



**SETON CATHOLIC  
PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL**

**College Planning Handbook  
2010-2011**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><i>Preface</i></b> _____	<b>3</b>
<b><i>Introduction</i></b> _____	<b>4</b>
<b><i>General Overview</i></b> _____	<b>5</b>
<b><i>How to Compare Colleges</i></b> _____	<b>6-9</b>
<b><i>Timeline for University Admissions</i></b> _____	<b>10-14</b>
<b><i>College Admissions Vocabulary</i></b> _____	<b>15-16</b>
<b><i>Internet Sites</i></b> _____	<b>17</b>
<b><i>Application Protocol</i></b> _____	<b>18</b>
<b><i>Test Dates</i></b> _____	<b>19</b>
<b><i>Recommended Books</i></b> _____	<b>20-21</b>

## ***Preface***

The following pages were written for the students and parents of Seton Catholic Preparatory High School. They are intended to minimize the confusion created by the college selection process. We have tried to answer many of the questions that surface each year. This information is not meant to be inclusive, and some of the generalizations may not apply to each college or situation. However, these statements are based on personal experience, as well as substantiated and published data. If one follows the steps outlined in the following pages, the perceived anxiety and confusion involved in the long and emotional process of college admissions may be minimized.

Above all, the key to successful placement rests on good communication between the four parties involved: the student, the parents, the college, and the school. If you are ever in doubt, please feel free to contact your student's counselor.

Counseling Office  
Seton Catholic Preparatory High School

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Extension</u></b>	<b><u>Email Address</u></b>
Jerry Mullin	480-963-1900 Ext. 2025	<a href="mailto:Jmullin@setonchs.org">Jmullin@setonchs.org</a>
Leah Kochis	480-963-1900 Ext. 2026	<a href="mailto:Lkochis@setonchs.org">Lkochis@setonchs.org</a>
Nan Hillebrand	480-963-1900 Ext. 3009	<a href="mailto:Nhillebrand@setonchs.org">Nhillebrand@setonchs.org</a>
Pamela Hollerbach	480-963-1900 Ext. 2024	<a href="mailto:Phollerbach@setonchs.org">Phollerbach@setonchs.org</a>

Please do not hesitate to contact us, as we are here to serve you.

Regards,

Jerry Mullin  
Department Chair  
Seton Catholic Preparatory High School

## ***Introduction***

The goal of the Seton Catholic Preparatory High School college counseling program is to help you understand the college admissions process, to evaluate accurately your own achievements and aspirations, to gather information about specific college choices, and to make informed college choices.

The process of identifying, researching, and applying to colleges represents one of the most significant aspects of a student's education at Seton. It is incumbent on students to play the lead role throughout the process. If a student is ready to go to college and live an independent life, he should probably be ready to assume the responsibility of meeting the appropriate deadlines, making appointments, and completing his own applications. College admissions officers are interested in the students and not in how well mom, dad, or a parent's secretary types or handles the telephone. The final responsibility in this process rests in the hands of the student.

## *A General Overview*

Reduced to its most fundamental form, the following outline describes the college selection process. Understanding the basic overall structure, or big picture, should help students better navigate the many details of the research and application process.

### Choosing Your Colleges

1. "Know thyself!" The process begins with you. What are you really like?
2. Decide what you want and don't want in a college.
3. Find out which colleges meet YOUR criteria.
4. Determine if you meet THEIR criteria.
5. Create a sensible list reflecting an appropriate range of colleges.
6. Determine with your counselor if an "early application" is for you.

### Applying to the College You Have Chosen

1. Know which standardized tests each college requires, register for them on time, and request that your scores be sent to each one.
2. Obtain application forms early in the fall of the student's senior year.
3. Submit the Secondary School Report from the application to your counselor.
4. Fill out the application and file it as soon as possible.
5. Give teacher recommendation forms to your teachers in September.

### Understanding How Colleges Make Their Decisions

1. Can you cope with their academic demands?
2. Have you demonstrated personality and character traits that they find desirable?
3. Do you have interests and nonacademic skills that will enrich the life of their community?

