

# Mercy High School



Class of 2023  
Junior College Kick-Off

# Mercy Counseling Staff and Roster

Mrs. Holly Bennetts, 10th - 12th grade, A-G

Mrs. Arpna Hessler, 10th - 12th grade, H-O

Mrs. Kristen Casey, 10th-12th grade, P-Z

Mrs. Trish Brown, 9th grade, Department Chair

Ms. Tosha Willis, Counseling Support Specialist

# Agenda

- State of College Admissions
- How Colleges Make Decisions
- Deciding where to apply/enroll
- The Mercy Process
- Resources
- Questions

# Mercy Philosophy

## Our Belief...

The college adventure should be an exciting time for every family

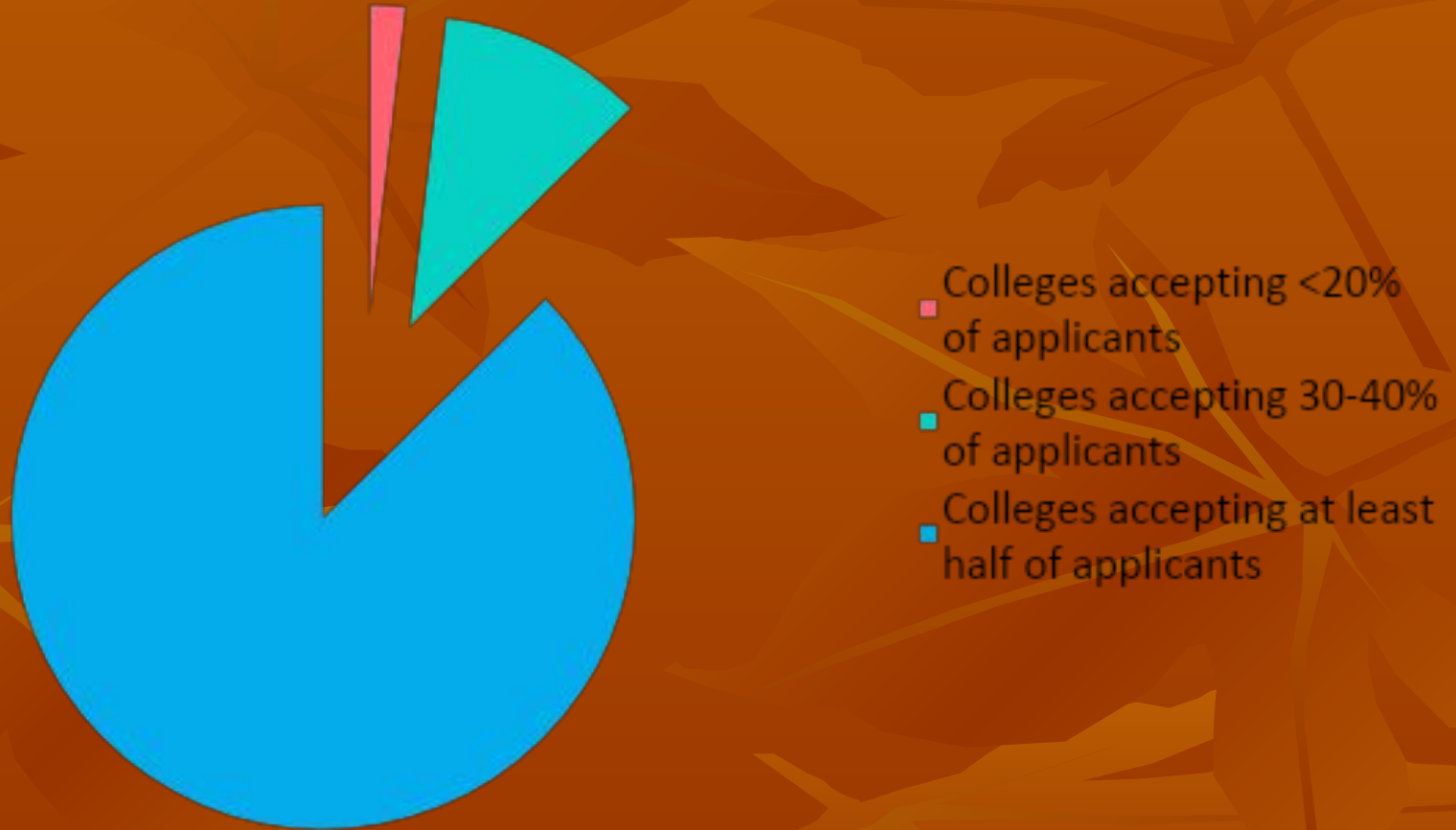
## Our Approach...

