

Fair Winds and Following Seas

A Guide for DMA cadets



You are a junior ... now what?

Congratulations! You are more than half way through your junior year of high school. You are turning the corner from high school student to high school graduate. Now is the time to start to make a plan for what you want to do after high school. Are you interested in attending a four year college program? Do you want to learn a trade? Do you want to attend an Academy? Are you planning to go directly in to the workforce

or military? Whatever you decide to do is okay but you need to have a plan! That is what we are here for ... Your counselor is determined based on your last name.

Mr. Grant ~ Last Names A-M

Mrs. Certesio ~ Last Names N-Z

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Course Selections

It is important to carefully select your courses for senior year. We'll talk about the process and what you should consider

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Your GPA and your SAT or ACT scores serve as "gate keepers" for college admission.

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Selecting colleges

This is an overwhelming task but one that requires your time and attention

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Senior Year Course Selections

When it comes to admissions, much of what we talk about is from the perspective of the University of Delaware. Why? There are two major reasons ... First, the University of Delaware is our “feeder school” or the school where the majority of our cadets choose to attend. Second, UD has rigorous admission policies so if our cadets can be prepared for UD, they can be prepared for most of the schools in the area. What does UD look for from Delaware students?

The University of Delaware requires all applicants to complete 4 years of math, English, Science and Social Studies/History.

At least two of these courses should be at the honors level or higher. That means you should be taking the most challenging courses you can in your senior year. In addition, they require three years of a world language and at least one academic elective (business, CPI, Studies in Drama, etc). When selecting your senior year courses, you should also keep in mind your intended college major ... if you want to be in a medical field, you should probably take AP Biology. If you want to study International Business, you should take Spanish IV. Your course selection can have a serious impact on your college admission decisions.

Don't miss important updates

The Class of 2018 can get college planning updates from the Guidance Office through our text alert system. If you are not already getting guidance texts, you can join by texting @DMA2018 to 81010 to get added to the subscriber list.

We send out college information, college fair info/school visits, job opportunities, and testing information. Sign up today!

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You can request a change in your college counselor but it needs to be in writing and it needs to be consistent. So if you decide that you want to request Mr. Grant to be your college counselor, you need to send an email to Mrs. Certesio requesting the change and then you would go to him for **ALL** your college needs. This ensures that consistent information is being sent to all colleges.

The majority of your college planning will be done through your Naval Science class. If you only have Naval Science for one semester, it is important that you check in with your college counselor on a regular basis. This planning process begins in the middle of your junior year. This publication will take you through the process of college planning and help you to pick schools and locate funding sources. Additional publications will come out on a bi-monthly basis.

Mr. Grant and Mrs. Certesio have open door policies. If you have a question, and we are in our office, feel free to stop in and ask. We are always here to help. In addition, you should already be on the text alert system to ensure that you are getting important college updates.

Standardized Tests ... why do they matter?



There are two standardized tests that colleges will generally accept ~ The SAT and the ACT. First, let's talk about the SAT.

The SAT is administered by The College Board and is given at DMA to all juniors (free of charge) in April. The test is designed to test what you learned in high school and how you apply that knowledge. These test scores are sent to colleges (by YOU) to help aid them in making an admission decision. The SAT is the most commonly accepted college admission test and it is made up of two separate sections: English Reading and Writing (ERW) and Mathematics. You can earn a maximum score of 800 for each section and a maximum combined score of 1600. Why should you care about these tests?

The answer is pretty simple ... if at any point you decide to apply to a college (even DTCC) these scores will become important. For larger schools,

the SAT serves as a "gate keeper." That means that if you do not have the grades, course rigor, community service and leadership you need to balance out the scores, they could prevent you from getting in to your first choice school. For smaller schools, they are used to determine if you need remedial courses prior to starting a program.

Most schools will super score your SAT. That means that if you take the SAT multiple times, they will take your highest score in each of the three categories and combine them to get a super score. We encourage all cadets to take the SAT multiple times to increase their super score. The reality is that sometimes you take the SAT multiple times and still do not get the score you want or need. What other options do you have?

The majority of schools will also accept the ACT test. DMA does not administer this test but you can sign up to take the ACT by going to www.act.org. It is similar to the SAT but with some minor differences.

Preparing for the SAT and ACT

There are a number of ways that cadets can prepare for the SAT and ACT. In the past, you had to pay a small fortune for a prep course to ensure your cadet was ready. That is no longer the case.

When the SAT was redesigned a few years ago, the College Board also partnered with Khan Academy to provide SAT preparation for all students FREE of charge. Here is how it works:

1. Cadets create a college board account (you can only have one so make sure you save the login information)
2. Your PSAT 9 and PSAT 10 scores should automatically load in to your account – if they don't please see Mrs. Certesio
3. To the right of the scores, there is a button for FREE SAT preparation – click on it!
4. When asked, give permission to link your College Board account to Khan Academy.
5. Congratulations! You now have a personalized study program based on what you got wrong on the PSAT.
6. There are also a number of free or low cost iPhone and Android apps for SAT and ACT prep – We encourage you to use all the

What courses should you take?

The courses you select (and qualify for) have a direct impact on your college admission decisions. Who would have thought that a decision you made in freshman or sophomore year could affect whether or not you get in to a specific college? The reality is that it can have a major impact. One of the biggest factors that colleges consider is the rigor of your course load. That means they are looking at whether you are taking challenging courses and succeeding in them. You should be selecting the most rigorous courses that you qualify for and working hard to succeed in these courses. The University of Delaware requires all applicants to have at least two honors level or higher courses to be considered for admission. In addition, they want to see that you are carrying a full load of credits your senior year.



Your junior year grades are the most important ones because they are the last ones that colleges will see before they decide on your application for admission. Take them seriously and ask for help if you start to fall behind. If you have not yet taken honors level courses, you should consider some for your senior year. You will also have the opportunity to pick electives for your senior year. Some things to consider:

1. Would it benefit you to take an academic elective such as CPI, Studies in Drama or Asian Studies? If you are a borderline academic student, this might be the thing that sets you up for an acceptance.
2. Are you interested in a business or international business program in college? If so, you may want to consider Spanish IV as many colleges require this for admission to these programs.
3. If you have been in band or choir for the last three years, you should continue with it for senior year. Why? Colleges look for cadets who commit to something and stick with it. If your schedule allows, you should finish these programs in your senior year.

The good news is that Mrs. Certesio and Mr. Grant are always willing to answer questions and will be meeting with you to help you navigate this crazy process.

What is “test optional?”

There is a new trend in college admissions where test scores are optional. This means that an admissions board will evaluate a candidate based on their overall package, excluding SAT or ACT scores, when determining if they will be offered a spot in their class of 2022. There are positives and negatives to this option. If you are a cadet who has struggled with standardized tests but has done well in classes and is involved in the school, this would be a huge benefit. The down side is for many of these schools, you forfeit any merit based scholarship monies if you do not submit test scores. This is how it works at the University of Delaware – if you do not submit test scores, you cannot be considered for any of the merit scholarships that may be awarded. Be careful when making a decision about whether or not to submit scores. Each school is different and we recommend calling admissions when you have a question about a specific school.