## *How to Compare Colleges*

In order to pick the college, you must know as much as possible about that institution. First, determine your criteria for the perfect college and then examine the colleges to find those that most closely match your needs. An organized approach based on the following is often the most successful:

### Student Enrollment

- Enrollment: Total number; percentage of undergraduate students; freshman class size
- Retention: percentage of freshmen who eventually graduate
- Background: Male/female ratio; percentage commuter/resident; geographic distribution; percentage minority; percentage receiving financial aid

### Location & Surroundings

- Location: Geographic region; distance from home; travel costs and convenience
- Setting: Urban/rural; weather; nearest city or countryside; recreational opportunities
- Facilities: Library; laboratories; study and practice rooms; athletic; student center

### College Type & Philosophy

- Type: 2 or 4 year; church/state/private control; college/university
- Purpose: Liberal arts; pre-professional (business, education, engineering, fine arts, etc...); technical or vocational; degrees offered
- Philosophy: Traditional/progressive; deeply scholarly/career oriented; comprehensive
- Calendar: Semester/trimester/quarter/module; interterm program; acceleration

### Curriculum

- Academic Requirements: Portion of study to general education/concentration/student choice; required freshman courses; curriculum distribution requirements in curricular areas/elective curriculum

Academic Offerings:	Majors offered in your areas of interest; breadth and depth of courses offered in your areas of interest; interdisciplinary courses and majors; strong departments
Independent Study:	Individual tutorials; seminars; research opportunities
Special Study Programs:	Fieldwork; internships; exchange programs; foreign study; joint degree programs; cooperative work/study plan; pre-professional programs
Standards:	Accreditation; degree requirements; grading systems; grading distribution; honor system
Course Descriptions:	Sequential/open order; introductory/advanced/specialized courses; courses for majors/non-majors; courses required for major

### Admissions

Deadlines:	Application; notification of decision; reply to offer of admission
Application Requirements:	Fee; information form; specific high school courses; transcript; secondary school report; recommendations; interview; other
Tests Required:	SAT I & II, ACT (specific SAT II tests)
Admissions Selectivity:	Percentage of applicants offered admission; average SAT/ACT scores of freshman; freshman ranked in top 10% of high school class; freshman class profile

### Academic Environment

Faculty:	Percentage with PhD's; origin of degrees earned; original faculty research/scholarship; teaching course load; expectation for teaching/scholarship/advising and other college service; emphasis on undergraduate teaching and learning
Faculty-Student Relationships:	Faculty-student ratio; advising; accessibility with student representatives; average class size; opportunities for discussion/student presentation/exchange of ideas

Academic Demands:	Workload; course expectations; type of assignments; academic pressure/competition
Intellectual Vitality:	Student attitude toward learning; flexibility/structure for study; exchange of ideas; interest in political, social or world issues
Career Preparation:	Pre-professional program; career advising and program information; percentage who go on to graduate school; graduate school and job placement

### Campus & Student Life

Types of Students:	Diversity and tolerance of differences; typical/off-beat student; importance of money/material possessions/social position
Community Type:	Homogeneous/pluralistic/cohesive/fragmented; school spirit; controversial campus issues; liberal/directive/restrictive social regulations
Living Arrangements:	Predominantly large dorm/ housing clusters/small houses; availability of single rooms/doubles/suites/multiple rooms; system of housing allocation/room selection; centralized/decentralized dining; alternative meal program
Campus Activities:	Activities related to your interests; emphasis on social life, fraternities, sports or other dominating interests; clubs and organizations traditional/creative/competitive issue-oriented; presence of religious, ethnic or cultural groups; cultural opportunities on campus or in community; focus of social life on campus/fraternities/community/other college campus/home

### Costs & Financial Aid

Costs:	Minimum-maximum total costs per year; student budget for tuition and fees/room & board/books & personal expenses/travel costs; admission and enrollment fees
Family Resources:	What the family can pay toward college expenses; earnings and savings in student's name

Awards: Percentage of students receiving aid; range of awards; average award

Financial Aid: Based on need/merit/or funds available; loan & job expectations

Application: FAFSA, CSS Profile, state, college form required; deadlines

## *Time Line for University Admissions*

### *Junior Year Timetable*

#### **January and February:**

After receiving the results of the PSAT test, students should take time to review their answers with the test booklet. This is a wonderful SAT test preparation session as the PSAT delineates all of the correct answers for you as well as the answers that you chose. If the SAT scores predicted by the PSAT fall below expectation, create a plan to bring the scores up and include colleges that fall within the range of PSAT scores in your university search.