Finding right fit and encouraging student ownership of the college search and application process



**STATE OF COLLEGE  
ADMISSIONS/HOW COLLEGES  
MAKE DECISIONS**

# State of College Admissions



# State of College Admissions

## **The Good:**

80% of colleges accept more than half their applicants

Over half accept more than two-thirds of their applicants

## **The Bad:**

Roughly 40 highly selective schools accept less than 20% of their applicants

## **Takeaways:**

- Create a balanced college list
- Great college experiences happen everywhere

# Factors in the College Admissions Process

What do colleges consider?

- Grades/Transcript
- Strength of Curriculum
- Test scores\*\*\*
- Activities
- Essays



# Importance of Various Factors in the College Admission Process

Factor	N	Considerable Importance	Moderate Importance	Limited Importance	No Importance
Grades in All Courses	220	74.5	15.0	5.5	5.0
Grades in College Prep Courses	220	73.2	16.8	5.9	4.1
Strength of Curriculum	219	62.1	21.9	8.7	7.3
Admission Test Scores (SAT, ACT)	221	45.7	37.1	12.2	5.0
Essay or Writing Sample	220	23.2	33.2	24.1	19.5
Student's Demonstrated Interest	218	16.1	23.9	28.0	32.1
Counselor Recommendation	218	15.1	40.4	26.6	17.9
Teacher Recommendation	219	14.2	40.2	26.5	19.2
Class Rank	220	9.1	29.1	34.1	27.7
Extracurricular Activities	219	6.4	42.9	32.0	18.7
Portfolio	219	6.4	11.9	26.9	54.8
Subject Test Scores (AP, IB)	219	5.5	18.3	35.2	41.1
Interview	219	5.5	16.4	28.3	49.8
Work	217	4.1	28.6	36.9	30.4
State Graduation Exam Scores	218	2.3	8.7	18.8	70.2
SAT II Scores	216	1.9	5.6	14.8	77.8

SOURCE: NACAC Admission Trends Survey, 2018–19.

# Strength of Curriculum

Core Classes/College Prep	Non-Core Classes
Math	PE
English	Art
Science	Music
World Language	Religion*
History	Computer Science *
Religion*	NCAA Non-Approved Courses

# Transcript

The transcript is used to help an admissions office understand how the student arrived at their GPA.

- Courses taken and individual grades earned
- Patterns in course selection (rigor)
- Trend in grades

Colleges want to know how prepared is the student to be successful at their institution. The more selective the college, the more important the strength of the transcript becomes.



# STANDARDIZED TESTS

# Standardized Testing

Our current reality:

- Impact of Covid-19 on testing as a factor of admission
  - Some colleges reported test-optional through 2022
  - Colleges that adopted a COVID test optional policy will update websites as we move into the spring.
- Applicants need to visit each college's website to learn about that school's testing requirements - which may change

# Which Test is Best - ACT or SAT?

- Based on what we know now, we recommend students plan that they will need to test
  - Some schools may require testing and others may adopt a test-optional policy
- Most students will still perform better on the ACT
- Colleges want the test the student performs best on

# When Should a Student Test?

- Begin taking 2nd semester of 11th grade
- Multiple attempts of the ACT and/or SAT may be recommended
- Eligibility for Michigan Competitive Scholarship:
  - Demonstrated financial need (FAFSA) & 1200+ on the SAT
- Fairtest.org
  - List of 1,500 or so test-optional and test-free colleges

# Test Registration and Reporting

- Students/Parents register for the tests through test websites ([act.org](http://act.org)- ACT, [collegeboard.org](http://collegeboard.org)- SAT)
- Always release your scores to Mercy High School (231-005)
- Realize that you may be bombarded with mail after you take a test
- Recommend you do not release scores on test day because of test-optional admissions



# Test Prep

Mercy Classes offered through College Quest MI

December test prep -registration information via email to students, in Good News and Messenger

April Test prep - Registration in the Spring

# Essays

1. The Essay has job to do:
  - Humanize the application
  - Hear your student's voice and personality
2. Many colleges don't need an essay
3. Some schools have supplemental essays
  - Why this school, this program, etc.
4. Your essays should sound like your student.
5. Take the pressure off this piece.

# Activities

- Activities show commitment to something in your life.
- Should be used to demonstrate what you like to do in your free time.
- College is about academics - the activities show that you will be involved in something outside the classroom.

