

STEPS FOR APPLYING TO A PRIVATE COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY

Follow these steps to apply to a private college. They can be completed in any order.

1 COMPLETE AN APPLICATION

- If you are applying to a private college in or out of Texas, go to www.commonapp.org and see if your schools accept the Common Application. Select the tab “Member Colleges” and then choose “All Members” to find all colleges using the Common Application. It’s easier for you and everyone who submits information for you.
- If your school is not a member of the Common Application, you will have to go to their individual websites to access their application.
- If you are on the free or reduced lunch, come by the College Corner for waivers that pay for your admission/application fees to colleges. Take an SAT or ACT on a fee waiver first whenever possible.
- Be sure you use the 2009 – 2010 version. Forms will usually be available in July.
- Complete the application electronically whenever possible. Look for supplements and scholarship forms after completing the application.

2 GATHER AND COMPLETE FORMS REQUIRING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Review the application packet for these forms:
 1. Secondary School Report or Counselor Evaluation
 2. Teacher Evaluations
 3. Midyear Report
- **For the Secondary School Report / Counselor Evaluation**

If you are using *The Common Application* at www.commonapp.org, turn in only **one copy** of each form, filled out as follows. If you use other applications, complete this information on all forms:

1. Complete all your personal information “To the Applicant”: your name, address, etc. They will ask you if you wish to waive your right to review the evaluation. Although it is your choice to waive your right to read your recommendations later, know that if you do not choose to waive your right, admissions counselors will be suspicious about the honesty of the recommendation. It is in your best interest to waive the right to review your recommendations. You probably won’t go to the trouble to read it anyway. Be sure to sign that you authorize your records and information to be released.
2. In the areas “TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL COUNSELOR” or the area for school officials, fill in the information below if requested. (Since advisors do several hundred applications, it saves much time if this general information is already completed.)
 - a. Current Year Courses: Identify Pre IB courses as honors and IB classes with IB/SL or IB/HL depending on the level of the class. For example: Physics Honors or IB History of Europe HL. Include Dual Credit (HCC) classes and label them: Dual Credit Government. Correspondence classes should be labeled: Business Computer Systems, online.
 - b. School is accredited by: Texas Education Agency & Southern Association of Schools
 - c. List the most advanced classes at Lamar: *English* - IB/HL; *Math* - IB/HL; *Social Studies* - IB/HL; *Foreign Language* - IB/HL or AP; *Science* - IB/HL; *Other* – Computer Science IB/HL, Fine Arts IB/HL
 - d. Class rank is weighted on a 4.0 scale
 - e. Explain weighted rank: One bonus point is given for IB and honors classes
 - f. School passing mark is 70
 - g. Graduation date is May 31, 2010
 - h. Percentage of class attending 4 year schools: 65% Two year schools: 10%
 - i. Are classes on block? Yes Year block began: 1994 Type: Alternating 4 X 4
 - j. Do we limit the number of AP classes? No

- k. Number of IB classes: 45
- l. Number of AP classes: 2
- m. Number of honors classes: 76 In English, math, science, social studies, fine arts, and foreign language
- n. Grading Scale: A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-75; D=74-70; F=below 70
- o. School Name: Mirabeau B. Lamar High School
- p. Address: 3325 Westheimer; Houston, TX 77098
- q. Phone number: 713-522-5960
- r. CEEB Code: 443 405
- s. Title: Academic Dean
- t. Phone number: 713-522-5960
- u. Fax number: Family 1: (713) 807-5119; Family 2: (713) 807-5142; Family 3: (713) 942-3354

3. If you have a resume, bring a copy to your advisor with the forms and envelopes.

4. If your forms need your SAT or ACT score, include a copy of your score report with your forms and envelopes.

▪ **For Envelopes and Stamps:**

1. For *The Common Application* at www.commonapp.org, turn in only **one copy** of each form with a note attached listing the schools that you are applying to *and the deadline dates* with the common application. Paperclip all the envelopes using that form to it. Complete the information on the envelopes that follows.
2. Since the School Report and Midyear Reports are sent at different times, prepare different envelopes for each form. Turn them in at the same time so you won't forget later.
3. On each envelope, complete the following:
 - **PRINT** the mailing address of the college admission office
 - Do not put *your* address as the return address.
 - **For advisor evaluations** do not put a return address on the envelope.
 - **For teacher evaluations**, print the return address as: Lamar High School; 3325 Westheimer; Houston, TX 77098
 - *Self sealing envelopes are very much appreciated!*
 - Lamar will not pay the postage to mail your forms.
 - For normal envelopes 4" X 9 1/2" (preferred):
 - Put 1 stamp on a Teacher recommendation envelope
 - Put 2 stamps on the envelope for Secondary School Report or Counselor Evaluation
 - Put 1 stamp on the envelope for the Midyear Report
 - For envelopes larger than 4" X 9 1/2":
 - Put 2 stamps on a Teacher recommendation envelope
 - Put 3 stamps on the envelope for the Secondary School Report or Counselor Evaluation
 - Put 2 stamps on the envelope for the Midyear report

3 REQUEST RECOMMENDATIONS

- If you are applying to a private college, you will most likely need a letter of recommendation from your advisor and possibly from several teachers. If you need a letter, go to www.lamarhs.com > ACADEMICS > College Information > College Applications > Recommendation Letter Request Survey. Completing this survey will give your advisor helpful information to make a personal letter for you.
- Copy forms for your advisor to complete (Secondary School Report, Counselor's Report, etc.), due dates of all forms and stamped and addressed envelopes according to directions in #2 above. Make an appointment with your advisor and bring forms, envelopes, due dates, and your Recommendation Letter Request Survey responses to your advisor at least 2 - 3 weeks before the forms are due. Advisors cannot do online recommendations for The Common Application.
- Teachers may make their recommendations online or on paper when using the Common Application. Online recommendations will be processed faster, but ask your teacher first if they agree to do your recommendation and then which method they prefer. Give teachers information at least 2 - 3 weeks before your application deadline.
- Do not give the teacher your responses from the Recommendation Letter Request Survey.