**My College QuickStart** is an easy-to-use, online, personalized college and career planning kit available to Seton Catholic students through the College Board. This useful tool incorporates student responses that were provided when they took the test, and it presents their data back to them in four main parts:

- **My Online Score Report**—an enhanced score report that allows students to review each test question, the student’s answer, and the correct answer with answer explanations
- **My SAT Study Plan**—a customized SAT study plan based on student PSAT/NMSQT test performance, highlighting skills for review and practice
- **My College Matches**—a starter list of colleges based on the student’s state and indicated choice of major
- **My Major & Career Matches**—major and career matches that are compatible with the student’s general interests and personality type

To sign in, students need:

- The access code printed on the upper right corner of their PSAT/NMSQT score report
- A College Board student account. Students who do not already have a College Board account will be prompted to create one. It typically takes less than two minutes to create a free account.

-Register for either the ACT ([www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org)) or the SAT ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)) online for the spring.

-For those students who may apply to private universities, register for the SAT II for the spring ([www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)), if applicable. Remember to save your registration identification information. Juniors usually take the science, foreign language, and U.S. history SAT II and take the math and other SAT II in senior year.

-Visit college campuses when on vacation. Try to get a sense of the type of campus characteristics that interest you: urban campus, suburban, rural, large or small, etc...

-Concentrate on grades, since 75% of admission decisions are based on the transcript (the courses you take and the grades earned).

-Meet with your counselor to discuss courses for next year: honors or AP courses for next year, another year of science or foreign language.

-Think about your summer plans and possibly consider a summer workshop at a college or university.

### **March through May:**

-Continue to use the My College QuickStart website for college searches and add to your prospective colleges on the My College QuickStart site.

-Apply for summer programs.

-Take the SAT I and SAT II.

-Visit college campuses.

-Add schools to your list of prospects in three categories: reach schools, 50-50 choices, and guarantees.

-Consider visiting college campuses during the break.

-Plan senior year courses to support your applications to colleges.

-Complete your Personal Profile and give a copy to your counselor.

-Consider the course of studies and major that you will pursue in college.

-Meet with your counselor in order to share your prospective college list and possibly receive suggestions for alternate schools that meet your profile.

-Register for a summer SAT test prep program if you plan to take one.

### **May through August:**

-Visit college campuses.

-Modify your college list and begin to narrow down your list. Record your choices on the My College QuickStart website.

-If you are a prospective National Merit Semifinalist, sign up for the first administration of the SAT I in the fall.

-Research scholarship opportunities through My College QuickStart and [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)

-Students who wish to play a Division 1 or Division 2 sport in college need to register in May with the NCAA Clearinghouse, request a Seton Catholic Preparatory High School transcript be sent to the NCAA Clearinghouse, and request that ACT or SAT scores be sent from the testing organization to the NCAA Clearinghouse. The clearinghouse code is 9999.

(<https://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net/NCAA/common/index.htm>)

### ***Senior Year Timetable***

#### **August through October:**

-Register for fall SAT I or ACT test administration and remember to plan it around activities or sporting events. Students applying to in-state universities may not need to retake the SAT or ACT if junior year scores were high enough.

-Submit your updated personal profile to your counselor and meet in person to discuss your transcript and college choices.

-If needed, register for the fall administration of the SAT II.

-Create a list of application deadlines.

-Read up on the colleges that you are interested in and develop a list of intelligent questions to ask college representatives when they visit.

-Contact teachers whom you will ask to write recommendations. Give them a copy of your personal profile, an addressed envelope to each university, and two weeks time to write the recommendations.

-Research scholarship opportunities through My College QuickStart and [www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com).

-Apply online to ASU, and/or UA, and/or NAU by Oct 1<sup>st</sup>. Fill out a transcript request form in the Counseling Office and have your transcript sent to the schools ***AFTER*** you apply.

-Be sure to meet the college representatives from your list of schools when they visit Seton. Have questions prepared for the visit.

-Attend the Xavier College Fair, Brophy College Fair, or the Phoenix College Fair in September or October (be sure to check dates).

**November:**

-Deadline for Early Admission and Early Decision candidates (dates may vary).

