

# YOUR COLLEGE CONNECTION



The Roadmap to Admissions Success

## May 2025

### Seniors—

May 1st - Common reply deadline for college enrollment.  
Notify colleges you aren't attending

### Juniors—

May 9th - Registration for June 14th ACT  
May 22nd - Registration for June 7th SAT  
May 5th-16th AP Tests

## June 2025

### Juniors—

June 7th - SAT  
June 14th-ACT  
Register June 6th for July 12th ACT

### Seniors—

Thank parents, teachers, and others who helped you.  
Thank scholarship providers.  
Have your final transcript sent to your college of choice.

## Overused Essay Topics

All right, juniors—summer is coming, and so is the time to start writing those college essays. Whether you're dreading it or excited to spill your life story, one thing is for sure: your essay needs to stand out. Admissions officers read thousands of these, and if you go with an overused topic, your application might just blend into the pile.

Your essay should showcase who you are, not just what you've done. It should make the reader feel like they just met an awesome, real person they'd want on campus. But if you choose a cliché topic, you risk making yourself forgettable. So let's talk about the essay topics that are way overdone and how to avoid them.

Unfortunately, many applicants do themselves a disservice by taking on topics that don't resonate well with the admission readers, thus giving a false or incorrect impression of the writer. The essay's focus, or topic, must engage the reader from the very first sentence, share a positive, optimistic, and truthful picture of the applicant, and allow the reader to feel confident that this particular applicant fits their profile. Here are some overused and unhelpful topics that students are encouraged to avoid.

A laundry list of accomplishments that sounds both arrogant and boastful, and fails to share anything substantial about who you really are. Don't exaggerate your achievements because it will probably show through in your writing, and that lack of authenticity breaks all the requirements for a solid and original college essay.

Sports essays as a metaphor for life ("I scored the winning goal and it changed my life") are overused, so they will often fall flat. If you choose to write about sports,

personalize your experiences. Tell the reader more about some aspect of your sport that has given you a deeper insight into who you are and what you want.

If you're naturally hilarious, your voice will come through. But forcing humor is risky. If you are a truly funny person, tell a story that illustrates this about you, but trying to be funny just to amuse the reader is usually not going to work. Don't tell off-color jokes or make fun of anyone; your reader wants to get to know you, not attend a comedy show. Take risks but don't be risqué.

Given the current polarization in many parts of the world, it is best to avoid topics such as politics or religion; remember, you don't know who is reading your essay. Again, know yourself and know your college. Be careful about being too controversial in your essay, and avoid any descriptions of illicit behaviors, profane language, drugs, or alcohol. Don't try to shock your reader as a way to be memorable; it will likely backfire horribly.

Many students participate in community service and, for those lucky enough to have significant resources, may complete international travel with a volunteer component. These essays can also fail to win over the reader because they fail to share anything personal about these wonderful opportunities.

Don't write another laundry list of 'what I did in Costa Rica to save the green turtles' - write about a local volunteer you connected with, someone doing work important to you, and from whom you learned an important life lesson. Keep the focus on what you learned about yourself and the world around you.

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# College Admissions Strategies

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## Careers for Sport Management Majors

*Sports Agent*

*Athletic Director*

*Team Manager/Operations  
Coordinator*

*Sports Marketing*

*Social Media Manager*

*Public Relations Specialist*

*Stadium Manager*

*Recreation Manager*

*Fitness Trainer*

*Sports Data Analyst*

*Corporate Partnership  
Manager*

*Contract Analyst*

*Guest Relations Manager*

*Game Day or Event*

*Coordinator*

*Sports Media and  
Broadcasting*

## Focus on Majors: Sport Management

For students who live and breathe sports, a career in the industry doesn't have to mean going pro as an athlete. The U.S. sports industry generates over \$400 billion annually and relies on professionals in management, marketing, event coordination, and facility operations to keep things running. A degree in sport management can be the ticket to an exciting career behind the scenes of the sports world.

