



"Ready for College, Ready for Life"

A Handbook and Workbook
for Bishop Garcia Diego
High School Students

CARDINALS GO TO COLLEGE



MISSION STATEMENT

Bishop Garcia Diego High School, Inc., is an independent Catholic co-educational secondary school that welcomes students of all faiths and provides them with the spiritual, personal and intellectual knowledge to meet the enduring challenge of realizing their God-given potential in a multi-cultural society.

EXPECTED SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS

It is our goal that all students of Bishop Garcia Diego High School will:

FAITH

Use personal reflection to further experience your faith and respond to the challenge of realizing your God-given potential.

SERVICE

Take responsibility for improving the quality of life for self and others through Christian service and by assuming productive roles as members of family, church, occupation, civic and global communities.

THOUGHT

Employ knowledge related to curriculum content to analyze significant and complex problems.

EXPRESSION

Use oral, written, artistic and technological forms of expression to convey ideas effectively and to cultivate positive personal and professional relationships.

SELF-RELIANCE

Develop self-reliance, independence and moral strength; establish and pursue positive personal and educational goals.

ACTION

Participate in recreational, artistic, political and/or cultural activities to enhance physical and emotional health and enjoyment throughout life.

Bishop García Diego High School

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Bishop García Diego High School

College Handbook /Workbook For Students and Parents

INTRODUCTION

Bishop García Diego High School - CEEB Code Number: 053-245

This handbook has been designed for Bishop García Diego High School students and parents as a resource and tool to use in the process of college exploration, preparation, and application.

While college preparation is a focus at all grade levels at Bishop, the college preparation process begins in earnest during the junior year. After the PSAT in October, our juniors take the SATs or ACT starting January of their junior year. Planning college visits during summer and fall will help students when the application time comes.

The senior year of high school is one full of expectation, anticipation, and frustration for both students and parents. Students are expected to work their hardest in some very demanding courses, maintain good grades, continue extracurricular involvement, take tests, write essays, complete applications, and wait for replies from the college or university admissions offices!

The senior year should also be full of satisfaction and confidence. As students complete college applications, they are, in essence, summarizing their high school careers. Hopefully, they will feel a sense of accomplishment and success as they look back. Bishop graduates take with them a feeling of confidence as they enter a new world. Their curriculum has been academically challenging, their teachers have helped them gain a sense of life-long learning, and the Bishop community has instilled virtues and enhanced the Christian and family values that will remain with them throughout their lives. It will be a year of contrasts - fear and confidence, anxiety and hope, questioning and fulfillment!

The college counseling department at Bishop García Diego High School has designed a program of guidance that promotes early goal setting and long term planning throughout all four years of high school. We hope this handbook will be another resource in a smooth transition from high school to college. You are also welcome to stop by the College Counseling Center located on Bishop's campus for more information about planning for college. It is our hope that this handbook will support you in reaching your God-given potential.

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**Bishop Garcia Diego High School
Pre College Calendar and Checklist**

“Ready for College, Ready for Life”

Freshman Year - Action Plan:

Fall

- Meet with your counselor to discuss your college plans.
- Review your schedule with your counselor to make sure you're enrolled in challenging classes that will help you prepare for college. Many colleges prefer four years of English, history, math, science, and a foreign language. It is also important to earn high grades and be successful in all of the classes you are enrolled in.
- Use your planner on a daily basis that was provided to you by Bishop and remember to include your homework assignments in the planner.
- Write all important dates and deadlines in your planner. (finals, test days, etc.)
- Get involved with extra curricular activities. Remember colleges like to see this.
- Attend the Earl Warren College fair. See your counselor for more information about this.
- Prepare for and take the P-SATs

Winter

- Learn about college costs and how financial aid works.
- Talk with your parents about financing your college education.
- Attend college presentations by universities who are visiting Bishop's campus.
- Find out about college firsthand from college friends who are home for the holidays.
- Create a “College Folder” including any awards, report cards, or certificates that you received. This will be helpful when applying to college.

Spring

- Sign up for college preparatory courses. Consider honor's courses.
- Stay focused with your academics. Remember to study and plan effectively for spring finals.
- Explore summer opportunities – job, internship, or volunteer positions.
- Check with your school counselor and search online for summer school programs for high schools students at colleges.

Summer

- Start and complete your summer reading assignments.
- Plan to visit college campuses to get a feel for your options. Start with colleges near you.
- Finalize your summer opportunities with jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities.
- Become familiar with college entrance requirements.
- Start saving for college
- Start recording your community service hours.
- Become familiar with scholarship opportunities – GPA, extra curricular activities, community service, etc.

Sophomore Year - Action Plan:

Fall

- Continue to meet with your counselor throughout the school year to discuss your college plans. Review your schedule with him or her to make sure you're enrolled in challenging

classes that will help you prepare for college. Colleges prefer four years of English, history, math, science, and a foreign language.

- Explore your career interests with your counselor and take the career assessment provided by your school counselor.
- Prepare for and take the P-SATs.
- Continue to do well in your classes as colleges want to see an impressive GPA.
- If you haven't joined a club yet now is the time to do so. If it's your second year in the club, run for a leadership position within the club.

Winter

- Review your P-SAT results with your parents and school counselor. Discuss how you can improve your P-SAT scores.
- Start collecting college information.
- Continue to visit colleges and talk with college students.
- Be ready with a list of questions to ask on your college campus visits.
- Update your "College Folder" with any awards, report cards, or certificates that you received. This will be helpful when applying to college.

Spring

- Develop a list of college characteristics to decide how to evaluate different colleges.
- Develop a college comparison worksheet and speak with your counselor if you need further assistance with this process.
- Explore summer opportunities – job, internship, or volunteer positions.

Summer

- Continue/start saving for college
- Consider your reasons for going to college and how they relates to your career interests
- Finalize your summer opportunities with jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities.

Junior Year – Action Plan:

August

- Review your high school course work and activity plans.
- Keep in mind that colleges look for the following – challenging coursework, strong GPA, involvement in extracurricular activities such as sports, volunteer work or church.
- Start becoming familiar with your Social Security number or Registration Alien number as you will need this for financial aid assistance in college.

