

COLLEGE COUNSELING MISSION

The mission of the Friends School College Counseling Program is to help each student consider a range of college options suited to his or her talents and interests and, ultimately, matriculate to a college that will be an excellent match. The College Counselor works to facilitate this process by providing assistance throughout the transition. As Quaker School educators, we aspire to help students in the way of self-discovery and knowledge; therefore, we encourage students to not only consider colleges and universities based on the prestige factor, but rather on academic and social suitability for the pursuit of personal growth. With this approach, we honor the diversity of achievement, interests, aspirations, and backgrounds that our students represent.

COLLEGE COUNSELING RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES

The College Counseling office provides a range of activities and resources to help students consider their university options and prepare for the application process. These include, but are not limited to, the following.

Family Connection

All 9th – 12th grade students (and parents) have access to Family Connection (<http://connection.naviance.com/ramallah>). An email is sent to new students and parents each year with information about how to set up Family Connection accounts. Family Connection includes resources such as a CV/resume builder, personality and career assessments to help students consider what professions fit their skills and interests, and databases to search for universities or for summer program opportunities (although these databases are primarily focused on the U.S.).

When students begin the formal college counseling process in 11th grade, Family Connection is also used to help keep track of application requirements and which universities students are applying to.

College Counseling Library

Students of all ages are welcome to pick up university brochures that are kept in the College Counseling office. The office also keeps books that include profiles of many universities; students are welcome to browse through these books in the College Counseling office. A number of university profiles and brochures are also available electronically. Students may find these in the 'document library' in Family Connection; there is a link to the document library on the right side of the Family Connection homepage.

The document library in Family Connection includes several additional admissions planning resources such as application checklists, guides to the application processes in several countries and regions, lists of scholarship opportunities in various countries, and information about the U.S. financial aid process.

University Presentations

Each year, admissions representatives provide presentations about their respective universities or about general admissions topics that are common to universities in their country. Sometimes these representatives visit the Friends School campus in person to give these presentations, and sometimes

they provide virtual presentations via Skype or other online platforms. When possible, virtual presentations are recorded so that additional students and parents can have access to the information provided. Audio recordings are saved in Google Drive and shared with students through their FBS email accounts.

Graduates of the Friends School also return to campus to provide presentations on their universities or to participate in Alumni College Fairs. All upcoming university presentations are posted in the college visits section of Family Connection and are promoted via email to students and parents.

Workshops

Several workshops are offered each year for students and parents. These take place primarily during the spring semester and include topics such as choosing IB subjects (for 10th grade students), the U.S. financial aid process, writing personal statements, and setting up applications in UCAS or the Common App.

COLLEGE COUNSELING PROCESS

The formal college counseling process begins in 11th grade. At the beginning of 11th grade, each student will be asked to complete a very brief survey (Junior Survey) about his or her college preferences, with focus on the subject(s) and geographic region(s) or countries in which the student is interested. The College Counselor uses this information both as the starting point for the advising process with individual students and to organize workshops or distribute materials related to the interests and needs of groups of students within the class.

Based on each student's survey responses, the College Counselor will follow up and will provide a guidebook by email to the student and parents. Guidebooks are available for seven different countries/regions (Arab World & Local, Australia, Canada, Europe, Ireland, United Kingdom, and United States). Each guidebook outlines the application process and typical requirements for that country or region. The student is responsible for reviewing this information before his or her individual meeting (Junior Consult) with the College Counselor.

Also based on the student's survey responses, the College Counselor will assign the student to one or more "programs" in Family Connection. Each program is simply a group of key tasks related to the application process in a particular country or region. This is a way for the both the College Counselor and the student to keep track of some of the major steps in the application process.

One of the tasks included in most of these "programs" is the Counselor Survey. Students complete the Counselor Survey online in their Family Connection account during 11th grade. The survey gathers information on the student's family background, academic interests, career aspirations, personality, activities, volunteer and work experience, etc. The College Counselor uses this information to write a recommendation letter for the student. This is required for all students who apply to the United Kingdom and to the United States. It is also required or recommended for many students who apply to Europe or to institutions such as the American University of Beirut that follow an American admissions

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process. Once a student submits the completed Counselor Survey, the College Counselor will schedule an interview with the student to follow up on any additional details needed for the recommendation letter.

During the winter of junior year (January – March), the College Counselor will schedule a Junior Consult with each student to discuss the student’s academic profile, testing requirements and schedule, and priorities for university selection (parents are invited to attend this meeting). The counselor and student will draw up a list of universities for the student to investigate. Notes from this meeting and a list of “Next Steps” will be sent to the student and parents via email. During the rest of the student’s junior year, and throughout senior year, the College Counselor and student will arrange follow-up meetings as needed.

During the summer before senior year, students will finish choosing the universities to which they will apply. They will also begin drafting any essays that are required for their applications. Students should expect that a good essay will require multiple drafts with feedback from someone who can edit and provide clear feedback on an English-language admissions essay (such as an English teacher or a college prep teacher or volunteer).

