“9 Things Admission Officers Look for in an Application:

3. **Good communication skills.** One of the things admissions officers are on the lookout for is a good ability to express oneself. This is why colleges ask for a writing sample and often read very carefully the samples they do receive—whether the Common App essays, supplemental questions each college itself might ask, or the writing section of the ACT or essay of the SAT (this is why surprisingly many schools require the standardized tests “with writing”). For this reason, in composing your essays on your application you should pay special attention not only to answering the exact questions asked but also to writing in a way that is natural, careful, and well argued. Also, in case you have an oral interview or discussion with an alumnus, campus rep, or other person from the college, you should carefully answer his or her questions in an informed and responsive way.

4. **Knowledge of their institution.** One of the things admissions officers are most interested in finding out about you is how seriously you are considering their college and how well you would fit in, if accepted. And one of the main ways they have of finding out these things is to see how you respond when asked hidden—and not-so-hidden—questions about why you want to go to their college.

Specificity is king. When asked on a supplemental question something about yourself or their institution or both, be sure to offer some reason for picking their school that does not apply to every other school and that was not the single thing they said five times at the college rep visit, college night, or information session—for example, that their school has an open curriculum, that their school has a design-your-own-major program, or that their school was grade-free for the first year. They know all those things (and, in case they forgot, countless
other applicants recount them for them). Instead, find something *particular* and *specific* that makes you want to go to their school—for example, a special program or major, something about the goals or values of that school, or some career path for which the school trains you especially well. Every college wants to feel special and, more important, that you’ve taken the time to figure out why it’s special.

Some colleges are more interested in intrinsic rather than instrumental reasons for your wanting to go to their college. That is, your burning desire to study microbiology (combined with their school’s excellence in that field) is more impressive to them than your desire to use that college as a stepping-stone to med school. Think the next four years in presenting yourself, as well as the next ten.”

**Parents of 10th, 11th and 12th graders:**

The window to apply for NHS and CSF is January 7 – January 18, 2019. The application forms will be available in the College and Career Center beginning January 7. The forms are also available online at: [http://bdhsmultimedia.org/application-forms.html](http://bdhsmultimedia.org/application-forms.html).

In order to complete the CSF and NHS applications students will need a copy of their Semester One grades, which won’t be available in PCR until Christmas vacation. Please mark your calendar for the CSF and NHS application window in January. If you have questions, contact Mrs. Carpenter.

What follows is a description of NHS and CSF:

The National Honor Society (NHS) was established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to recognize students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Service, and Character. Membership in NHS requires students to maintain a cumulative, minimum GPA of 3.75. Students involved with NHS are honored at the Bishop graduation ceremony. Plus, membership may be attractive in the college admissions process.
Each semester, NHS students are required to fulfill 2 hours of Bishop Peer-Tutoring. Hours can be counted toward students’ Christian Service Hours and are to be signed-off by Ms. Anderson.

The California Scholarship Federation (CSF) emphasizes high standards of scholarship and community service for California high school students. Students in grades 10-12 with at least a 3.5 GPA are invited to complete an application and submit it with a copy of their semester report card to Ms. Gonzalez.

NHS and CSF applications are available in the College and Career Center the first week of September and January each year. They are also available online at: http://bdhsmultimedia.org/application-forms.html.

Enrichment Opportunities:

UC Davis offers the Young Scholars program, which takes place over the summer. Participants work one-on-one with research faculty in state-of-the-art laboratories for six weeks. Each student will work on an individual project and prepare a journal quality paper and symposium presentation about their work. To learn more, visit: http://ysp.ucdavis.edu

Seton Hall University offers a Sustainable Development Challenge by entering an idea that addresses a problem facing the world today. The competition is designed to encourage high school students to take part in the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which include fighting inequality, ending hunger and tackling climate change, among others.

Ten finalists will be selected in early April to present their ideas on Saturday, April 20, 2019, at Seton Hall (in person or via Skype).
Prizes

- **1st Place Winner:** $2,500 cash prize. Plus, a $10,000 scholarship to attend Seton Hall University ($2,500 annually).
- **2nd Place Winner:** $1,000 cash prize. Plus, a $6,000 scholarship to attend Seton Hall University ($1,500 annually).
- **All Other Finalists** will receive a $4,000 scholarship to attend Seton Hall University ($1,000 annually).

How to Enter

Students must submit a 300–500 word statement addressing their thoughts and ideas about how they can be part of the solution and raise awareness or effect change related to one of the UN goals.

To learn more and to submit an entry, visit [shu.edu/go/UNchallenge](http://shu.edu/go/UNchallenge).

Parents of Seniors:

If your student has a LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION deadline of:

- January 15, the last day to request a letter of rec is **December 14**.

The Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara deadline is January 15. Letter of recommendation requests for this application must be submitted to teachers/counselors no later than December 14.

Remember to order official SAT or ACT scores by the required college application deadline.

Rya Carpenter
Director of Counseling and Student Services
College Counselor
(805) 967-1266, ext. 104
rcarpenter@bishopdiego.org