September

- Identify sources of college and career information at your school.
- Start looking through guidance publications, college catalogs and guidebooks.
- Put together a list of ten colleges that you would like to attend. Plan to apply to at least three to six schools.
- Study for the P-SATs.
- Obtain dates and location of college fairs and "parent nights" in the Santa Barbara area.

October

- Prepare for and take the P-SATs
- Inquire about Advanced Placement (AP) or summer college courses that may be available to you.

- Attend college fairs in your area.
- Learn more about the colleges you're interested in. Remember the Internet is a good resource, especially www.collegeboard.com.
- Attend the Earl Warren College fair. See your counselor for more information about this.

November / December

- Look for your PSAT/NMSQT score report.
- Start planning to take the SAT I and or SAT II exams, if necessary.
- You may also need to take the ACT.
- Check with the colleges you are applying to in order to find out about specific testing requirements. Ask your high school counselor about registration deadlines.

January

- Go through the catalogs of the three to six colleges that interest you most. Review the positive and negative advantages of each college.
- During your college visits, make sure you visit the financial aid office to find out what types of aid are available.
- Attend financial aid nights if you have not already done so.
- Schedule a one on one college planning meeting with your school counselor.

February

- Start investigating private scholarships and other student aid programs. Ask you teacher and counselors if they know if any organizations that offer free use of a scholarship search program.
- Register, study, and take the SAT and/or ACT exams, if you have not already done so.
- Search the internet for scholarships that are available to you.
- Take an SAT prep course to help prepare you for the upcoming test.

March

- Start seriously investigating outside funding sources.
- Register, study, and take the SAT and/or ACT exams, if you have not already done so.
- For more information about scholarships visit www.fastweb.com or fafsa.ed.gov

April

- Begin scheduling visits to each of the three to six schools that are on your final list. If appropriate, apply for an interview and/or an overnight stay.
- Begin preparing essays for college admissions and scholarship applications.

May

- Take the SAT (I and II) and/or the ACT exams.
- In early to mid-May, take AP exams, which are given in high schools nationally.
- Mark a calendar with test dates and registrations deadlines for the remaining SAT (I and II).
- Continue compiling information to find out which organizations award scholarships to graduating seniors (you may have to begin applying the summer after your junior year.)
- Attend the Junior College Night at Bishop. (Look for specific information in the newsletter or college counseling office.)

June / July

- Take the SAT (I and II) and/or the ACT exams if you didn't take them last month.

- Read a variety of books and magazines and review your math skills over the summer. This will help you to prepare for the SAT if you plan to take it in the fall.
- Obtain a summer job that might be related to your career interests.
- If possible, save some money from your summer job to help pay for college expenses.
- Schedule visits to colleges you are interested in applying to.
- Complete your high school resume that will be given to teachers or employers when you ask for a letter of recommendation. The resume should include your GPA, extra curricular activities, honors/AP courses, employment history, sports, clubs, etc.
- Complete the FAFSA 4 Caster at www.fafsa.ed.gov. This will give you an estimate of expected federal grants and loans that you may be eligible for.
- Continue essays for college admissions and scholarship applications.
- Update your “College Folder” with any awards, report cards, or certificates that you received. This will be helpful when applying to college.

Senior Year Action Plan:

August

- Review your career plans and decide which type of college is right for you.
- Schedule visits to colleges you are interested in applying to.
- Narrow your college list to three to seven schools.
- Request course catalogs and research admission information.
- Contact your high school counselor for registration materials and test dates for the SAT and ACT.
- Surf the internet to review scholarships available to you.
- Schedule a follow up college planning meeting with your school counselor.

September

- Meet with admissions representatives who are visiting your school.
- Make a list of test names, dates, fees, registration deadlines, and deadlines for college admissions and financial aid applications.
- Remember you must take test like the SATs and ACTs at least six weeks before the deadline for scores to be submitted to colleges.
- Ask teachers, guidance counselors and employers for letters of recommendation to include with your admissions and/or scholarship applications. Remember the UCs and CSUs do not require letters of recommendation for regular admissions.

October

- Schedule visits to colleges you are interested in applying to.
- Work on admissions applications essays.
- Visit your top school choices. Interview some students, faculty and staff if possible.
- If available, attend special programs such as college fairs.
- Find out which financial aid applications are required for the colleges you are applying to and make note of the due date. Some private universities may require that you register for the CSS/Financial Aid PROFILE at this time. (This registration will determine your qualifications for private school aid.)
- Begin preparing your college applications.
- Visit the college counseling office to learn about scholarship opportunities.

November

- Take the SAT or ACT exam if necessary.

- Obtain financial information from you high school counselor or the college of your choice. Read them carefully to determine what information is required and when the applications are due.
- Continue working on your college applications. Remember some college's early action deadlines begin in November.
- Check with colleges to find out when materials must be postmarked.
- Apply for scholarships.

December

- Continue to apply for scholarships. Remember the general deadline for the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara is in late January.
- Continue to apply to colleges whose deadlines are in January.
- Tip for parents – save your year end payroll stub if it shows your earning for the year. You may need it for financial aid eligibility reviews by schools.

January

- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). It's available at fafsa.ed.gov. Remember that many scholarship organizations require that you have submitted a FAFSA.
- If parents or guardians claim you as a dependent for tax purposes, you will need their help in completing the FAFSA.
- Tip for parents – it is helpful to get your income tax returns prepared early – schools may request them to prove eligibility for financial aid.
- Attend the Financial Aid Night at Bishop. (Look for specific information in the newsletter or college counseling office.)

February

- Check to see if your mid year transcripts have been sent to the schools you have applied to. (This is typically required of private schools.)
- Complete your FAFSA online or be sure to mail it if you have not already done so.
- Research taking Advanced Placement (AP) exams.
- Rank your finalized list of colleges.