All students, regardless of where they are applying, are expected to submit a final university list to the College Counselor by August 20 (at the beginning of 12th grade). This allows the student to identify all application requirements and deadlines before the fall semester begins. It also allows the College Counselor to ensure that all school documents are prepared in time for each student’s applications.

PLEASE NOTE: application requirements vary significantly depending on what country/region each student is applying to, so the tasks and schedule assigned to one student may be very different from those assigned to another student. It is the responsibility of each student to keep track of his/her requirements and follow up on these requirements by the assigned deadlines.

DEADLINES

The table below lists the primary tasks involved in college counseling and in the university application process. While some requirements and deadlines are consistent, others vary greatly by country/region. Refer to the guidebook for each country/region for additional details about the application process and requirements, and be sure to confirm dates and requirements for your individual universities once you have completed your university list.

	CANADA	EUROPE	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES (and American Universities)	OTHER
Complete Junior Survey	11 th grade: September 30	11 th grade: September 30	11 th grade: September 30	11 th grade: September 30	11 th grade: September 30

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	CANADA	EUROPE	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES (and American Universities)	OTHER
Take tests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TOEFL or IELTS: by August 31 before the start of 12th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TOEFL or IELTS: by August 31 before the start of 12th grade ● Entrance exams: usually April – June of 12th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● IELTS: by August 31 before the start of 12th grade ● BMAT or UKCAT for medicine: UKCAT registration begins May of 11th grade with exam in the summer before 12th grade; BMAT registration begins September of 12th grade with exam in November of 12th grade ● LNAT for law: from September 1 of 12th grade* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PSAT 10: February of 10th grade ● PSAT/NMSQT: October of 11th grade ● SAT 1 or ACT: from December (SAT) or April (ACT) of 11th grade ● TOEFL or IELTS: by August 31 before 12th grade ● SAT 2: October – November of 12th grade* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TOEFL or IELTS: by August 31 before 12th grade ● Entrance exams: varies*
Complete Counselor Survey¹		11 th grade: February 28*	11 th grade: February 28	11 th grade: February 28	11 th grade: February 28*
Begin Common App		12 th grade: August 15*		12 th grade: August 15	12 th grade: August 15*
Begin UCAS application			12 th grade: August 15		
Submit university list	12 th grade: August 20	12 th grade: August 20	12 th grade: August 20	12 th grade: August 20	12 th grade: August 20
Request teacher recommendations		12 th grade: September 1*		12 th grade: September 1	12 th grade: September 1*

¹ This is used to gather information needed for the College Counselor to write a recommendation letter.

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	CANADA	EUROPE	UNITED KINGDOM	UNITED STATES (and American Universities)	OTHER
Submit transfer transcripts²	12 th grade: September 15	12 th grade: September 15		12 th grade: September 15	12 th grade: September 15
Submit a final draft personal statement		12 th grade: October 1*	12 th grade: October 1	12 th grade: October 1	12 th grade: October 1*
Submit medicine/ dentistry/vet applications			12 th grade: October 15		
Begin individual university applications	12 th grade: October 15	12 th grade: Varies (October – April)		12 th grade: October 15	12 th grade: Varies (October – July)
Submit applications	12 th grade: January	12 th grade: January – July	12 th grade: January 15	12 th grade: Most January 1 (November – February)	12 th grade: February – July
Receive and review offers	12 th grade: April – May	12 th grade: February – July	12 th grade: February – April	12 th grade: March – April	Summer of graduation
Confirm choice/ pay enrollment deposit	12 th grade: May	12 th grade: varies*	12 th grade: March – May	12 th grade: May 1	Summer of graduation

*Check the admissions requirements for your universities to confirm whether this is needed.

POLICIES

DEADLINES: Students are expected to meet all assigned deadlines. If there are extenuating circumstances that may prevent the student from meeting a deadline, he/she is expected to contact the College Counselor by email ahead of the deadline to request an extension. Requests for extensions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

- A. **Counselor Survey:** The Counselor Survey must be completed and submitted by February 28 of 11th grade. Students who miss this deadline will not receive a recommendation letter from the College Counselor.
- B. **Personal Statements:** Each student must submit a final draft of his/her personal statement to the College Counselor by October 1 of 12th grade. The College Counselor will review the final

² Students who were not enrolled at the Friends School during 9th and/or 10th grade will need to provide English-language copies of their official transcript(s) from school(s) attended during 9th and/or 10th grades.

draft for serious writing problems and plagiarism. Once the College Counselor approves the final draft, the student may add the personal statement to his/her applications. No school documents, such as transcripts or recommendation letters, will be sent to a student's universities until the final draft personal statement has been reviewed and approved by the College Counselor.

- C. **University List:** Each student must submit a final list of the universities to which he/she plans to apply to the College Counselor no later than August 20 at the beginning of 12th grade. If a student misses this deadline, the College Counselor is not responsible for submitting school documents or otherwise following up on that student's applications.
- D. **Teacher Recommendations:** Students are responsible for researching the number of teacher recommendations needed for their universities and identifying the teachers who they would like to have write their recommendation letters. Students must contact their selected teachers by email with all of the necessary information no later than September 1 of 12th grade. If students miss the September 1 deadline, teachers are free to refuse writing a recommendation. Communications between students and teachers regarding recommendation letters must be documented via email.