Sport management programs blend business, marketing, and sports-related coursework to prepare students for careers in the athletic industry. A Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Sport Management typically includes classes in business, finance, sports marketing, event planning, facility management, and ethics in athletics. Many programs also emphasize hands-on experience through internships with sports teams, facilities, and organizations, giving students a valuable edge when entering the job market.

When exploring sport management programs, at some universities, the major is housed in the business school, which places a greater emphasis on finance, administration, and marketing, while at others, it may be housed within communications or liberal arts. The program's focus can shape career opportunities, so students should consider their long-term goals when selecting a school.

Certain colleges and universities have gained a strong reputation in sport management. The University of Massachusetts Amherst's Isenberg School of Management is consistently considered one of the top programs and has strong industry connections. The University of Michigan focuses on sports business and societal impact with an extensive alumni network in professional sports. Southern Methodist University offers specializations in event management and athlete representation, while Ohio University is home to one of the oldest and most

respected sport management programs. The University of South Carolina offers a Sport and Entertainment Management degree within its College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management, giving students direct access to major sporting events and industry partnerships.

The location of a university can also play a major role in career opportunities. Schools in cities with major league teams, sports marketing firms, and athletic organizations often provide students with valuable industry exposure.

Graduates with a degree in sport management have a wide range of career paths available to them. Some may find roles in team administration and managing operations for professional or collegiate sports organizations. Others may gravitate toward marketing and sponsorship, working with brands to develop advertising strategies and corporate partnerships. Event and facility management is another growing field, where professionals oversee stadiums, arenas, and major sporting events. Those interested in athlete representation and public relations may work directly with athletes to manage their careers, contracts, and media presence. Sports analytics and technology are also expanding fields, utilizing data to improve team performance and fan engagement.

Breaking into the sports industry can be competitive, so hands-on experience is key. When researching programs, students should ask about internship opportunities, job placement success, and the strength of the school's alumni network. Schools with established connections in the industry can provide students with a pathway to internships and jobs with professional teams, college athletic programs, and sports-related businesses.

To learn more about sport management programs and careers, you can refer to the [North American Society for Sports Management \(NASSM\)](#), [Degrees in Sports](#), and [Sports Business Journal](#).



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# College Admissions Strategies

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## Financial Matters: Pitfalls to Avoid in Your First Year



For many students, the first year of college is their first real taste of financial independence. While this is an exciting time, it's also a period where financial missteps can have long-lasting consequences. Parents and students should work together to develop smart money habits from the start. Here are some common financial pitfalls and how to avoid them.

Many students start college without a clear plan for managing their money. Without a budget, it's easy to overspend and run out of funds before the semester ends. Parents should discuss needs vs. wants. Warn your student about scams and how to avoid impulse spending.

**Solution:** Sit down and create a monthly budget that includes tuition, rent, groceries, transportation, and entertainment. There are several easy-to-use budgeting apps such as [YNAB](#) or [Goodbudget](#) that can help track spending.

Some parents provide their college

students with an allowance to help cover expenses beyond tuition, rent, and meal plans. This support can be an effective way to teach financial responsibility while ensuring students have enough for day-to-day needs. But how often should parents send money—weekly, biweekly, or monthly?

**Solution:** Set clear expectations on what the allowance covers and what happens if the student runs out of money.

Credit card companies often market aggressively to college students, offering appealing sign-up bonuses. However, high interest rates and overspending can quickly lead to debt.

**Solution:** Use credit cards responsibly by charging only what can be paid off in full each month. Consider a student credit card with a low limit to build credit responsibly.

Beyond tuition, there are many other expenses to consider, such as textbooks, lab fees, and social activities. These hidden costs can add up quickly.

**Solution:** Plan for these expenses by setting aside extra funds or purchasing used books and digital versions when possible. Consider getting a part-time job to have additional spending money.

Many students assume that their opportunities for scholarships and grants disappear once they start college.

**Solution:** Continue searching for financial aid opportunities throughout college. Many scholarships are available for upperclassmen, and some schools offer grants based on academic performance.

