

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE
Independent College Counselors & Educational Consultants
Northern San Francisco Bay Area

Fall 2007

NACAC Core Values (summarized & paraphrased)

- We are responsible for the integrity of our actions.
- We believe the effectiveness of our profession is enhanced when we work together to promote and protect students and their best interests, based upon trust, mutual respect and honesty with one another and with students.
- Our members have a responsibility to treat one another and students in a fundamentally fair and equitable manner.
- We believe we have a duty to serve students responsibly, by safeguarding their rights and their access to, and within postsecondary education.

The Education Conservancy Principles

These guiding principles are relevant for parents, students, counselors and admission deans:

- Education is a process, not a product. Students are learners, not customers.
- The benefits and predictors of good education are knowable yet virtually impossible to measure.
- Rankings oversimplify and mislead.
- A student's intellectual skill and attitude about learning are more important than what college a student attends.
- Educational values are best served by admission practices that are consistent with these values.
- College admission should be part of an educational process directed toward student autonomy and intellectual maturity.
- Colleges can be assessed, but not ranked. Students can be evaluated, but not measured.
- Students' thoughts, ideas and passions are worthy to be engaged and handled with utmost care.

Specifically We Will:

1. Encourage students and parents to conduct the admission process in an ethical and conscientious manner.
2. Conduct in-depth interviews and, in some cases, give questionnaires and surveys to students and parents for an evaluation of the student's abilities, goals, needs and values. We will encourage students to explore a broad range of postsecondary opportunities. To assist them, we will provide a variety of informational handouts on the overall college admissions process – college entrance requirements, timelines, web sites, etc.
3. Make educational recommendations on a best effort basis, as a result of our professional evaluations of students, the accuracy of information submitted by students, and materials available from high schools and testing companies. These materials will include academic/activity résumés, transcripts, test score reports, and the University of California "a-g" lists, in addition to information given verbally.
4. Advise secondary school students in academic planning, extra-curricular and summer activities. Our advice will be consistent with the policies and practices of the student's high school regarding placement in honors, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses.
5. Provide current and accurate information on colleges based on research, college visits/tours, as well as participation in professional local, state and national conferences and workshops. We will not use disparaging comparisons of post-secondary institutions.
6. Help students to understand the selection criteria of competitive colleges and programs, and teach them how to research colleges.
7. Assist students in developing a list of colleges to which they will apply. This list will be realistic, balanced, reasonable in number, and consistent with our evaluations of students for good college fits. We will encourage them to apply broadly and will not guarantee admittance to, or satisfaction with, any particular college or college program. We will advise students to follow up at each college to which they applied to assure that their applications are complete.
8. Assist students with an organized, strategic plan of action in the college admission process, including suggestions on how to narrow their choice of colleges and how to make a final decision.

9. Advise students regarding the selection, preparation, scheduling, interpretation and use of admission tests. We will advise students on how these tests are used for admission. We will not recommend special education testing for the sole purpose of securing extended testing time.
10. Advise students and parents to adhere to the NACAC policies regarding early decision and restrictive early action plans. We will advise students to abide by the colleges' application requirements and restrictions when they file.
11. Advise students to be the sole authors of their essays, applications and academic/activity résumés and counsel against inappropriate assistance on the parts of others. We will provide general guidance, direction and a review of these materials, as needed, to minimize accidental errors and omissions.
12. Advise students that they will be responsible for the accuracy of all of the materials sent to colleges and for sending them in a timely manner. These materials will include applications, application supplements, test score reports and optional items.
13. Assist students in their choice of majors and college programs. We believe these decisions ultimately are their choice.
14. Provide information about opportunities and requirements for financial aid. We will not make guarantees of any financial aid or scholarship awards.
15. Advise students to notify their colleges in a timely manner of their intent to accept or decline offers of admission. We will advise them to deposit at only one school.
16. Advise students who have deferred admission that they should follow the conditions imposed by the deferring college. We will advise deferred students to adhere to policies regarding applying to other colleges during the deferral period.
17. Neither solicit nor accept any reward, remuneration or gift from any institution, agency or organization for placement or recruitment of students.
18. Actively engage in pro bono work, including the possibility of volunteering in high school counseling offices and career centers.
19. Actively participate in professional development opportunities and professional organizations such as the Higher Education Consultants Association (HECA), Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA), National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), NACAC Regional Associations, as well as college-sponsored conferences and workshops.
20. Seek to establish and maintain avenues of communication with school counselors/advisors on matters related to college admissions. We will not make unethical or unprofessional remarks about or requests of other admission counseling professionals. We will not use disparaging comparisons of secondary institutions.
21. Provide services in addition to, not in place of, those available to students from their high school counselors/advisors. We will endeavor to complement the work of high school counselors/advisors, much in the same way subject tutors can complement teachers.
22. Advise students to utilize fully the services of their high school counselors/advisors. We believe school counselors, advisors or school administrators are the only persons to submit School Reports and are the most appropriate persons to represent students to colleges. We will not lobby colleges for our students.
23. Recognize and respect the fact that high school counselors/advisors have the perspective of knowing students in the context of school settings over an extended period of time. Their assessment of students includes academic potential through teacher feedback, as well as observed involvement and demonstrated leadership in campus activities.
24. Advise students to follow the high school's published procedure and calendar for personal data packets (counselor's/advisor's questionnaires), School Reports, transcripts and letters of recommendation. Only under extraordinary circumstances, when dictated by prudence and ethical standards, will we communicate vital information about students directly to college admission professionals. Accordingly, we may write factual letters of information; however, we will not write letters of recommendation.
25. With family permission, we may inform school counselors/advisors, who would like this information, that we are working with one of their counselees/advisees. If appropriate, we will confer with school counselors/advisors regarding our students on matters regarding college admissions.
26. Work through our students and/or parents for academic or personal information, instead of contacting school officials directly. We will send, receive and keep information about students, such as test scores and transcript information, in confidence. We will not reveal, unless authorized, candidates' college preferences.

We May Also Provide In-Depth Services in the Following Areas:

- Interest and Personality Assessment
- Career Counseling
- Psychological Testing and Records Review
- Learning Disability Assessment
- Learning Disabled Student Counseling
- Special Summer Programs
- Admission Test Preparation
- Athletic Counseling for Potential College Athletes
- Fifth Year High School Opportunities
- Gap Year
- International Education and Study Abroad
- Financial Aid and Scholarships
- College Visitation
- Interviews – Admissions, Career Exploration, Informational, etc.
- Community Colleges
- Military & Coast Guard Academies
- Air Force, Army, Marine & Naval ROTC Programs
- Religious Colleges and Institutes
- Vocational Schools and Technical Institutes
- Visual and Performing Arts Colleges/Institutes
- Deferred Enrollment
- Wait List Management
- Appeal Process
- Undergraduate Transfers
- Graduate School Admissions
- Counseling During College Years
- Maintenance of a Reference Library