March

- Look for your Student Aid Report (SAR) in the mail. Your SAR contains federal financial aid information. If you have not received your SAR four weeks after sending in your FAFSA, contact the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 800-433-3243.
- Submit your SAR to the financial aid office and tax forms if requested.
- Contact each office to make certain that your financial aid application is complete. Find out what else you need to do to establish and maintain your eligibility for financial aid.
- Keep copies of everything you submit to the financial aid office.

April

- Watch the mail for acceptance letters and financial aid award letters.
- Compare the financial aid awards you receive.
- Choose a school and send in a deposit by the assigned deadline.
- Check with the college you are attending about the details of signing and returning financial aid award letters.
- Notify the other schools that you will not be attending.
- Watch for important deadlines (housing, financial aid, etc.) at your chosen school.

May

- Take the AP exams that are given in schools nationwide.

Watch for important deadlines (housing, financial aid, etc.) at your chosen school.

****Information on checklist provided by ACT, Wachovia, and Bishop's Guidance and Counseling Department.**

COLLEGE VOCABULARY

Accreditation

Endorsement granted to colleges and universities that meet established standards formally approved by one of six regional accrediting boards.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Designed for students who have completed advanced work in specific subjects. A qualifying score may allow a student to receive college credit and/or to bypass some college courses.

American College Testing (ACT) Assessment

A college entrance examination required by some colleges and accepted by others in lieu of the SAT I. It includes four sections: English, mathematics, social studies, and natural sciences.

Associate Degree

A degree awarded after completion of a two-year college program of study.

Bachelor's Degree

A degree awarded after completion of a four- or five-year college program of study.

Candidate Reply Date

The day by which most colleges require students to reply to offers of admission - usually May 1.

Class Rank

The relative position of a student in his or her graduating class based on the cumulative grade point average. Bishop does not rank its students.

Common Application Form

An application designed to ease the workload of students and high school guidance personnel. This application is used by several private colleges.

Internship

Program of supervised work experience related to a student's field of interest, performed with or without pay. The student may receive degree credit.

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA)

The association of member colleges that makes rules governing eligibility, recruiting and financial aid for student athletes.

PSAT/NMSQT

The Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test is a practice test preparing students for the SAT I. It is taken by all Bishop students during their first three years of high school.

SAT I: Reasoning Tests

The College Board's assessment of verbal, math and reading skills. The scores used as criteria for admission to colleges and universities.

SAT II: Subject Tests

One-hour tests of knowledge in specific subjects. They are required by some colleges in addition to the SAT I.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

An evaluation of an international student's proficiency in college-level English. It is required by most colleges for students whose second language is English.

Transfer Program

A two-year program which results in an associate degree. It is designed for students who intend to continue their studies at a four-year college.

Trimester System

Division of the academic year into three units. It is sometimes called a "quarter" system when the summer session is included.

Wait List

Used by colleges to hold in reserve, students who meet admissions requirements but cannot be accepted due to enrollment constraints.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Ask yourself the following questions as you try to decide where to apply:

Setting

Do you prefer the excitement of a big city?

Are you looking for a "small, college town" atmosphere (quiet)?

Do you want to live in an urban (city), suburban, or rural setting?

Size

Have you always thought you would attend a big football school?

Do you like the idea of a small school where it is easy to get to know everyone?

Is it important to you to be in small classes?

Will a small school offer you the variety of courses and majors you need?

Type of School/Academic Structure

Would you prefer a liberal arts college or a major university?

Would you be interested in a more specialized school such as an art school?

Are you looking for a specific major?

Do you need a structured academic framework in order to work effectively?

Are you interested in a religiously affiliated school?

Location

How close to home do you want to be?

How well do you adapt to new situations?

Would you be lonely if you moved far away from family and friends?

Is there an area of the country where you always wanted to attend school?

What kind of weather do you like?

Academic Requirements

How do you realistically view yourself as a student?

Do you have the GPA, course requirements, and extra curricular activities needed to be successful at a highly competitive institution?

Do you want an academically demanding college program?

Do you plan to attend graduate school?

How have you fared on the PSAT, SAT or ACT?

Campus Life

Do you want to live in a residence hall, off campus, or commute from home?

Are you prepared to share a room with one or two other students?

Are you interested in fraternity or sorority life?

Are you looking for a school with a wide assortment of extracurricular activities?

Do you want an extensive athletic program?

Cost

Has your family discussed how much you can afford to spend on college?

Will you qualify for scholarship assistance or grants?

Would you be willing to work part time or take loans to pay for your education?

GATHERING AND ORGANIZING INFORMATION

You should begin writing, emailing or calling colleges to request information in your junior year. Ask for an application packet, viewbook, brochure, even a video/DVD/CD if they have them. Once you give them your address, they won't stop sending you stuff!

After taking the PSAT in October of your junior year, you will start to receive mail from many colleges. Immediately begin to "weed out" information from colleges you definitely are NOT interested in. Keep information on colleges you ARE interested in. You may also gather information at various college fairs, campus visits, or from college representatives visiting the Bishop campus. Make sure you give your name when you speak to a college rep or admissions officer – they always make a note of it for the admissions file. The more interest you show them, the more they are interested in YOU.

Now begins the task of organizing all the information you are collecting. We suggest that you begin a filing system. This could be in an expanding file or filing box. Your files could be labeled as follows:

- PSAT/SAT/ACT Information
- UC Schools
- Cal State Schools
- Private Schools - California
- Out of State Schools
- Scholarship/Financial Aid
- College Essay Info

This will probably be all you will need for your junior year. As **seniors**, you will want to be a bit more specific in your filing system. Your files may read:

- PSAT/SAT Information and Results
- Academic Records and Extracurricular Activities (unofficial transcript and resume)
- Separate file for **each** school you are applying to: information, application, notes from campus visit, scholarship/financial aid information, personal notes
- UC Application - 1 basic application for all UC campuses
- Cal State Application - 1 basic application for all Cal State campuses
- Scholarship Information - private sector
- FAFSA/CSS Profile (Financial Aid forms)
- College Essay - drafts and finished essay
- Letters of Recommendation

No matter how you choose to keep the information you have gathered, the important point is to ORGANIZE IT! It will give you peace of mind knowing that you have everything you need in one place and save you many anxious moments of putting your finger on important papers as you go through the college application process!

