

College Admissions, Part 1

10th Grade Pre-Campus Visit Learning Activity

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	1-2 class period(s)
Subject	Financial Literacy, Social Studies	**Duration**	50 minutes
Course	Personal Financial Literacy		

Essential Question

How do colleges decide who they will admit?

Summary

This lesson places students in the role of a college admissions officer in order to help them better understand admissions requirements, the admissions process, and how to fill out a good college application.

Snapshot

Engage

Students will create a class list of what colleges look for when deciding who they will admit to their school and then have a class discussion about the different criteria for admissions colleges might have.

Explore

Students will act as admissions officers to evaluate 5 fictional college applications and determine which ones meet the required criteria and which ones go beyond minimum requirements for acceptance.

Explain

Students will choose only 2 of the 5 fictional applications to accept and participate in a modified "Four Corners" to explain who they are accepting and justify their answers.

Extend

The teacher will lead a discussion on the manner in which this activity actually prepares students to handle college admissions.

Evaluate

The GUU Admission Evaluation chart can be graded, students can write Exit Tickets about what they need to start doing to help meet admission requirements, or they could write formal acceptance or rejection letters to the fictional applicants.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

CLR201: Locate basic facts (e.g., names, dates, events) clearly stated in a passage
CLR301: Locate simple details at the sentence and paragraph level in somewhat challenging passages
SYN301: Make straightforward comparisons between two passages

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Personal Financial Literacy (7th through 12th grade))

PFL.1.1: Using decision-making models, evaluate how career choices, educational/vocational preparation, skills, and entrepreneurship affect income and standard of living (e.g., postsecondary degree/ certification, needs versus wants, and the ability to live on less than you earn).

Attachments

- 10th Grade Campus Visit Slides—College Admissions, Part 1.pptx
- 10th Grade Pre-Campus Visit—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- 3 Corners Signs—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Application Example Amy Carlisle—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Application Example Brandon Griffin—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Application Example Brian Cusher Jr.—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Application Example John Rodriguez—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Application Example Nicole Jackson—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Applications Example Amy Carlisle Essay—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- College Admissions Evaluation Chart—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- GEAR UP University Admissions Requirements—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- HS Diploma Requirements Checklist—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf
- Sophomore College Checklist—College Admissions, Part 1.pdf

Materials

- Paper and Pencils
- Chart paper, whiteboard, or computer projection to record class responses in the opening activity
- One Admission Requirements sheet for GEAR UP University per group
- One set of 5 fictional college applications per group
- GUU College Admission Evaluation charts (one per group or one per student)

Engage

Place students in groups of three. Pose this question to the whole group, “What do you think colleges look for when deciding who they will admit to their school?” Ask students to share what they think with their group and record a list of their ideas. After students complete their list, ask them to come to a consensus on which three factors they think colleges might consider as the most important. Ask each group to share their top three and record them where everybody can see. (Examples students might come up with are grades, class rank, test scores, college entrance exam scores, community service, job experience, teacher recommendations, essays)

Explain to the students that different colleges have different criteria for admission. Validate that the lists they have generated contain many of these criteria. Explain that many colleges have similar criteria such as GPA, high school diploma, or college entrance examination scores and some consider additional criteria such as community service and written essays. State that it is important to find out about the criteria early (right now) in order to plan for going to college. Point out that all colleges have an admission application that must be completed and this application provides students with an opportunity to show they have met the individual criteria of the school for which they are applying.

Tell the students that they will be playing the role of college admissions officers for a fictional college that has many of the attributes ofOklahoma schools as well as schools from other states. They will be deciding which of the applicants will be accepted to the fictional college, GEAR UP University (GUU).

Explore

Give this task to your students: Your group is a team of college admissions officers. Your task is to review 5 applications from prospective GUU students and determine which applicants meet the requirements for admission. Once you have determined which applications meet the requirements, you need to rank them in order from most promising to least promising because only a limited number of students can be accepted to GUU.

