

# Newsletter

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## April/May Calendar

- \* April 29– last day to sign up for June SAT
- \* May 1– last day to submit intent to register to chosen college
- \* May 1– SAT test date
- \* May 7– last day to sign up for June ACT test



## Focus Shifts from Getting In to Getting Out

As students shift from fretting about where they will be admitted to where they will go, some very interesting statistics begin to emerge regarding this year in college admissions. While students continued to focus on where they might get into college, historic numbers of students in California also focused on getting out of California. Because of the grim economic status of California public higher education, students could no longer take comfort in being admitted to the California



State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) systems. Thus, they applied in record numbers to out of state public colleges and private universities. More intriguing, however, is the fact that they did not limit their applications

to the western United States. To illustrate this phenomena, University of Washington and Arizona State University reported 22% and 24% increases in applications from California, while on the other side of the country, the University of Delaware and University of Virginia noted increases of 36% and 24%, respectively.

Even more expensive private universities reported large increases in applications from *(Continued on Page 2)*

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## New Website Launched

After several years, I decided to revamp my entire website. The new site was launched this week, and we will be adding more features over time. The new site has some new information, including listings of colleges visited and colleges where my students have been admitted, as well as student and parent testimonials. Besides my regular newsletter, I will begin a blog and there will be other news items as I write and speak elsewhere.

Later this year, I hope to add a client log in feature that will allow students and parents to access To Do Lists, next meeting dates, and their college lists with application information. As you navigate the site, please let me know what you think. I value your input.

## The Waitlist Debate

Are waitlists a blessing or a curse? This debate becomes more keen this year as the University of California (UC) waitlisted almost 11,000 students, a break with tradition. Seven of the UC campuses used waitlists for the first time this year, a process traditionally used mostly by private colleges.

While waitlists may soften the blow of rejection, they are generally a disservice to students. They prolong the stress of the application process and often provide false hope to students because of the high numbers of students waitlisted. In the end, very few will be admitted.

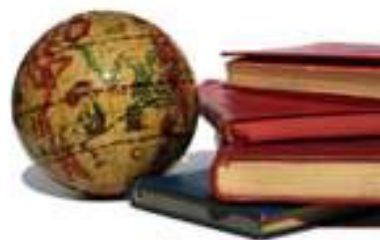


# Is the Liberal Arts Education Dying?

One of the significant and most revealing questions I have on my intake questionnaire is: Why do you want to attend college? That question is followed by: What are your academic interests? Increasingly, the answers to those questions are “to get a good job” and “I want to major in business”. While, in the past, I might have discovered that these were answers given without careful thought or much reflection, the current recession and unemployment have certainly made students and their families give more considerable thought to the value of what they plan to study in college. Students are, thus, gravitating toward pre-professional majors where they will learn something practical to obtain a job after graduation.

Some colleges are responding to this trend by adding pre-

professional programs, while others are dropping some of the humanities majors. Families will also find that many colleges are putting more financial investment into programs such as science, business and engineering because they are receiving more government and private enterprise funding in these areas.



Is this trend toward the practical going too far? Will we graduate students who lack critical thinking skills and the ability to write, analyze and synthesize information? Will students who specialize for particular careers miss out on the most current labor market

because they are too specialized and lack the ability to think broader? Some of the most elite liberal arts colleges think so and are bucking this trend, some able to do so because of hefty endowments which allow them to ride out this tide.

Let's hope that this trend does not go too far. Students need to graduate with critical thinking skills, the ability to write outside of the traditional business and technical sense, and with solid communication skills. If a student is proficient in these abilities, they will be able to adapt to the broader job market in any liberal arts major, particularly if they have attained good grades, networked and completed relevant internships while in college.

## Getting Out *(Continued from Page 1)*

California students, and these applications were also widely dispersed. For example, at Colgate University in upstate New York, applications from California residents were up 15%, and at Villanova in Pennsylvania, the increase was 34%. Even smaller colleges in the Midwest and the South relayed significant increases.

The reason for this uptick is not difficult to understand when at least 14 of the CSU campuses reported that they

were impacted this year, up from the traditional few impacted CSU campuses. Families also worried about access to the flagship UC campuses, and the ability of students to get classes and the quality of education given the budget cuts.

The trend is not likely to disappear next year. Sophomores and juniors should be encouraged to widen their nets because of the impaction in Cali-

fornia, which is not likely to recover anytime soon. The unfortunate consequence, however, may be an exodus of our brightest and most talented students.