Student loans are a common way to finance education, but not all students fully understand their repayment terms.

**Solution:** Read loan agreements carefully, understand interest rates, and have a repayment plan.

Make interest payments while still in school to reduce long-term debt.

Going out to eat and attending social events can quickly drain a student's budget.

**Solution:** Take advantage of meal plans and look for free or low-cost campus events for entertainment.

Many businesses offer discounts to students on everything from software to public transportation.

**Solution:** Always ask about student discounts and always carry a student ID. Small savings add up over time.

The first year of college is an important time to establish good financial habits. By avoiding these common pitfalls, students can set themselves up for a more secure financial future. Parents should encourage open conversations about money and provide guidance as needed. With careful planning, students can enjoy their college experience without unnecessary financial stress.

## Overused Essay Topics (continued from page 1)

The classic essay that is way too often submitted is the one about someone else! That's right. It's not about you but about your grandmother/father/sister/neighbor/coach – you get the idea. This one always falls flat because, invariably, the reader comes away thinking that they would love to meet your grandmother/etc, and not you!

Many students dig around for some

kind of challenge they have had to overcome. A challenge doesn't have to be monumental to the rest of the world to be worth sharing. Every day struggles like overcoming your fear of public speaking to deliver a great speech or figuring out how to help your friends work out a stressful conflict, could be effective if they show your problem-solving skills in action. Keep it real, and keep the focus on you.

Stay focused on one moment in time that significantly impacted your life, stay away from clichés and exaggerated lists of events and achievements, and allow your true, best self to shine. Start with a strong opening and grow from there – make your admission readers smile, jump up from their chairs, and share your essay with colleagues. Let them know the real YOU!

## Insights into Playing Sports in College

Many student-athletes dream of playing a sport in college. However, with competitive recruiting, levels of play, and misconceptions about scholarships, insight into how the process works and what it truly takes to compete at the college level is essential.

The desire to play must come from the student, not the parents. The commitment and demands of college athletics can be overwhelming, even when a student is fully invested. Many assume excelling in high school or club sports guarantees recruitment, but only 7% of high school athletes play in college, and not all see playing time ([NCAA](#)). Just 1–2% play at the Division I level, so seek guidance and honest feedback from coaches experienced in collegiate athletics to assess realistic opportunities. And with the current changes in [laws governing NIL](#), many rosters are getting smaller.

Student-athletes must actively engage in recruitment by communicating with coaches, creating highlight reels, attending showcases, and maintaining training and nutrition regimens. Strong grades open more doors for admissions and scholarships—students should research schools that align with their academic interests and long-term goals, not just athletic fit. Keeping an open mind about different divisions increases the chances of finding the best overall opportunity.

Beyond skill, coaches recruit leaders, team players, and hard workers. Character, attitude, and coachability can be as important as talent. Being a good

teammate and demonstrating resilience on and off the field make a lasting impression on coaches.

A common misconception is that playing in college guarantees a scholarship. However, full athletic scholarships are rare; most receive partial scholarships, if any. Division III schools offer no money for athletics. Strong academics remain the best way to maximize financial aid and admissions opportunities.

The time commitment of college athletics varies widely. Division I athletes may dedicate 40+ hours per week to their sport, making athletics a primary focus ([NCAA GOALS Study](#)). Division III offers more flexibility, allowing students to pursue internships and other interests. Club and intramural sports provide competitive and recreational opportunities with less commitment. Athletes can stay involved in their sport without NCAA pressures.

The key for those who want to compete at the next level is taking ownership of the process. Student-athletes should work daily to reach their goals, remain realistic, prioritize academics, and understand that some elements of luck and timing are outside their control. For those committed and talented, playing a college sport builds time management, leadership, and resilience that benefit students' careers and lives. Relationships built through athletics create lifelong friendships and professional connections beyond the field. It can be an incredibly rewarding experience, teaching valuable life lessons and preparing students for future success.



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