask questions. This is particularly true if the parent starts the call by saying “We’re applying to your college next year.” If the student wants to start building a meaningful relationship with the college, they make the calls, and speak in first person.

Synthesis

Well-meaning parents insist they only help their

child complete a college application because it is too complicated. Colleges certainly don’t want the process to discourage students; at the same time, applicants show they possess the traits needed to be successful students at selective colleges by demonstrating the flexibility, organization and persistence needed to create an application crafted exclusively by the student. That’s why it’s best for students to schedule an hour or two each weekend in the fall to focus on college applications -- it gives them the best chance to create an application that is rich with their voice, and their voice alone.

Originality

Everyone has a unique view of the world, and a good college application gives the admissions office a glimpse into a student’s ability to share their particular vantage point. Colleges understand that view may not be fully developed at age 17 -- in fact, most hope it isn’t -- but they also understand that unique view should be consistent across all parts of the application. A 20-minute weekly college meeting between parents and applicant gives the student the right mix of structure and encouragement to shape their own answers, and assure their ownership of the application process.

Authenticity

Students have different reasons for attending college, but each reason has a common purpose -- students want to get something out of the experience. A strong college application shows the admissions office what that purpose is, and taking the time to wrestle with each part of a college application not only gives the application more clarity and confidence; it also gives the applicant more clarity and confidence.

It may be hard for parents to watch students struggle at first with this important task, just as it wasn’t easy to watch them strike out at the plate, listen to their first violin solo, or feel them let the clutch out too soon. Great hitters and virtuosos are made with time, effort, and the opportunity to get better, and so are good drivers. The best way to help them reach their college destination is to give them the keys.”