ENTRANCE EXAMS: Dates and requirements for entrance exams dates vary in different regions and from one university to another. College counseling will provide very basic and initial information on entrance exams, but dates, registration, and taking of the exam are solely the responsibility of the student and their parents.

IB DIPLOMA/CERTIFICATE PROGRAM PREDICTED GRADES: College counseling requires all predicted grades to be submitted by the school between October 10 and October 20 of Grade 12. Changes to predicted grades are only accepted after the first semester report card is published and are not accepted any later than February 14 of grade 12.

CONDUCT GRADES: The College Counselor will receive conduct grades for all seniors. Conduct grades will be taken into consideration when the College Counselor writes recommendation letters.

ENROLLMENT DEPOSITS: Students may submit an enrollment deposit to only one university. Paying an enrollment deposit indicates a student's intent to enroll at that university. Once the student has decided what university to attend and paid the enrollment deposit, he/she should notify other universities that he/she has accepted an admission offer elsewhere. The student's final school transcript will only be sent to one university.

Universities often penalize students who attempt to “double-deposit”, that is, to hold spots at two universities by paying two enrollment deposits. **Universities have the right to withdraw an admission offer from students who double-deposit.**

There are some exceptions to this policy. The most common exceptions are the following cases:

1. A student is wait-listed at his or her first choice university. In this case, the student may submit an enrollment deposit to a second-choice university in order to secure a spot while waiting for a decision on a wait-list acceptance. If the student later is accepted to the wait-listed university and decides to enroll there, he/she must immediately notify the university where the deposit was made that he/she is no longer planning to enroll there.
2. A student applied to universities in multiple countries with very different application timelines, so he/she is still waiting for some admission decisions when the enrollment deposit is due. Again, once all offers have been received and the student has made a final decision, he/she must immediately notify other universities that he/she is no longer planning to enroll.

In these cases, students should discuss their admissions offers and deadlines for enrollment deposits with the College Counselor. **Enrollment deposits are usually non-refundable.**

SUMMARY OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The College Counselor is responsible for:

- Reviewing the student’s university list to advise on academic and financial fit and recommending alternatives if necessary
- Approving the final list of universities to which the student’s transcript will be sent
- Writing a comprehensive letter of recommendation for any student who completes the Counselor Survey by the deadline
- Reviewing the final draft of each personal statement or other required application essays
- Obtaining student transcripts from the school office
- Sending school documents (transcript, recommendation letters, and school profile) electronically to all universities that accept electronic documents or preparing these documents for mailing to universities that require hard copies

Students are responsible for:

- Adhering to all College Counseling policies and deadlines
- Researching the universities on the list compiled during the Junior Consult and following up with the College Counselor about any other universities that are of interest
- Keeping track of application and financial aid requirements and deadlines for each university you are applying to (charts to help you organize this information are available in the [Family Connection](#) document library)
- Keeping track of entrance exam dates for any university you are applying to

- Communicating directly with teachers to request recommendation letters
- Initiating further contact with the College Counselor if you have any questions or need additional support
- Being honest in all admissions applications, all financial aid and scholarship applications, and all communications with universities and the College Counselor

TAWJIHI EQUIVALENCY

1. A student must successfully complete grades 11 and 12 and obtain official school transcripts for these two grade levels.
2. Must successfully pass six subjects with at least two subjects in the higher level and the remainder in the standard level.
3. Must pass both Math and Arabic within the six subjects
4. Must pass TOK, religion, physical education and must complete all CAS requirements.
5. Must receive a minimum score of 21 out of 42.
6. For HL the passing grade is 3-7, and for SL the passing grade is 2-7.
7. If a student has more than one HL subject, only the first will be treated as HL in passing grade range while the remaining subjects will all be treated as SL subjects.
8. To receive Tawjihi equivalency in the science stream a student must complete the above conditions in addition to the following: a. Must pass either one science HL or Math HL; b. Must pass two science SL subjects or one science SL and one Math SL.
9. In addition to the successful completion of the above terms (1-7), to receive Tawjihi equivalency in the arts stream a student must complete two subjects in the higher level including Arabic HL.
10. The year of equivalency will be the same year of high school graduation.
11. Grade scale equivalency

	Points	7	6	5	4	3	2
Level	HL	99	98	88	78	68	X
	SL	98	95	85	75	65	55

- a. The average is calculated by the sum of all subject grades (100 scale) divided by the number of subjects used in the equivalency.
 - b. One point will be added to the overall percent average if a student receives 1 point in TOK and extended essay
 - c. Two points will be added to the overall percent average if a student receives two or three points in TOK and extended essay.
12. These instructions will be applied beginning the academic year of September 1, 2016, therefore on the graduating class of 2017 and later.