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE??

Here you are - a senior at last! Right now you may be feeling a bit overwhelmed with all the information you have gathered and organized. Your head may be spinning with possibilities about what college to attend, what major to choose, and just where you will be in a year! Here are some strategies that may help you in make this important decision.

Identify Your Goal

Think about what you want to achieve and state that as your goal. The goal may be making a decision about what courses to take in school, what to study in college or what career you may want to investigate.

List Possible Choices and Gather Information

You already have much of your information gathered and organized. Now get more specific! List 8-10 colleges to research in depth. Plan campus visits, check out their websites on the internet, and talk with current students or alumni if possible.

Evaluate Your Choices

Evaluate colleges in terms of what criteria are most important to you. List the advantages and disadvantages of each choice. Ask yourself:

- Will I feel good about this choice? How will my parents feel about it?
- Will certain risks be involved? Am I willing to take such risks?
- Will it be satisfying for me? How will I feel about this choice five years from now?
- Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?

Decide Where You Want to Apply

Students should apply to at least three colleges in each of these categories:

Possible acceptance (reach) - "If I could go anywhere I wanted, where would it be?"

Probable acceptance (50/50 or realistic) - those which will meet all your needs and for which you are qualified

Certain acceptance (safety) - those which would be satisfactory and will be sure to accept you.

Develop a Plan of Action

Examine your choices. Decide on the colleges you will apply to. Be sure to have all the information and application forms/online applications, know and adhere to all deadlines, follow all directions. **Take action!**

Online applications

Most college/financial aid websites require you to sign on with a user name and password, which you can then use to log in whenever you want and return to saved information. Online applications reduce errors and are the most efficient means to submit information. **BUT REMEMBER YOUR USER NAME AND PASSWORD!**
(Write it down here _____)

***It is also important to check your email and junk email on a regular basis as this will be the primary means of communication for the colleges you apply to online.

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY OPTIONS

California boasts two of the finest public university systems in the country - the University of California (UC) and the California State University (CSU). California also has excellent private institutions. Here are some specific requirements for admissions for each system:

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC)

There are ten University of California campuses: Berkeley, Davis, Irvine, Los Angeles, Merced, Riverside, San Diego, San Francisco (graduate level only), Santa Barbara, and Santa Cruz. The UC schools are selective and admit approximately the top 12% of high school graduates.

Subject Requirements

To satisfy the Subject Requirement, students must complete the courses listed below **with a grade of C or above**, earning a grade point average as defined by the Scholarship Requirement. This sequence of courses is also known as the "a-g" subject requirements. Students who meet the minimum graduation requirements with C grades or higher at Bishop also meet the a-g requirements. While colleges state their minimum requirements, for admission, we highly recommend for students to exceed the minimum a-g requirements to enhance their chances of admission to each college they apply to.

A - History/Social Science - 2 years required. Bishop has a 3-year requirement.

B - English - 4 years required.

C - Mathematics - 3 years required, 4 recommended.

Three years of college preparatory mathematics that include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two and three-dimensional geometry.

**Beginning with the freshman class of 2012 all Bishop students are required to complete four years of mathematics.

D - Laboratory Science - 2 years required, 3 recommended.

Two years of laboratory science in at least two of these three areas: biology, chemistry and physics. All Bishop science courses are lab sciences.

E - Foreign Language - 2 years required, 3 recommended.

Two years of the **same** language other than English.

F - Visual and Performing Arts – 1 year required

One year of visual and performing arts chosen from the following: dance, drama/theater, music or visual art. All Bishop VPA courses are approved by the UC.

G - College Preparatory Electives – 1 year required

One additional year of any subject beyond the minimum requirements listed above. Bishop theology courses beyond freshman year count as college prep electives.

Scholarship Requirement

The scholarship requirement defines the grade point average (GPA) students must attain in the a-g subjects in order to be eligible for admission to the university. The eligibility index incorporates GPA and SAT Reasoning and Subject tests. The minimum GPA required is **2.80**, and all students - even those with the highest GPAs - are required to meet minimum test score requirements.

Honors/AP Courses

The university assigns extra points as follows for honors and AP level work: A=5 points, B=4 points, C=3 points. Not more than two units of certified honors courses taken in the tenth grade may be given honors points. D grades do not earn extra points. Only those courses approved as "honors" level courses by the UC system will be assigned the honors credit (see UC Approved Course List page at www.ucop.edu).

Examination Requirement

Students must complete either the SAT Reasoning or the ACT. The ACT composite score is used. Two SAT Subject Tests are required. If Math is chosen, it must be Math 2. All sections of the SAT are weighted equally.

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU)

There are 23 campuses in the California State University system. Campuses extend from Arcata in Northern California to San Diego. The CSU selects from the upper one-third of high school graduates. To qualify for regular admission as a first time freshman an applicant must: a) be a high school graduate, b) have a qualifiable eligibility index, and c) have completed the courses in the comprehensive pattern of college preparatory subject requirements with grades of C or better.

Eligibility Index

The eligibility index is the combination of a student's high school grade point average (GPA) and test score on either the SAT I or ACT. The GPA is based on grades earned during the final three years of high school and bonus points for each C or better grade in approved honors courses.

Subject Requirements

In addition to presenting an appropriate eligibility index, candidates are required to complete 15 units of college preparatory subjects, as follows:

English -	4 years required
Mathematics -	3 years required, 4 years recommended: Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II
Social Sciences -	2 years required, 3 years recommended: including 1 year U.S. History
Laboratory Science -	2 years required, 3 years recommended: 1 year biological & 1 year physical
Foreign Language -	2 years required in the same language, 3 years recommended
Visual/Performing Arts -	1 year required: art, dance, drama/theater or music
Electives -	1 year required: selected from one of the above areas

First-Time Freshman Grade Point Average

The high school grade point average calculation for students seeking admission to a CSU as a first-time freshman will include only those grades earned in approved college preparatory courses taken during the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades of high school.

