

Menlo School College Counseling

My search. My college. My path.



Start your journey.

The college search and application process can be challenging. But it's also an opportunity to explore your interests, reflect on your values and find your own voice.

Your **search** is both external and internal. Yes, you'll create a list of colleges that match your criteria. But to discover that list, you'll first undertake an internal search: a quest to discover who you are, what's special about you and what's important to you. Through this educational journey, you'll find a **college** that's the right match for you, and put yourself on your **path** to life after Menlo.

We're here to help. We've created this comprehensive "road map" of information, and we'll be your guides along the way. So get to know us, and help us get to know you!

Our approach is:

- **All about finding your right "match"**

That means you find the school that works for you: one that matches your academic, social, size and location desires. It's not necessarily a college you know much about at the start of the process, and there may be more than one right match. Your list of potential 'homes' for the next four years will develop as you discover what's important to you. And remember, the right match is right in both directions: both you and the college pick each other.

- **Student centered**

At Menlo, everything we do puts students at the center of their own learning. You're the driver—but you've got your counselor with you to help navigate the road. We're very good at helping you discover what's special about you.

- **An extension of Menlo's educational philosophy**

Throughout your years at Menlo, you've practiced self-advocacy, introspection and self-expression. You've been learning the skills you need to succeed in college, and in life. The college search process is no different—the skills you'll learn while on this path will help you continue your educational journey once in college.

- **Built around supportive, individualized counseling**

With over 50 combined years of experience in the field, we've got plenty of resources and know a lot about the wide range of colleges out there. We'll meet with you often, and the best way we can help you is to get to know you. So come say hi!

During the journey:

- **Let's get to know each other.**

We introduce ourselves during your sophomore year and get to know you and your family over the next three years through individual meetings, parent education events, and watching your games, concerts, and plays. In what can be an emotionally charged process, we make ourselves available and provide perspective.

- **What classes to take?**

We advise you as you choose classes that add up to the most rigorous yet balanced course load and that allow you to pursue your interests.

- **What's important to you?**

We help you define your criteria for the types of colleges where you'll thrive, based on your unique mix of skills and interests.

- **Take a trip.**

Visit colleges that will help you discover what kinds of schools you're looking for. We're here to help you decide which ones to visit either in person or virtually.

- **Have you heard of this school?**

We host over 120 college representatives on campus, so that you can learn about many different types of schools—and so we can build relationships with those schools. We get to know admissions officers well through these visits, our trips to their schools, professional conferences, etc., and we work with them closely.

- **Make your college list.**

We work with you to create a list of colleges that will lead to reasonable choices.

- **ACT? SAT? Test Optional?**

We help you understand and make a plan for which, and if, standardized tests are right for you.

- **The Essay**

We support you as you develop your own authentic and compelling essays.

- **The Letter of Recommendation.**

We craft a well written, personalized letter of recommendation that brings you to life and shows you in your best light—and that admissions officers enjoy reading. Those officers appreciate our authentic letters. We're responsive if they call us with questions, and we know when it's appropriate to reach out to them.

- **Athlete? Artist? Learning Difference?**

We provide specialized counseling and resources to those of you with special application needs.

- **Push the send button.**

How to manage all the details and deadlines of the application process? We give you access to SCOIR, an online college planning and search tool, and provide a junior-year College Admission Seminar class to help you organize your application requirements.

- **How to pay for college?**

We're on call for confidential conversations if you think you may qualify for financial aid.

- **You got in! Now what?**

We help you think through all of your options and celebrate with you when you find your right match.

We look forward to working with you!

- The College Counseling Team



College Counseling Year-by-Year Checklist

Freshman Year

- ☐ Focus on classes and develop academic interests.
- ☐ Adjust to high school: check out clubs, extracurricular activities and ways to get involved.
- ☐ Drop by the College Counseling Office to have your questions answered, to say hello or just to hang out.
- ☐ In the summer, recharge, do something interesting, complete summer reading and visit colleges if convenient (see Chapter 7).

Sophomore Year

- ☐ Pursue activities of interest in and outside of school.
- ☐ Drop by the College Counseling Office to have your questions answered, to say hello or just to hang out.
- ☐ [October] Take the PSAT (practice exam for SAT; see Chapter 2).
- ☐ Register for SCOIR (See Chapter 5). College Counseling will send an email invitation from SCOIR with a link to register in the spring.
- ☐ In the spring, meet with your academic advisor for the course selection/sign-up process.
- ☐ [May] Take AP Exams if completing AP classes (see Chapter 2).
- ☐ [May] You will receive your college counseling assignment.
- ☐ [May–August] Students can schedule an optional individual with their college counselor.
- ☐ In the summer, recharge (junior year is traditionally Menlo's most challenging), do something interesting, complete summer reading and visit colleges if convenient (see Chapter 7).