

College Preparation

“Vision is not enough; it must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps; we must step up the stairs.”

~Vaclav Havel

It is important to specifically discuss the factors that colleges consider when reviewing an application. The main factors are academics, standardized test scores, extracurricular activities and community involvement, your essay, and teacher and counselor recommendations. Let’s look at each of these factors individually.

Academics

GPA and Rank

The classes you take and the grades you earn are the single biggest factor in deciding whether a school will accept you. At the time of application, your GPA (grade point average) and rank are determined by your final averages in all courses taken for high school credit, except for PE. Your rank is your position in your class based on how your overall GPA compares to that of your classmates. GPA and rank are not weighted at Mohonasen. Most people understand that the higher your grades are the better chance you have of being accepted to a school of your choice. Unfortunately many students still make the mistake of believing that this means they should take easier classes to help inflate their GPA. **This is not true!!**

The more selective a school is, the more important it is to them that you take the most challenging curriculum available to you. Taking all four years of high school math, science and foreign language is a great start. However, in addition, taking honors and AP classes and exploring electives within your intended area of college study are also ways to show schools you are serious about your academics. Many students fall short with these expectations in their senior year, feeling that they have worked hard all the way through high school and that this is their time to “coast.” This can be a very costly mistake.

What courses should you take your senior year?

Before finalizing your senior year courses, contact the Admissions Offices at the colleges you are interested in to:

- Verify that you are in fact taking courses competitive enough to be considered for admission to those schools.
- Verify you have met specific requirements for your major (i.e. You have taken Chemistry and met the minimum grade requirement if planning on majoring in nursing).