**Beginning with the freshman class of 2012 all Bishop students are required to complete four years of mathematics.

Examination Requirements

If your GPA is 3.0 or better (3.61 for non-residents), you are exempt from submitting test scores. However, you are urged to take the SAT Reasoning test or ACT since **all** campuses use test results for placement purposes. However, impacted CSUs require all students to submit either SAT or ACT test results.

Honors Courses

Up to eight semesters of honors courses taken in the last two years of high school can be accepted. Each unit of A in a course will receive a total of 5 points, B, 4 points, and C, 3 points.

CATHOLIC AND OTHER PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Admission requirements vary among the private colleges. Students should also be aware of the requirements for a particular major in a college. Students with a specific school in mind should consult the college counselor to determine its particular requirements. However, admission to most colleges/universities is based on the following:

1. Academic record (GPA);
2. Academic courses;
3. Scores on either the SAT I or the ACT, plus scores on SAT IIs where required;
4. Personal qualifications, such as personal characteristics, breadth of interests and the promise of success in college as judged by letters of recommendation and a personal essay;
5. Extra-curricular activities and community activities.

STANDARDIZED TESTS FOR COLLEGE ADMISSION

Bishop García Diego High School - CEEB Code Number: 053-245. This number is needed when registering for the SATs or ACTs.

Most colleges and universities require some form of testing to determine your readiness for college-level work. They will require **either** the College Entrance Examination Board Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT I) **or** the American College Test (ACT). **You must be aware of the requirements for individual colleges.** Some colleges may also require SAT II Subject Test **(the UC schools require two SAT IIs)**. Other colleges may not require these subject tests, but suggest you take them for placement purposes. Again, check with the individual college for those requirements. Here is a brief explanation of the different standardized tests used in college admissions evaluations:

Scholastic Assessment Test: Reasoning

This is a three-hour plus, multiple-choice test administered at a local test center that measures verbal, mathematical and writing abilities. Scoring for each of the three divisions of the test ranges from 200 to 800.

Scholastic Assessment Test: Subjects

These are one-hour tests in specific subjects with a multiple-choice format, scored from 200 to 800. The SAT Subject tests measure a student's knowledge of particular subject material. Some colleges do not require SAT Subject tests, while others require a specific combination of tests.

Note: UC requires two SAT Subject tests.

The American College Testing (ACT) Program

The ACT Assessment includes four curriculum-based tests that measure students' educational development in English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The tests are based on the major areas of instruction in American high schools and colleges. This test is accepted by many colleges and universities as an alternative to the SAT I. Students should consult with individual colleges regarding acceptance of the ACT in place of the SAT I. The test is scored from a minimum of 1 point to a maximum of 36. Students should register for the additional writing section.

Advanced Placement (AP) Exams

The Advanced Placement Exams are administered every year to those students who have been pursuing one or more AP courses during that academic year. Students who achieve a high enough score (usually a 3 or above on a scale of 1 to 5) could receive college credit or be placed in advanced-level college courses, according to each college's policies.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

This test evaluates the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English.

PREPARING FOR COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

SAT/ACT PREPARATION COURSES

There has been much debate about the value of SAT/ACT prep courses. Some arguments against such courses include their cost, the number of hours they require, and the fact that they cannot guarantee the results students and parents may want. Arguments in favor of the course include research showing that some students may see gains in their verbal and math scores. If you are trying to decide whether to take a test preparation course, keep these questions in mind:

- Cost - there can be a range from \$100 to \$1300
- Does the course combine math and reading with problem-solving and test taking?
- Is the course taught by experienced teachers?
- How recently has the course material been updated?
- What size are the classes? Are they small enough to permit individual assistance?
- Does the course offer diagnostic testing? Does it teach to your individual needs?
- Is your progress monitored weekly?
- Are timed practice tests used throughout the course?
- Will you have time to attend classes? Do the homework?

OTHER WAYS TO PREPARE

There are excellent resources available to you to prepare for taking the college entrance exam. Some are available in the library, others online and in bookstores. These resources can be extremely helpful if you are motivated to perform well on the college entrance exams.

REGISTRATION

You can register by mail or online. Registration forms are available in the college counseling center or online at www.collegeboard.com or www.act.org. It is important that you note the deadlines for registration! The College Board website is a valuable resource for students and parents. Besides test registration, there is the SAT Question of the Day, financial aid information and even a college search!

FEE WAIVERS

Fee waivers are available for both the SAT and ACT programs. Please read the specific information for each below. Students who are eligible and use fee waivers for the SAT or ACT are then also eligible to obtain fee waivers for some college application fees!

SAT Fee Waivers: High school juniors and seniors who demonstrate financial need can receive up to two (2) fee waivers for SAT I and up to two (2) additional fee waivers for SAT II tests. Students must meet certain financial eligibility requirements. Fee waiver requests should be made to the college counselor.

ACT Fee Waivers: Only a limited number of fee waivers are authorized by ACT each testing year. Once funds have been exhausted, requests for fee waivers will have to be denied. **ACT provides only one (1) fee waiver per student.** Students must meet financial eligibility requirements similar to the SAT requirements.

THE COLLEGE VISIT

By now you may have read catalogs and view books, viewed videotapes, or talked to friends about different colleges. As you may also have discovered, this is not enough to make a solid decision about which colleges you might want to apply to. You probably would not purchase a new car after simply looking at brochures or talking to friends. Most likely you would take a test drive and inspect the car personally. Choosing the right college will have a much greater impact on your life than buying a car. Why wouldn't you "test drive" the colleges you are considering?

Visiting a college campus may well be the most valuable action you can take in choosing a college. What you observe on a campus tour will help you decide about a college choice in terms of size and location, type of student population, academic and living facilities and resources, academic program, student services, cost, and general atmosphere.