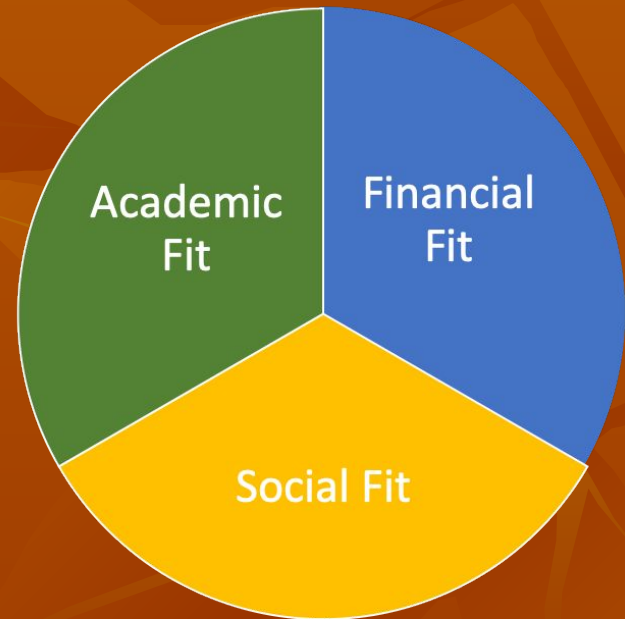
The background of the slide features a pattern of stylized autumn leaves in various shades of brown and orange, set against a darker brown background. The leaves are scattered across the frame, with some showing detailed vein patterns.

# **DECIDING WHERE TO APPLY/ENROLL**

# Choosing the Right Fit School

Is it the right ACADEMIC fit?

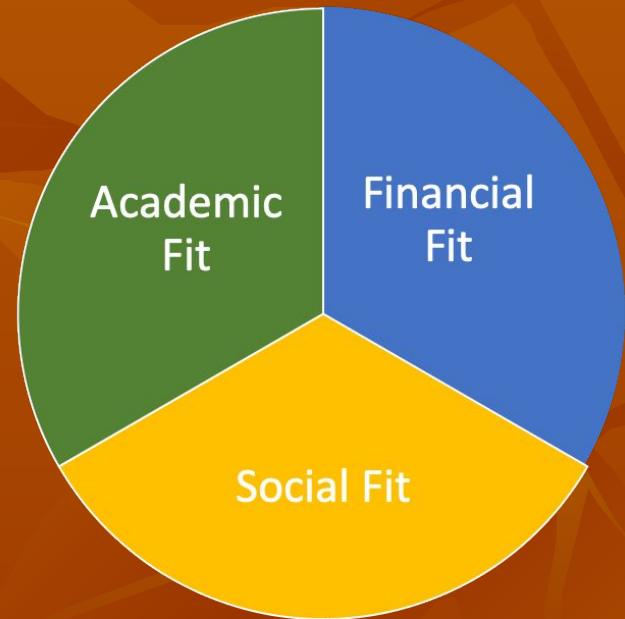
- Does it have your programs?
- Will you be challenged academically?
- Opportunities in the classroom? (research, study abroad, etc.)
- Student to teacher ratio
- Class size
- Are most of the classes taught by professors or TAs?
- Will it academically prepare you for a career you want?



# Choosing the Right Fit School

Is it the right FINANCIAL fit?

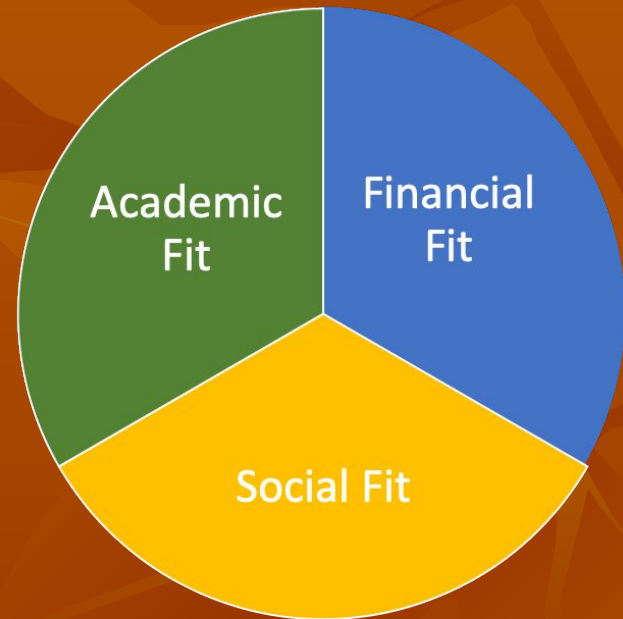
- Do you have the right aid and scholarship package that works for your family
- Are there ways to decrease tuition through opportunities?
- What will it cost year #1 compared to year #4?
- This is an investment, but think about investment vs debt.
- Different tuition programs?



# Choosing the Right Fit School

Is it the right SOCIAL fit?