-Deadline for students applying to University of California schools.

-Finalize college essays.

**December through January:**

-Remember to give teachers and counselors two weeks to process your application and/or recommendation.

-Submit all applications with a January 1<sup>st</sup> deadline to the counselor by December 5<sup>th</sup>.

-Request transcripts **AFTER** you mail your application.

-Important! Many colleges require a mid-year report (grades in January). After the Christmas holiday, bring those mid-year report forms to your counselor. Please be sure to fill out the top part of the form with your name, etc... For the Common Application Forms, please also include a list of the schools where the form should be mailed.

-Remember: College admission acceptances are conditional based on grades. You should earn the same grades in second semester (or better) as you did in the first semester because a college reserves the right to rescind an admission if a student's grades drop.

-Begin to access FAFSA forms for financial aid. <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

**February through May:**

-Submit FAFSA forms with data no later than February.

-Continue to keep your grades up.

-Universities will notify students of acceptances through April 15<sup>th</sup>.

-Notify schools by May 1<sup>st</sup> of your intent to attend and pay deposit.

-Inform your counselor about each admission and financial aid award. You may want to bring in a copy of your award letter.

-Notify Mrs. Rich in the counseling office of your final college choice by early May so final transcripts can be sent.

-For athletes, request for a final transcript to be sent to the NCAA Clearinghouse.

-Register to attend on-campus orientation/registration programs that will occur over the summer.

-Thank your teachers, parents, and counselor for their support.

## ***COLLEGE ADMISSION VOCABULARY***

***Common Application*** allows you to apply to multiple schools using one application form. A listing of the schools that will accept the Common Application may be found at [www.commonapp.org](http://www.commonapp.org)

***Early Action*** is used primarily at highly selective colleges. Under Early Action, you follow an accelerated application process and apply by early November. You are notified of a decision by mid-December, but if accepted, you do not have to let the institution know of your decision until May.

***Early Decision*** is an admission plan offered to well-qualified applicants who are definitely committed to their choice of college. Applicants will be notified of their acceptance by December. **Acceptance under Early Decision requires you to withdraw applications to all other colleges and your acceptance is binding.**

***Open Admission*** is the policy of accepting students without regard to rank, GPA, and test scores.

***Regular Admission*** is the application process that requires application materials to be submitted no later than the specified deadline printed in the college catalog or application form. Admission responses are usually received from March 15<sup>th</sup> to April 15<sup>th</sup>.

***Rolling Admission*** is the admission plan in which a completed application is acted on as soon as it is received. Students are admitted on a continuing basis.

### **Additional Abbreviations**

***CEEB Number*** is a code that each high school uses for tracking by the College Board, ACT, or university. The CEEB Code Number for Seton is 030047.

***FAFSA*** is the Free Application for Federal Student Aid. It is one form used for the financial aid process. Applications are usually available from [www.fafsa.ed.gov/](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/) by mid-December. This form cannot be filled out until after January 1<sup>st</sup>. It requires income tax information from the previous year.

***CSS PROFILE*** is the financial aid form required by some colleges as supplemental information to the FAFSA. You must determine by reading the college financial aid materials if the CSS PROFILE is required by the university (usually used by private universities rather than public).

***Wait List*** is the term used by selective colleges that do not initially offer or deny you admission, but extend the possibility of admission to a later date (usually late May through July 1<sup>st</sup>). You must make a deposit at another college prior to May 1<sup>st</sup> to insure

that you have a place at another college. It is best to discuss all wait list situations with your counselor. Second semester grades can be critical to your acceptance.

***Candidate Reply Date:*** **May 1<sup>st</sup>** is the national deadline by which all admitted students must inform colleges of their intention to enroll or not enroll. A non-refundable deposit is due by this date. This is a final deadline unless a college admissions officer has granted you an extension. In addition to notifying the school you will attend of your intentions, you are also obligated to notify all other schools to which you have been accepted of your plan not to attend. Sending a deposit to more than one college is not ethical and may jeopardize your acceptances at each of the colleges involved.

## *Internet Sites*

My College QuickStart. This interactive tool will allow parents and students to create a personal database, complete college searches, and view specific college admission data from former Seton students at specific universities. Students need an initial sign in code from their counselor to access their account.