Here are some hints that may make your college visit more productive:

- Plan your visit when school is in session if possible.
- Be sure to visit all types of campuses: private, UC and CSU.
- Make prior arrangements to speak with someone in the admissions and finance offices and make reservations to take a tour of the campus.
- Stay overnight in a residence hall whenever possible.
- Make sure you see everything that is of interest to you (residence hall, libraries, laboratories, student center, cafeteria, athletic facilities, etc.).
- Talk with students, faculty, and admissions and finance personnel.
- Have a list of questions and take a notebook to record the answers and your impressions.
- If you are accepted to a college you were not able to visit, we strongly suggest you plan a visit before the May 1, Candidate Reply Date.

THE COLLEGE APPLICATION

The college application is your opportunity to make a good impression on the college of your choice. You won't get a second chance to make that first impression! Some applications are more complicated than others. Some require additional applications to specific departments or majors. Whether you are applying to the UC or CSU system or to private colleges, these basic steps apply:

1. If you are not applying online, request an application either directly from the colleges or from an on-campus college representative.
2. Organize your personal records, such as your resume and unofficial transcript.
3. Make a draft of all required essays. Allow time to let them rest while you complete the application forms.
4. Read the directions carefully and follow ALL instructions.
5. Pay special attention to the application deadlines. If you need a secondary school report, allow enough time for the college counselor to complete it and send your transcripts.
6. Answer all questions. Use N/A (not applicable) if the question does not apply.
7. Put your essays in their final form.
8. Select references wisely. Use those who personally know you, your academic record, your strengths and your accomplishments.
9. Make a copy of each completed application for your records.
10. It is advisable to obtain a Certificate of Mailing for each application when you mail it.

Be sure to consult individual colleges and/or specific departments regarding supplemental applications or information they may require. Again, be aware of specific deadlines - especially for early admissions consideration, some scholarship application deadlines, or other special issues, such as auditions or interviews.

Most colleges mail or email their notification letters by April and you will have until May 1 to choose from colleges offering admission. You should advise the college counseling department when you receive an acceptance from a college and which college you decide to attend. Be sure to notify all schools to which you have been accepted of your decision.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Many colleges require you to supplement your application with letters of recommendation. It is your responsibility to determine what letters, if any, are required. When requesting letters of recommendation, follow these guidelines:

- Decide whom you would like to ask to write a letter of recommendation. Think about which teachers know you well.
- Provide the following to each person writing a letter for you:
 1. Any necessary forms with your part completed - some forms ask you to sign a waiver of right to access - We suggest that you always sign this waiver;
 2. Stamped envelopes addressed to each college with the return address blank;
 3. A copy of your resume and unofficial transcript if the person requests it.
- Allow sufficient time for a person to write a letter - **at least 2 weeks before the deadline.**
- Write a thank you note to anyone writing a letter of recommendation. They have taken the time to support you in this way. Also let them know the outcome.

COLLEGE ADMISSION PROGRAMS

As you gather information from different colleges you will find a number of different college admission programs. You should become familiar with the types and how they pertain to the specific colleges to which you are applying.

Open Admission

Colleges grant acceptance to all high school graduates without regard to additional qualifications such as test scores or specific high school courses.

Rolling Admission

The college considers each student's application as soon as all the required credentials, such as application, school record, and test scores, have been received. The college usually notifies applicants of its decision in 4-6 weeks.

Early Decision

Students who have a definite first choice of schools and a strong academic profile might consider applying for early decision. Applications are submitted in the fall, usually by November 1; students are notified of the decision in December. At that time students agree, by contract, to enter that college and withdraw all other applications. If not accepted for early decision, students are either denied or reconsidered for admission in the spring.

Early Action

Early action is similar to early decision except that students, if accepted, are not required to accept admission or withdraw other applications. They usually have until the May 1 candidate reply date to respond.

Regular Admission

Students are required to apply by a fixed date. Decision letters are mailed to students in the spring.

Delayed/Provisional Admission

Students are accepted for admission but not necessarily for the fall semester of the upcoming school year. They may begin after either successful completion of a summer program on campus or a fall semester at another college.

Deferred Enrollment

Students have an opportunity to delay enrollment for a semester or year.

WRITING THE ESSAY

Colleges often include one or more essay questions on their applications. Some schools require you to write on a specific topic; others request essays about personal goals and ambitions. Essays provide admissions officers opportunities to evaluate your writing ability and to estimate your potential contribution to the non-academic life of the college. The following guidelines are taken directly from the University of California, Santa Barbara's "Writing the Personal Statement." These tips will work well for any college essay.

The Basics

- Carefully read the essay instructions. Be sure your essay addresses either the specific topics requested or the general topics recommended.
- Type your essay on one side only of 8 1/2" x 11" white paper. Write your name on the top of each page (follow specific instructions from each school).
- Allow time to write, revise, review, and finalize your essay. It takes time to produce a well-written and compelling essay that speaks to the issues.
- Write the essay yourself, then ask a counselor, teacher, parent, or classmate to review it for you.

The Content

You may use the essay to:

- Present new information about yourself, or elaborate on information you provide elsewhere in the application (for example, elaborate on the honors and awards you listed). Tell us not only *what* you have done, but *why* you have done it, and *what you have learned* from it.
- Provide us with information that distinguishes you from other applicants. Remember that your application is part of a strong pool. Accordingly, tell us about those areas in which you *most* excel.
- Tell us not only about your accomplishments, but also about your qualities, characteristics, and attributes. That is, tell us not only *what you have done*, but also *who you are*. Discuss how your qualities, characteristics, and attributes might enhance the quality of the college's undergraduate class.
- Mention any of your skills, abilities, or experiences that might add to the diversity of the college undergraduate class. For example, mention if you are multi-lingual or multi-cultural; differences in world view and life experience provide for a stimulating and intellectually vibrant learning environment.
- Discuss any challenges you have faced or obstacles you have overcome. For example, let us know if you are the first in your family to go to college, or if you have contended with serious illness or disability. Be sure to tell us how you achieved success in spite of these challenges or obstacles, and how any hardships you have endured have shaped your character, affected your beliefs, informed your values, and influenced your goals.

