

# TOTAL COLLEGE PLANNING

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## Men—The New Minority On Campus

### April 2009

Seniors – Final acceptance letters should arrive this month

Juniors – Visit colleges

Prepare for AP Exams

### 4<sup>th</sup> - ACT and ACT plus Writing

Seniors – compare offers of admission

Seniors – evaluate financial aid packages and explore college funding options

### May, 2008

1<sup>st</sup> – Common reply date for college enrollment

2<sup>nd</sup> – SAT Reasoning and Subject Tests

4<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> - AP exams

Juniors – work on resume

Juniors – speak to advisor about military colleges or ROTC programs

Seniors – notify colleges that you will not attend

Seniors – check out loan options if needed

When you think of underrepresented groups that colleges want to recruit, who comes to mind? Probably not males. But there are over a million more women than men in college. Colleges are receiving an average of 58 percent of their applications from females and 42 percent from males. This gap is likely to widen as projections by the National Center for Education Statistics show a 22 percent increase in female college enrollment between 2005 and 2016, compared with only a 10 percent increase for men.

Already, many schools have freshmen classes that are well over 50 percent female. Boston University and New York University are just a few of the schools that have been close to 60 percent female in recent years.

At some schools, there are three well-qualified female applicants for every male. Nobody wants a student body that is 75 percent female. In order to keep the male-female ratio from being too lopsided, men will sometimes be admitted over women who have stronger records. Last year, the Dean of Admissions at Kenyon College wrote a letter to the *New York Times* apologizing to all the terrific young women who were denied admission to the college while less qualified men were admitted.

Males who don't want to be outnumbered, or females who want better odds in dating, can choose schools with business or engineering programs, which tend to attract men. Some schools are establishing Division I sports programs, since they are a big draw for

guys.

There are several possible explanations for the higher rates of female college attendance. One is that women mature earlier and are more prepared for college. Well-paying trades, like plumbing and electric, may draw more male than female high school graduates. There's no definitive answer, but it is clear that the number of women going to college has increased in recent decades, and the men simply haven't kept up.

What does all this mean for high school juniors who are starting the college applications process, or for younger students who are looking ahead? For boys, this trend could be good news. With a strong academic record, they should be in demand at many colleges.

While girls may face more competition at some schools, they should keep in mind that gender is only one of many factors that colleges might consider in admitting a diverse class, and well-qualified females will certainly have many choices. When it's time to look at potential colleges, all students need to put some "likely" schools on the list. Girls might just want to be a little more conservative in estimating their chances of admission at certain schools.

This trend can be seen as a sign of how far women have come. The fact that so many young women have impressive academic records and are applying to college in record numbers means that they feel empowered to pursue their career dreams. That is good news for everyone.

***"Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited while imagination embraces the entire world."***

Albert Einstein



## Focus on Careers: Advertising

Give the pervasiveness of advertising in every media, it's hard to imagine a world without ads. But it was the Ivory soap campaign of 1882 that marked the start of this major new industry – advertising. This fast-paced, high-stress industry employs more than 700,000 people nationwide who are responsible for getting the word about products to their potential users. The advertising industry plans and executes advertising campaigns to increase the public's awareness of a product or company and to increase the company's sales.

While some companies may have their own promotional and advertising departments, many corporations use the services of outside advertising agencies. Within the general field of advertising, different types of specialists work together to oversee promotions. The *account department* serves as the liaison between the client company and the creative members of the staff. Account managers are responsible for determining the needs of the client and seeing that these needs are met. Account planners conduct interviews with focus groups and observe people as they go about ordinary tasks in order to understand

### Education

To prepare for a career in this exciting field, students should pursue a broad liberal arts program, majoring in areas such as sociology, psychology, English, journalism, or philosophy. For those who want to work in the area of marketing, courses in business and business law, statistics, accounting, finance, and economics are helpful. If it's advertising management that interests you, a bachelor's degree in advertising or journalism is preferred. Here you'd take such courses as marketing, sales, consumer behavior, communication, and visual arts. No matter what major you choose, courses in management and participation in an internship experience while in college are highly recommended. Individuals familiar with new media and possessing interac-

how they use and perceive specific products and services. Planners also sift through mountains of market research to identify current trends.

Members of the *creative department* include copywriters and art directors. Together, they develop the words and designs that bring the campaign to life. They start with the goals behind the marketing campaign and develop a pool of ideas to meet their client's goals.

The *media department* staff is responsible for placing the advertisements so they most effectively reach their target audience. Media planners determine the best media to utilize (radio, TV, internet, newspapers, magazines, billboards, movies) making sure that the media they select will reach their client's target audience and fit the style and tone of the overall campaign. Media buyers locate the desired media and then negotiate and place ads.

The staff of the *research department* is charged with investigating consumer buying habits to ensure effective sales campaigns.

*Interactive media* specialists are playing an ever-greater role in the world of advertising designing interactive advertising for the web.

tive marketing skills will have the best opportunities for challenging jobs. To be successful in this field, you need to be able to communicate well, both in writing and orally, be skilled in working as part of a team, be able to handle stress, and have qualities that include creativity, flexibility, imagination, and maturity.