- School Size?
- What % of students live on campus? commute?
- What do students do when they are not in class?
- What do students do on the weekends?
- Does the campus have Greek Life?
- Is there diversity on campus?
- How is the food?
- What clubs are popular?



# Campus Visits

- Visits are happening virtually and in-person at “some” schools
- Make it Official
  - Contact the Admission Office/sign-up online
- Do you see yourself as a student?
- Sit in or peek in a class
  - Big, personal, lecture, interactive, technology
  - Would you want to be in that class?
- Residences Halls and Cafeteria
  - Eat lunch, see a couple of rooms
  - Are the facilities outdated?
  - Could you see yourself living and eating here?
- Talk to people outside of Admissions
- A way to show demonstrated interest in a school
- Can't visit in person - visit virtually at [youvisit.com](http://youvisit.com) or SCOIR



# Must Know Information

- Student graduation rates
- Retention 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- Internship opportunities
- Job Placement
- Graduate School Placement (including Med, Law, etc)
- Programs for undecided students
- Ability to change major
- Average Financial Aid/Merit Package

The background of the slide is a solid, warm orange-brown color. Overlaid on this background is a pattern of stylized, overlapping leaf shapes. The leaves are rendered in a slightly darker shade of the background color, creating a subtle, textured effect. The leaves vary in size and orientation, some pointing upwards and others downwards, giving the impression of a dense, natural arrangement.

# MERCY PROCESS

# SCOIR

SCOIR /score/

*Irish Gaelic Verb: to exit, retire, or transition from one phase to another.*

- College Planning Program
  - College Search
  - College Lookup
  - Virtual College Visits via YouVisit
  - Statistical & Historical Data
  - Career Planning - YouScience Assessment
  - Application Management System for Counselors

# Junior Family College Planning Meeting

- Occur November - February
  - Schedule through PTC Fast
  - Email sent in early November
- To Prepare for Meeting:
  - Students complete College Survey on SCOIR
  - Parents complete College Survey/Brag Sheet on SCOIR

# Future Programming

- Course selection geared toward college list
- Essay writing assistance
- Meetings at student request (as needed)
- Presentation/May 2022 - (for rising seniors) to help them organize & prepare for applying
- Presentation/August 2022 - (for seniors) application nuts & bolts & the Mercy process
- Individual student check-in meeting in September of senior year
- Senior parent meeting

# Independent Educational Consultants

Mercy counselors are skilled and prepared to help your Marlin navigate the college journey.

Does my family need one....

**No**

# Independent Educational Consultants

Why might you want to hire?

- IEC's are able to work one on one on the students/families schedule.
- A third party not related to student or school to manage process.

# Questions to ask an IEC

- How do you learn about Mercy?
  - How classes are scheduled, when AP/Honor is available?
- What is your experience?
- Are you a member of HECA or IECA (associations for Independent Educational Consultants)
- Are you a member of MACAC or NACAC (associations for college, high school and access admission professionals)





# RESOURCES

# Financial Aid and Scholarships

- FAFSA after October 1 of senior year
- CSS Profile (if required) after October 1 of senior year
- Students should build scholarship applications into the college application process
- Create a Going Merry account
  - Think Common App for scholarships
- Visit [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com) to get estimates of need based aid & merit aid for the schools you are looking at

# Resources you should use!

- Accreditation
- College Navigator - National Center for Education Statistics
- LinkedIn
- Big Futures - College Board
- [www.collegedata.com](http://www.collegedata.com)
- NACAC- [www.nacacnet.org](http://www.nacacnet.org)
- Common Data set for schools (google Common data set University of XYZ)

# Resources you should use with caution!

- College Confidential
- Most ranking agencies (even the popular ones like US News & World Report)
- College Prowler
- Grapevine (I heard....)

# More on Accreditation

- Accreditation vs. Ranking
- Fine, Visual and Performing Arts  
<https://www.arts-accredit.org/>
- Engineering and Tech – ABET  
<http://www.abet.org/accreditation/>
- Business School – AACSB [www.aacsb.edu](http://www.aacsb.edu)
  - 716 schools in 48 countries (including United States)

# What you can do...

- Take a deep breath
- Support your Marlin and let them drive the process (but you can drive the car)
- Ask questions your student may not ask (safety, cost, opportunities)
- Set one night a week to discuss college plans
- Have the money talk and be specific
- Reach out to Counseling for assistance
- This is a marathon not a sprint

# Fast Facts

- Average student applies to 6-8 schools
- Most students need one (or no) teacher letters of recommendation
- Most applications open up August 1st
- Look at Honors Colleges at State Schools
- Each student will have their own timeline



# Questions and Comments