The Outcome

As a result of reading your essay, we should:

- Be able to distinguish you from other applicants
- Better understand the circumstances or context in which you have achieved-or not yet fully achieved-your academic potential
- Know more about you as a person, that is, know more about your character, your educational values, and your life goals (particularly as they relate to your intended area of study)
- Have insight into what you will add to the excellence and diversity of the college's entering freshman class

When you complete your essay, re-read it and see if it speaks to the points noted above. If it does, then you will have provided the college with important additional information that we will use in determining your admission status.

PAYING FOR COLLEGE

In recent years, financial aid for college has not kept pace with the rising costs of a college education. Your family may need assistance meeting the annual cost of tuition, books, fees, and room and board. Our best advice regarding financial aid? **APPLY! APPLY! APPLY!** The following information and guidelines will give you an understanding of what kinds of financial aid are available and help you organize your application process.

FINANCIAL AID VOCABULARY

Award Letter

Notification of the terms and requirements of the financial aid package offered.

College Scholarship Service (CSS) Profile

Financial aid application service of the College Board, used by many private institutions.

Cost of Attendance

The annual cost of attending college that is used to determine a student's financial need. It includes tuition, books, fees, room and board, transportation, etc.

Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)

The total amount a student or his or her family is expected to pay toward college costs from their income assets.

Federal Work-Study Program

A federally sponsored campus-based program that provides employment opportunities for students with demonstrated need.

Financial Aid Package

The total financial aid award offered to the student. The award may include grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

A form distributed by the federal government for use by students applying for federal financial aid programs. May be filed electronically or mailed.

Grant

A financial award that does not have to be repaid.

Loan

Money borrowed that must be paid back with interest.

Student Aid Report (SAR)

A report sent to students who have applied for federal student financial aid. It usually contains a \$ amount called the expected family contribution (EFC).

Scholarship

Monetary award that does not have to be repaid.

APPLYING FOR FINANCIAL AID

Follow these basic guidelines for investigating available financial aid, organizing materials and information, and applying for financial aid. You must be motivated, knowledgeable, and assertive in obtaining the money you need!

- Begin researching scholarships in the spring of your junior year. Look for scholarship information in the counseling office, libraries, and the internet.
- Continue to investigate scholarship opportunities throughout your senior year. Let your counselor and teachers know you are interested in locating scholarship money.
- Follow instructions carefully and comply with deadlines for private and public sector scholarships.
- Obtain the necessary forms your colleges require and comply with all deadlines.
- Pick up the necessary financial aid forms from the counseling office, the colleges or on the internet.
- Attend the financial aid workshop offered at Bishop García Diego High School. Check the website or the College Counseling office to confirm the date(s) and time. Explanations of the financial aid process and directions for filling out the FAFSA will be given.
- Complete and return the FAFSA as soon as possible after January 1. There is no charge to file the FAFSA.
- Complete and return the CSS Profile application if required. There is a filing fee for each college you ask to receive the CSS Profile.
- **DO NOT WAIT TO BE ACCEPTED TO A COLLEGE TO FILE ANY FINANCIAL AID FORMS!!**
- Write a letter to the financial aid offices of the colleges to offer supplementary information regarding special circumstances that may qualify you for financial aid.
- Obtain a Certificate of Mailing from the post office when mailing all forms.
- Keep copies of all paperwork.
- Inquire about tuition payment plans available at each college.
- Review the Student Aid Report (SAR) which will arrive a few weeks after you file the FAFSA. Make necessary corrections immediately.
- Carefully compare financial award letters when they arrive in the spring. Once you have decided which college to attend, notify the financial aid office of your decision to accept all, part, or none of the financial award.

FINANCIAL AID SOURCES

Scholarships

Scholarships are awarded to students based on their academic record, leadership ability, talents or need for financial assistance. Since many scholarships are specifically awarded by colleges, students should apply to the colleges directly for information and applications. Other sources of scholarship aid are your parents' employers, labor unions, civic and religious organizations, professional associations, and other private groups.

The internet has become a valuable resource for numerous scholarship searches. Be sure to take advantage of these FREE searches at various websites. **Be warned that there are many scholarship scams ready to take your money! DO NOT pay any money for a scholarship search.**

FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS

Federal Pell Grants

- Largest need-based student aid program
- Awarded to students with extreme financial need, not repayable

Federal Work-Study (FWS)

- On and off campus employment, at least minimum wage
- Awarded to students who demonstrate financial need
- Amount earned may not exceed demonstrated need

Federal Perkins Loan

- Low interest loan awarded to students with exceptional financial need
- Repayment begins nine months after graduation

Federal Stafford Loans - Subsidized

- Variable interest rate loan awarded to students who demonstrate financial need
- Federal government pays interest on loan while student is in school
- Repayment begins six months after graduation

Federal Stafford Loans - Unsubsidized

- Variable interest rate loan available to students who do not qualify for Stafford Loan
- Student responsible for pay interest during school and deferment period
- Repayment of principal and interest begins six months after graduation

Federal Parents Loans to Undergraduate Students (FPLUS)

- Variable interest rate loan available to parents for the cost of education less student aid
- Repayment begins within 60 days of loan disbursement

Hope Scholarships

- Tax credit of up to \$1500 available to taxpayers who file a tax return and owe taxes
- Students must not have completed two years of undergraduate study

Lifetime Learning Credit

- Tax credit of up to \$1000 available to eligible taxpayers who file a tax return and owe taxes
- Students must be enrolled at least half-time in an eligible program

CALIFORNIA STATE FUNDED PROGRAMS

Cal Grants A & B

- Available to students based on demonstrated financial need and qualifying GPA
- Student must file a FAFSA **and** GPA Verification form
- Student must be applying to at least one California college
- Does not need to be repaid
- Cal Grant B supplementary to Cal Grant A

