

College Counseling Coffee # 5

When it is time to apply to college, how do we do it? I have heard of the Common Application...what is it, where do we find it, and how do we fill it out to our advantage? The next College Counseling Coffee will focus on the Common Application and disseminating/ deconstructing the 6 sections of which it is comprised.

This presentation is especially pertinent to all 8-11th grade parents who believe their son/daughter may be college bound. The content should inform, empower, and afford you the knowledge to be “stress free” once your student begins filling out college applications.

Date: March 22, 2023

Where: Church Atrium

Time: 8:30-9:30 am

Presenter: Joseph Runge/ Director of College Counseling

Agenda:

- I. What is the Common Application?
- II. Why is there a Common Application?
- III. Does it matter if we fill out the Common Application vs. a university’s own institutional application for admission? Is either one preferred?
- IV. Which colleges uses the Common Application? There are 2400 4-year colleges and universities in the United States, 1033 use the Common Application as their primary application tool.
- V. The 7 sections of the Common Application (commonapp.org)
 1. **Profile Section:** Necessary information about yourself.
 2. **Family Section:** Parent information, sibling information, education attainment of parents and siblings. * Need to know parent birthday info, parent job title, addresses, professional position title, college attended and year graduated.
 3. **Education Section:** HS GPA, Class rank, HS name, academic honors (Valedictorian, National Merit Finalist, Department awards, etc.) and classes to take during senior year.
 4. **Testing Section:** Enter standardized test scores (if you are submitting), AP exam scores, future testing dates, etc.
 5. **Activities Section:** You can enter up to 10 extracurriculars that you have participated in during grades 9-12. Include hours per week, weeks per year, and a description of the activity (150-character limit). * If you have more than 10 extracurriculars, put your 10 most significant (in order of importance) and then we can create a resume/prag sheet with residual activities and attach within the Common Application.
 6. **Essay Section:** The Common Application has 7 essay prompts, only one of which you need to respond. Essay length is 250-650 words. The first 6 prompts are very specific and may resonate with your background, experience, or culture. The 7th prompt is basically write about whatever you want...it’s essentially an open ended opportunity to write (including submitting graded work from a classroom essay assignments).

7. **Additional Information Section:** This section allows you to detail any extenuating or mitigating achievement circumstances that may have inhibited your inside of outside the classroom achievement (injury, mental health, sickness or death in the family, etc.). You can also add additional activities here (beyond the 10 allotted in Section 5). You can also provide another writing sample of your own choosing, if you wish. You can also attach portfolio of art/film/photography/video/ mixed media
- VI. The Common Application has a college search site where you can “load” the colleges in which you’re interested onto a list to make “sending” your applications together easier.
- VII. Some colleges reserve the “right” to have you fill out more detailed questions about you and your family and/or write an additional essay or several short essays.