Activity directions for the teacher:• Provide each group with the Admission Requirements Sheet for GEAR UPUniversity. Have them look it over and ask if they need clarification. The basic requirements are the minimum criteria that must be met in order to go to GUU. These are the factors the group will use to determine who meets admission requirements. The additional factors are things GUU considers as part of the overall selection process because they have a limited number of students they can accept. These additional factors, along with GPA, class rank, and ACT scores, help admissions officers make decisions about ranking applicants for admission priority.

Provide each group with five GUU college applications from prospective students and ask them to read through them. You may want to go through one application with the whole group to answer any questions about the pieces of the application such as GPA, class rank, or essay score.

Teacher's Note

(Note: Essays are not provided with these applications to help with time. There is an example of an essay provided that goes with Amy's application if you want to share it with the students).

Ask groups to determine which applicants meet the minimum requirements. Two of the applicants (Nicole and Brandon) will not meet minimum requirements and cannot be admitted.

Once they have determined the three applications that meet minimum requirements (Amy, John, and Brian), these applications will need to be ranked in order of excellence based on all of the criteria on the list. The team can use the GUU College Admission Evaluation chart (illustrated below) to make their case for their rankings. The name of each applicant goes in the first column. The important strengths and weaknesses as determined by the group are noted in the next two columns. The ranking decided by the group goes in the next column. The final column is where the group provides a reason or rationale for their ranking. The whole group can complete one chart or the teacher may want to require each student to do their own chart.

When each group has finished their rankings, tell them that due to space requirements (GUU is a very popular university) the applicant with the #3ranking will have to be put on a waiting list.

Explain

Use a “three-corners” activity to have students present their justification for putting their #3 person on the waiting list. Place three signs around the room with the names of the possible pairs of students that could be ranked #1 and #2 (Amy and John, John and Brian, Brian and Amy). Have each group send a representative to the corner that shows their highest ranked students. The representative will state to the class why they chose these two over their #3 choice using the information from the evaluation sheet completed by the group. Sentence starters for the representative might be, “We chose Amy and John over Brian because...” or “Our group chose to place John on the waiting list over Amy and Brian because...”

Teacher's Note

Students will give a variety of reasons based on their perception of the most important criteria.

Teacher's Note

"Three Corners" is a modified version of the Formative Assessment "Four Corners." In this formative assessment, students must decide whether they agree or disagree with a specific statement regarding a topic or concept, go stand by the poster that represents their thinking, and then explain their thinking with other students gathered around their poster. Groups will then share their reasoning with the class.

Extend

After all groups have shared, the teacher should have students share ideas about how this artificial activity might relate to real college applications. The teacher should lead the discussion to get students to agree on and/or understand the following points.

1. Although this is a very contrived situation, the criteria used by GUU are very much like those used by colleges everywhere
2. The personal implication of the activity is that students should realize that they need to start thinking about college requirements now because their entire high school history and experience influences the outcome

Things to point out:

1. Not all colleges have the same criteria for admission and it is important to find out early what those are in order to plan for college.
2. While grades and college entrance exam scores are important, colleges often consider other factors when deciding who will be admitted. Right now is the time to start thinking of these, not your senior year when you fill out the application.
3. Essays are sometimes considered for college admission. They usually ask you to write about your life experience, accomplishments, and views. It is important to practice and improve your writing skills as well as broadening your experiences in order to make a good impression in the essay.
4. Even though not all colleges require essays for admission, many of them require essays to apply for scholarship money.
5. They should be thinking now about what they need to do to get into the college of their choice. Going online to look at college admission requirements can help guide their college decisions as well as their high school course and activity planning.

Evaluate

There are a number of options for the summative assessment of this activity. Below are some possible suggestions.

1. A grade or score could be given for the GUU Admission Evaluation that the students completed in the activity.
2. Exit Ticket – Have students reflect in a Two-Minute Paper on what kinds of things they might need to do starting now in order for their college application to rise to the top when they submit it their senior year.
3. Have each student write a letter to the college Dean outlining their recommendations for admission of these candidates using a supported argument format that they are learning or using in ELA.
4. Have students write formal acceptance or rejection letters to the applicants that are positive, tactful, and informative.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Bell Ringers and Exit Tickets. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/125
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Four Corners. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/138
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Two-Minute Paper. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/152