FREQUENT FINANCIAL AID QUESTIONS

1. **How do I Get Financial Aid?** When you are a senior you must fill out the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**. Representatives from Cal-SOAP will visit Bishop and help you fill out this form. You can also schedule an appointment with Bishop's College Counselor who will help you in completing the FAFSA.
2. **Are there things I can be doing now to get prepared for financial aid?** Yes! Do well in high school. Many grants and scholarships are merit based (based upon grades and extra-curricular activities). Collect letters of recommendation from your teachers and counselors.
3. **What is the money I receive used for?** Financial aid includes tuition, supplies, books, room & board, and living expenses. The average cost at a four year public college is approximately \$16,000-\$24,000; the average cost for one year at a private four-year college is approximately \$25,000-\$45,000. The cost to attend a Community College is about \$10,000 a year if you do not leave at home with a parent or guardian. These figures also include books and supplies. Keep in mind these figures vary based on the location of the college or university.
4. **How does the government determine how much money I get?** The government looks at how much money your family makes, and from this, determines your family financial "need". The "need" is determined by subtracting the cost of tuition, books, and living expenses from how much money your family can give you. For example, if the cost to attend college is about \$19,000 a year and your family can only provide \$2,000 a year, then your **financial need** is \$17,000!
5. **What kinds of scholarships are there and where do I find them?** There are scholarships for left handed people, for students who will be the first person in the family to go to college, students who are of a particular ethnicity, for good grades, sports, and more! You can find scholarships on the Internet for free. Try www.fastweb.com.
6. **Should I pay to get information on financial aid?** NEVER PAY ANYONE TO FIND OUT INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL AID. It should always be for free.

ONLINE RESOURCES

College Information/Financial Aid/Scholarships

www.csumentor.edu

California State University system with student-campus matching service, financial aid calculator and info. electronic applications, campus tours, and more

www.universityofcalifornia.edu

University of California system with application, SAT preparation, campus information, majors, virtual tours and more

www.californiacolleges.com

College search, online applications, financial aid, major search of almost every college or university in California

www.petersons.com

College search, financial aid, online applications, test prep, study abroad programs, summer camps, Graduate programs, job search

www.usnews.com

College rankings, scholarship search, financial aid info

www.collegeboard.com

College search, scholarship search, test prep, career search, financial aid calculators, SAT registration, score sender, score release, test dates

www.salliemae.com

Financial aid calculators and info, federal and private loan info, link to CASHE (College Aid Sources for Higher Education), scholarship search

www.kaplan.com

College search, financial aid calculators and info, test prep, practice PSAT, SAT I/II, ACT tests, free prep software, career info

www.commonapp.org

Common college application for 190+ selective, independent colleges & universities

www.finaid.org

Financial aid info and calculators, online info about testing, college admissions, and career placement, links to fee online scholarship search programs

www.fastweb.com

Internet's largest free scholarship search database program

www.weapply.com

Princeton Review's online services site with college search, practice SAT, test prep, financial aid info, downloadable college application software

www.cashe.com

CASHE – (College Aid Sources for Higher Education) online scholarship search

www.ncaa.org

Official web site of the NCAA (Sports)

www.scholaraid.com

Scholarship search program

www.gocollege.com

College search free SAT/ACT practice test, scholarship search

www.fafsa.ed.gov

User-friendly site that lets you complete FAFSA on the web

www.embark.com

Choose the right school, apply online, take practice SAT tests, funding searches

www.SchoolsintheUSA.com

New web site designed to assist students searching for university and college study opportunities

www.review.com

Princeton Review official site, college search, applications online, SAT/ACT info

www.campustours.com

Unique source for virtual campus tours, interactive maps, college webcams, campus movies and more

www.powerprep.com

Help preparing for the SAT or ACT, interactive crossword puzzle for difficult SAT words, college links

<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cool/>

From the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education. NCES helps college students, future students, and their parents understand the differences between colleges and how much it costs to attend college.

COLLEGE APPLICATION PLANS

Worksheet

List all the colleges (and any school or program within those colleges) to which you have decided to apply:

College	Application Deadline*
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

A. Are you applying Early Action or Early Decision? _____ Where? _____

B. Please list your Safety School(s) _____

B. Please list your Realistic School(s) _____

C. Please list your Reach School(s) _____

To Do List for College Planning:

Task	Date Completed
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____
11. _____	_____
12. _____	_____
13. _____	_____
14. _____	_____
15. _____	_____
16. _____	_____
17. _____	_____
18. _____	_____
19. _____	_____
20. _____	_____

College Application Checklist

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5	College 6	College 7	College 8
Name of College								
Applications								
Request info/application								
Regular Application Deadline								
Early Application Deadline								
Safety/Realistic/Reach								
Grades								
Request h.s. transcripts to be sent								
Request midyear grade reports sent								
Test Scores								
SAT or ACT Required								
Send Test Scores								
Send AP Test Scores								
Letters of Recommendations								
Request letters								
Send thank-notes								
Essays								
Essays required								
Write Essays								
Proof essays for spelling & grammar								
Have two people read your essays								

College Application Checklist

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5	College 6	College 7	College 8
Interviews								
Interview at college								
Alumni interview								
Send thank you to interviewees								
Send and Track Your Applications								
Make copies of all applications materials								
Apply Online								
Apply via mail								
Include Application Fee								
Sign Application								
Confirm Receipt of Application materials								
Send supplemental materials if needed								
Financial Aid Forms								
Priority financial aid deadlines								
Regular financial deadlines								
Scholarships Provided								
Scholarships Submitted								
FAFSA Submitted								
Mail Institutional aid form, if needed								
Mail state aid form if needed								
After You Send Your Application								
Receive letter for admissions office								
Receive financial aid award letter								
Send deposit								



Bishop Garcia Diego High School

College and University Acceptances 2004 - 2008

RECENT BISHOP GRADUATES HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED TO LEADING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES NATIONWIDE: Boston University, Brown University, Bryn Mawr College, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Chapman University, Columbia University, Cornell University, Georgetown University, Gonzaga University, Johns Hopkins University, Loyola Marymount University, Marquette University, Mills College, Mount Saint Mary's College, New York University, Northwestern University, Occidental College, Pepperdine University, Santa Clara University, Scripps College, Stanford University, United States Naval Academy, UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, UC San Diego, UC Santa Barbara, University of Arizona, University of Colorado, University of Notre Dame, University of San Diego, University of San Francisco, University of Southern California, University of Washington, Vanderbilt University, Westmont College and more...



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