[www.collegeview.com](http://www.collegeview.com)  
[www.ulins.com](http://www.ulins.com)  
[www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)  
[www.petersons.com/ugrad](http://www.petersons.com/ugrad)  
[www.colleges.com](http://www.colleges.com)  
[www.campustours.com](http://www.campustours.com)  
[www.ope.ed.gov/security](http://www.ope.ed.gov/security)  
[www.collegeispossible.com](http://www.collegeispossible.com)  
[www.mapping-your-future.org](http://www.mapping-your-future.org)

student college preference match  
specific college search  
link to online college fairs  
Peterson's college data base  
college and scholarship search  
virtual tours of college campuses  
campus security information  
college admission and financial aid  
college admission information

[www.asu.edu](http://www.asu.edu)  
[www.nau.edu](http://www.nau.edu)  
[www.arizona.edu](http://www.arizona.edu)  
[www.maricopa.edu](http://www.maricopa.edu)

Arizona State University  
Northern Arizona University  
University of Arizona  
Community Colleges in Maricopa County

[www.wiredscholar.com](http://www.wiredscholar.com)  
[www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)  
[www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)  
[www.gocollege.com](http://www.gocollege.com)  
[www.finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)  
[www.edfund.org](http://www.edfund.org)  
[www.salliemae.com](http://www.salliemae.com)  
[www.nasfaa.org](http://www.nasfaa.org)  
[www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)  
[www.pricetionreview.com](http://www.pricetionreview.com)  
[www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
[www.act.org](http://www.act.org)  
[www.kaplan.com](http://www.kaplan.com)  
[www.studyworks.com](http://www.studyworks.com)  
[www.ncaa.org](http://www.ncaa.org)  
[www.ncaaclearinghouse.net](http://www.ncaaclearinghouse.net)

step-by-step approach to financing  
more than 400,000 scholarships  
FAFSA application and pin numbers  
scholarship and college searches  
financial aid loans and grant information  
financial aid and tax benefits  
financial planning  
college savings tips  
federal financial aid programs  
test prep and study tips  
website for SAT and SAT-II tests  
website for ACT testing  
test prep and study tips  
test prep  
information for prospective college athletes  
Link to the NCAA clearinghouse for athletes

## *Application Protocol*

### **Teacher Recommendation:**

- Ask the teacher in person if he/she would write a letter on your behalf.
- Give the teacher two business weeks to write the letter.
- Give the teacher a stamped, addressed envelope.
- Provide a copy of your personal profile.
- Complete a Teacher Recommendation Form with personal information (name and address) filled in at the top as well as "waiver statement."
- Put a yellow "sticky" label on each form with the college name and due date.
- In one week, visit the teacher in order to see how the recommendation is coming along. If done, thank the teacher.
- If not completed, visit the teacher again after two weeks.
- Be sure to visit the teacher when you receive admission information and share the good news regarding admission, wait-lists, or denials. They write for you and have a stake in the process as well.

<p>Teacher Name Seton Catholic Preparatory High School 1150 North Dobson Road Chandler, AZ 85224</p>	<p>University Name Undergraduate Admissions Street Address City, State, Zip Code</p>
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### **Counselor Recommendation:**

- Update My College QuickStart with the schools where you are applying.
- Give your counselor the completed personal profile.
- Approach your counselor after you complete your application.
- Give the counselor at **least two business weeks** to process the forms.
  - Follow up in a week and see how it is coming.
  - Be sure to visit your counselor when you receive admission information and share the good news regarding admission, wait-lists, or denials. They write for you and have a stake in the process as well.
- Request **official transcripts** to be sent to all schools ***after*** your application is completed and sent to the university.