4 TAKE AN ACT and/or SAT TEST AND SEND YOUR SCORE(S) TO THE COLLEGE(S):

- To take the ACT, register online at www.actstudent.org. For the SAT, go to www.collegeboard.com to register. Go online or come by the College Corner for study guides and/or applications to send by mail. For instructions on online registration, go to www.lamarhs.com > ACADEMICS > [College Information](#) > Testing Information > Instructions for Completing SAT/ACT Registration.
- When registering for the ACT or SAT, send your score to 4 colleges for no extra charge. If you wait until to see your score to send it, it will cost you \$10 to send it later to one school. Colleges will not penalize you if one score is lower than others. Some schools will take the highest score from all administrations and if you do not send them all, you will miss out on this opportunity.
- If you are on the free or reduced lunch list, come by the College Corner for fee waivers to take these tests for free.

5 SEND YOUR TRANSCRIPTS:

- Go to www.lamarhs.com and click on Prep HQ in the lower right corner. Log in. In the blue area on the left, click on "Transcript Rqsts", click on "Add transcript request". Enter the information click on "Submit Request" and it's done!
- If you want to pick up copies rather than have them mailed, go to "Other destination", under "Enter Name" type: pickup. Click on "continue". Under "Notes to staff", indicate that you would like to pick up official copies. Identify the number you will need. When you pick them up, they will be sealed in an envelope. DO NOT open the seal before mailing. If you open one to review, you can no longer send it as an official copy. Transcripts requested on Prep HQ will be mailed or available for pickup in 3 days.
- Note that the first 5 transcripts ordered are free. The 6th and following copies cost \$2.00. Make your request on Prep HQ and pay the fees in the Business Office in the 2nd floor main office. Take your receipt to the registrar's office in room N110. If you are on the free or reduced lunch program, the College Corner can give you a fee waiver for 5 additional free transcripts.
- If you have Dual Credit from HCC, colleges will want a transcript showing your grades as part of your application. To order a transcript, go to <http://www.hccs.edu/hccs/business-community/transfer-options/order-a-transcript>

6 APPLY FOR SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL AID:

- Colleges have different application processes for scholarships. Some schools send your admission application automatically for scholarship review. For some, you have to look for a form in your admission application packet. A few will have a separate application only on their website. Check out the way that each of your colleges accept scholarship applications and be sure to make the deadline. This is often before the application deadline.
- Over 96% of the money given to students for college comes from the financial aid process. Applications for the FAFSA financial aid forms will be available January 1. Complete this information as quickly as you can. Remember that you must be admitted by a university before they will offer you financial aid, so complete your admission applications by Thanksgiving and the FAFSA asap to be at the front of the money line.

7 DEADLINES:

- Recommendation letter requests with a due date of December 15 – January 15 must be submitted no later than December 1.
- Teachers may have different individual deadline requests earlier than you expect. Ask them for their special requests before you turn in anything to them.

8 OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION:

- Keep an eye on PrepHQ at www.lamarhs.com for helpful and important online information. Scholarships and information will be listed there in addition to emails that will be sent to you periodically. Put your parent's email address in your profile so they will receive information as well.

- Advisors will not accept college recommendation requests for the first three weeks of school. If you have September or October deadlines, you can turn them in through September 11 to Ms. Cox in the College Corner. Appointments may be made with your advisor beginning September 14.
- When the new rank comes out in October, transcripts will no longer be available with the July rank.
- Before sending transcripts to colleges, you may want to order one for you to review for accuracy. Note that once an official transcript is opened, it can no longer be sent as an official copy.
- **NEVER** leave your forms and envelopes with a secretary. Don't leave forms on your teacher's desk. Ask them first to do your recommendation. If you don't put forms in the hands of those who are doing the writing, you take a risk that your materials will not be sent. Always make an appointment with your advisor, and give forms and envelopes personally to your teacher.
- Score reporting for SAT and ACT takes about 5 weeks. Try to take two administrations before the application deadline, but take at least one 6 weeks before the deadline. Many schools take the highest scores from multiple administrations. Often, your score will be better the second time you take it. Colleges will accept either the ACT or SAT, so which one should you take? Those stronger in math have an advantage in scoring with the SAT. If your reading skills are better than math, the ACT is probably the better test for you. The best part about ACT is that they do not take points off your score for wrong answers. The SAT deducts a quarter of a point for each incorrect guess.
- Note that UT Austin will begin using the writing score on the ACT/SAT for admission decisions beginning in the fall of 2009 and other colleges may as well.
- The College Corner has all forms and information pages in this handout available. The office will be open most weekdays during the summer for your college needs. The office will be closed for vacation from June 22 – July 3.