

## **HIGH SCHOOL – OVERVIEW**

1. Students should focus on a rigorous academic schedule (AP, Dual Enrollment and honors courses when available) - colleges are more impressed by good grades in challenging courses vs. outstanding grades in easy courses. NOTE: Regarding Dual Enrollment – be mindful that not all DE courses will transfer to all colleges under the category taken. For instance, a student who takes the DE course: CGS 2060 – Introduction to Micro-Computers will earn .5 credit for high school and 3 college credits, BUT this course may only transfer as an elective credit to a private, more selective university. A student who takes DE course: CHM 1045 (General Chemistry) must also take CHM1045L (the lab) in order to gain college credit. But, depending upon which college the student eventually attends, this course may or may not count toward the student’s major.
2. Schedule high school classes that are college preparatory (taking 4 core classes each year and graduating from high school with at least 4 years of English; 3 years of Math; 3 years of Science; and 3 years of Social Studies/History).
3. Schedule appropriate electives - preferably additional core classes.
4. Understand “GPA recalculation” – essentially colleges want to know how well a student has performed relative to their peers. Therefore, they remove all non-academic courses from consideration (generally elective classes – P.E., music, vocational classes, health classes, art, theatre, newspaper, and debate) unless it is an AP, dual enrollment, or honors course. This means that a student’s high school GPA is generally higher than the GPA that colleges consider when reviewing an application. Admission officers calculate Grade Point Average (GPA) using only core academic courses: Math, English/Language Arts, Social Studies/History, Science, and Foreign Language.
5. Take a minimum of two years of a foreign language sequentially; three years is preferred.
6. Align AP courses with SAT Subject testing (as early as 9th grade).
7. Prepare and take the PSAT in 9th, 10th and 11th grades (11th grade is National Merit).
8. Contemplate upcoming SAT and/or ACT exams and beginning to prepare via preparatory classes as early as 9th grade.
9. Participating in extra-curricular activities will lead to participating in similar activities during college.
10. Participate in outside extra-curricular activities: volunteering/community services and/or working/internships. To qualify for a Bright Futures scholarship, a student will need a minimum of 75 community-service hours documented on their high school transcript.
11. Create files to keep report cards, awards, and honors.

12. Begin to create a resume to keep track of school and community activities including dates and descriptions.
13. Use your summer months productively: read and read some more; begin to consider college choices and possibly visit colleges; attend a pre-college program (academic enrichment program); work; volunteer.
14. Attend college fairs!
15. Demonstrate enthusiasm: attend a campus visit/information session; complete data cards at college fairs; answer emails; visit college websites and complete prospective student questionnaires to receive college view books/brochures. You are being tracked!
16. Become familiar with financial aid terms: FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program, CSS Profile (via the College Board).
17. Understand NCAA (National College Athletic Association – NCAA.org) eligibility rules (including academic standards, amateurism certification, waivers, and recruiting).
18. Begin to research outside scholarships as well as in-house scholarships. Many require essays as well as extensive community service.
19. Become familiar with websites that offer virtual college tours: [www.unigo.com](http://www.unigo.com) and [www.youniversitytv.com](http://www.youniversitytv.com), to name a few.