# SAT 2011-2012

2011-12 Test Dates	Test	U.S. Registration Deadlines	
		Regular	Late (a fee applies)
October 1, 2011	SAT & Subject Tests	September 9, 2011	September 21, 2011
November 5, 2011	SAT & Subject Tests	October 7, 2011	October 21, 2011
December 3, 2011	SAT & Subject Tests	November 8, 2011	November 20, 2011
January 28, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	December 30, 2011	January 13, 2012
March 10, 2012	SAT only	February 10, 2012	February 24, 2012
May 5, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	April 6, 2012	April 20, 2012
June 2, 2012	SAT & Subject Tests	May 8, 2012	May 22, 2012

# ACT 2011-2012

## Test Dates in the U.S., U.S. Territories, and Canada

Test Date	Registration Deadline	(Late Fee Required)
September 10, 2011	August 12, 2011	August 13 – 26, 2011
October 22, 2011	September 16, 2011	September 17 – 30, 2011
December 10, 2011	November 4, 2011	November 5 – 18, 2011
February 11, 2012*	January 13, 2012	January 14 – 20, 2012
April 14, 2012	March 9, 2012	March 10 – 23, 2012
June 9, 2012	May 4, 2012	May 5 – 18, 2012

## ***Books on College Transition for Students and Parents***

### ***Recommended reading materials***

Ahmad, Shaheena. The Yale Daily News Guide to Succeeding in College. New York: Kaplan Books, 1997.

Arrington, Zach. Confessions of a College Freshman. Tulsa, Oklahoma: River Oak Publishing, 2001.

Barkin, Carol. When Your Kid Goes to College: A Parents' Survival Guide. New York: Avon Books, 1999. After author's son went off to college, she interviewed parents around the country to get their perspectives.

Bickle, Bruce and Stan Jantz. Real Life Begins After High School. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Servant Publications, 2000.

Brody, Janis. Bringing Home the Laundry: Effective Parenting for College and Beyond. Dallas: Taylor Publishing Co., 2000.

Coburn, Karen Levin and Madge Lawrence Treeger. Letting Go: A Parents' Guide to Understanding the College Years. New York: Harper Collins, 4th Ed. Co-authored by a College Dean and a psychotherapist.

Cohen, Harlan. The Naked Roommate: And 107 Other Issues You Might Run Into in College. Naperville: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2005

Combs, Patrick. Major in Success: Make College Easier, Fire up Your Dreams, and Get a Very Cool Job. Berkley, California: Ten Speed Press, 2000.

Dobkin, Rachel and Shana Sippy. The College Woman's Handbook. New York: Workman Publishing, 1995.

Gibbs, George. Campus Daze.

Grayson, Paul A. and Philip W. Meilman. Beating the College Blues. New York: Check Mark Books, 1999.

Hanson, Jennifer. The Real Freshman Handbook. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1996.

Johnson, Helen E., Christine Schelhas-Miller. Don't Tell Me What to Do, Just Send Money: The Essential Parenting Guide to the College Years. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000.

Jones, Connie. She's Leaving Home. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2002.

Jones, Marilee and Ginsburg, Kenneth. Less Stress, More Success: A New Approach to Guiding Your Teen Through College Admissions and Beyond. By an admissions director at MIT and a pediatrician.

Kastner, Laura and Wyatt, Jennifer. The Launching Years.

Latzko, Marian B. I Can Do It! A Micropedia of Living on Your Own. Appleton, Wisconsin: MICROLIFE, 1996.

Light, Richard J. Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

Litt, Ann Selkowitz. Eating Well on Campus. Bethesda, Maryland: Tulip Hill Press, 2000.

O'Callaghan, Karin R. Money Management for College Students. Hollywood, Florida: Frederick Fell Publishers, Inc., 2002.

Pasick, Patricia. Almost Grown: Launching Your Child from High School to College. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1998.

Rich, Jason. The Everything College Survival Book. Holbrook: Adams Media Corp., 1997.

Rollins, C.E. 52 Ways to Get Along With Your College Roommate. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1994.

Rowh, Mark. Coping with Stress in College. New York: College Board Publications, 1989.

Rubenstein, Sally and Dalby, Sidonia Panicked Parents Guide to College Admissions. (Chapter 1) Peterson's 2002.

Savage, Marjorie. You're On Your Own (but I'm here if you need me): Mentoring Your Child During the College Years

Seaman, Barrett. What Your College Student Won't Tell You.

Smith, M.J., Smith and Fred Smith. The Smart Student's Guide to Healthy Living. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2006.

Steenhouse, Andrea Van. Empty Nest...Full Heart: Journey from Home to College. Denver: Simpler Life Press, 1998. Practical advice from a mom/PhD Psychologist.

Woodacre, Margo Bane and Steffany Bane. I'll Miss You Too. Naperville: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2005.