Want to learn more? On the web, you can check out the home pages of the American Association of Advertising Agencies at [www.aaaa.org](http://www.aaaa.org), the International Advertising Association at [www.iaaglobal.org](http://www.iaaglobal.org), and the American Advertising Federation at [www.aaf.org](http://www.aaf.org). As always, the Bureau of Labor Statistics is a goldmine of career information ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)).

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## Focus on Finances: When Your Financial Aid Package Isn't Enough



Requests for financial aid for college skyrocketed this year, and the students in the entering class of 2009 may find their financial aid packages less robust than they had

hoped. Shrinking endowments along with a decrease in donations, both reflective of the economic issues that affect so much of American life, are impacting the amount of money available for student financial aid. What can you do if the amount offered by your package simply leaves you with too much to pay?

First off, make an appeal for more aid. Call the financial aid office (even better, arrange a face-to-face meeting if at all possible) to explain why you are requesting more help. New developments that may have occurred since filing your FAFSA (such as loss of a family member's job or unexpected medical bills) could result in a higher aid offer. If your

### Are You Ready For College?

As senior year winds down, many students find themselves eager to begin the next phase of life; they can't wait to be college students. Some seniors, however, are badly in need of a change of pace. Faced with the prospect of more years of study, they long for time to discover who they are and what they want of life. Or perhaps, they are just looking for a different type of adventure. If you are one of those who need a time-out from formal education, this might be a good time to consider a gap year.

Gap years between secondary school and university are common in Europe, and are becoming more popular in the United States. In some cases, students take time to travel and spend time in another cultural environment. Others spend their time in service to others, giving back some of the blessings they have received. Gap year students may intern or engage in entry level work in a career field of interest, or perfect their skills in music or art. Rather than wasted time, an interim year can provide you with time to reflect, opportunities to discover your personal values, and a chance to gain real-world experience.

When considering a gap year, think about what you

child was offered a better package at an academically comparable college, respectfully ask "dream U" if there is any chance that college number two's offer could be met so your child could attend their institution.

Loans can help meet some college expenses. Parents might consider a PLUS Loan (Parent Loan for Undergraduate Students), while students can apply for an unsubsidized Stafford Loan. Both of these tend to have more favorable rates than other private loans. Be careful, however, that neither you nor your child take on too much debt.

A new tax credit may also help. As part of the recent stimulus package, the American Opportunity Education Tax Credit was created (replacing the Hope Scholarship Credit), offering a maximum credit of \$2,500/ year toward college expenses for 2009 and 2010. Consult your financial advisor for more information.

hope to achieve. If travel and cultural understanding is your goal, consider an organized program such as those offered by groups such as GlobalQuest ([www.gquest.org](http://www.gquest.org)) or [www.WorldLearning.org](http://www.WorldLearning.org). Students interested in performing community service will find opportunities through Americorps ([www.Americorps.org](http://www.Americorps.org)) and the City Year program ([www.CityYear.org](http://www.CityYear.org)). Internship experiences can be planned through the Dynamy Internship Year program at [www.Dynamy.org](http://www.Dynamy.org). You can also plan your own experience by using contacts in your chosen field. You'll find more ideas for gap year programs at [www.EnrichmentAlley.com](http://www.EnrichmentAlley.com) or [www.gapyear.com](http://www.gapyear.com).

Gap year programs don't have to last a year. If offered *mid-year admission* at your first choice college, you might consider spending the fall term engaged in a gap year experience. No matter what type of program you choose, it's best to pursue this idea after you've assured yourself of a place at the college of your choice. Nearly all colleges are happy to defer your attendance for one year upon written request. You just need to request the deferral, let them know what you will be doing with your time, and send in any required deposits to hold a place for you in their next entering class.

## Doing the Wait-List Limbo

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With the uncertainties about enrollment brought about by today's economy, colleges are responding with even longer waitlists than in the past few years. Reluctant to turn qualified students away, yet still unable to grant too-many acceptances, they've resorted to using the waitlist to assure themselves that they can fill all spots in their freshman class. This is good for the college but tough on waitlisted applicants; is there anything that waitlisted students can do?

As admissions letters arrive, you'll need to begin making some decisions. If you've been lucky enough to have been accepted at your #1 choice, congratulations! If you've acquired a number of acceptances, you'll need to reconsider your options and rank the schools in terms of which fit you best. However, if one or more of those decisions have stranded you on the waitlist, you need to act right away.

If you prefer "Waitlist U" to any of the colleges that have granted you an acceptance, you can opt to stay on the waitlist. You'll want to return the response card quickly, and follow that with a letter explaining your disappointment and your hopes of ultimate acceptance. If true, include a statement that you will attend that school if you are accepted. Include with your letter any additional supporting documents, such as your newest grade report, any awards or honors you've recently won, even an additional letter of recommendation from a teacher or employer. Give the school more reasons to accept you. Then, follow your letter up with a phone call to the admissions officer who handled your file.

Ask about the size of the waitlist, the likelihood of acceptance, and if the list is ranked. Most colleges accept students from the waitlist who they know are most interested in attending, so if it's your dream school, make sure that you make that clear.

## Website of the Month: [Idealist.org](http://Idealist.org)

[www.Idealist.org](http://www.Idealist.org) is a project of *Action Without Borders*, a non-profit organization that connects people and organizations with useful resources. At this site you'll find links to loads of volunteer and internship opportunities at which you can make a difference or try out a possible career.

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