



COURSE DESCRIPTION (2026)

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College Counseling Package

Comprehensive College Counseling Program for Individuals

Mercer Education's College Counseling Package (CCP) provides a complete solution for college-bound students as they plan and prepare for college admission. Whether a student needs short- or long-term guidance, ME offers package options supporting students at every stage of college preparation, from freshman through senior year. Through a structured, personalized approach, students meet regularly with experienced college counselors to develop strategic admissions plans that maximize their opportunities for acceptance to colleges aligned with their goals and interests. Throughout the process, students and families receive ongoing guidance to help ensure thoughtful, organized, and effective preparation.

When you enroll in Mercer Education's College Counseling Package, you get

- ✓ A Comprehensive Program Addressing All Aspects of the Application Process
- ✓ An Experienced College Counselor Who Gets to Know Your Child Well
- ✓ Regular Meetings with Your College Counselor and the School Director
- ✓ Structured Essay Oversight and Revision Support
- ✓ Oversight by ME's Director, a Harvard Graduate with Decades of Experience
- ✓ A Guaranteed Time Slot for Monthly Classes
- ✓ Scheduling Priority During Peak Application Periods
- ✓ Mid-Year and Follow-up Reports for Tracking Progress
- ✓ Ongoing Access to a Knowledgeable Counselor Throughout the Process
- ✓ A Long-Term Approach to Meeting Deadlines and Maximizing Success
- ✓ Cost Advantage of Package Pricing Compared with Traditional Hourly Billing

Value-Added Support While the College Counseling Package provides structured meeting time, it also includes substantial essay review and revision support outside scheduled class time, guidance that would otherwise be billed hourly. By enrolling in the CCP program, families secure an integrated process of ongoing guidance, feedback, and revision support designed to provide thorough, personalized assistance while minimizing the unpredictability of traditional hourly billing.

High Quality Guidance Under the direction of Eric Cohen, a graduate of Harvard University with over 30 years of experience in education and college counseling, Mercer Education's team of admissions counselors emphasizes understanding each student's unique personality, interests, and goals, and providing customized guidance focused on the following elements of the application process.

ME's College Counseling Package covers the following:

- Personal Inventory of interests, goals, aptitudes
- Strategic Timeline Calendar
- High School Course Recommendations
- Exploring College Majors and Career Options
- Brainstorming and Crafting Application Essays
- Building a College List
- Extracurricular Planning
- Summer/Volunteer/Internship Planning
- Standardized/AP Test Planning
- Planning for Application Deadlines
- Resumés and Cover Letters
- Merit Scholarship Strategies
- Navigating Common Application
- Finalizing College List
- Regular vs. Early Admissions
- Completing Applications
- Understanding Costs and Financial Aid Applications
- Interview Coaching
- Campus Visits
- Evaluating Acceptance Offers
- Post Acceptance Tasks
- Gap Year Planning

Experience Since 1999, Mercer Education has been helping students – locally, around the country, and internationally – with the college application process. We are professional educators dedicated to helping our students gain acceptance to their preferred colleges and offer a full range of services – test prep, tutoring, and enrichment education – with college admission a central focus of our work. If you would like custom-tailored support for this important element of college readiness, we invite you to contact us to learn more.

Flexible Start Times Students may enroll at any time during freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior year and receive customized guidance tailored to their needs and goals. Students enrolling over multiple years refine the work done in the prior year with ME's counselors.

Choice of Instructors The College Counseling Package may be taken either with Mercer Education's Director, Eric Cohen, or with one of ME's experienced college counselors. In both versions, Mr. Cohen supervises each student's progress and reviews essay development as part of the program structure. Instructional staff includes veteran college and high school faculty members and admissions officers who have direct knowledge of the college admissions process and have provided college counseling to hundreds of students, many of whom have been admitted to some of the most selective colleges and universities in the United States.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

For freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, the CCP program includes ten 90-minute meetings (once a month September through June). In the fall of senior year, students have weekly 90-minute meetings with their counselors for 15 weeks from mid-September through December 23. Students can attend weekly 90-minute meetings in the summer, though the program is flexible, and they always have the option of additional help on a prorated basis as needed.

Enroll Freshman Year - 10 Monthly Meetings per Year

At the start of freshman year, most students are not thinking about college, let alone the application process for getting into college. With this in mind, our counselors typically begin by addressing the question of college in the broadest strokes, including the utility of a college education, the different kinds of colleges that exist, and the different ways to learn about them. Having introduced the value of college and the variety of schools available, counselor and students discuss the expectations that colleges have of their applicants—grades, standardized tests, extracurricular activities, to name a few—and how best to meet those expectations.

Before students can decide about specific schools, though, they first need to better understand themselves and what careers and college majors might best suit them. One of the first tasks, then, is the “personal inventory” of interests and aptitudes, which will help with selection of college majors and target schools. In many cases, students just starting high school will need more time to discover their own strengths, and a related, ongoing task of the college counselor is to encourage and identify possible extracurricular activities and/or civic participation. This, in turn, is an opening to learning about resumés, and students will begin to work on these, even if they do not yet have actual work or volunteer experience to document.

As students at this age still have time to take charge of their academic focus and direction, counselors work with students to review their course selections for upcoming years, direct them to resources if they need academic support, and map out possible standardized tests to document their academic achievement.

Emphasis on Writing One of the primary tasks of the college application process is the writing of multiple essays, the “personal statement” and other long and short-response writings. To help students understand the kind of narratives they eventually will be generating based on their academic and extracurricular efforts, we start students on this from the beginning, writing short narratives about various topics and regularly reading sample essays. This serves not only to hone their writing skills but also to give them examples, both of the activities they might consider and approaches to the essay questions they will face. Under the guidance of their counselors, students write and revise regularly, no matter when they enroll in the program.

Regular Communication

Communication among students, parents, counselors, and the school director is essential, and we encourage regular, open communication to make sure students are staying on track with their work and that parents are advised of their child's progress. Students and their parents will have a meeting with their counselor at a mutually convenient time at the start of the year. Counselors will provide parents with a mid-year update tracking progress and providing targets for the remainder of the year as well as an end-of-year follow-up report reviewing the work they have done and the student's overall college readiness. Students and their parents have an end-of-year meeting with the school director to discuss completed and upcoming work. The counselor and the director are always happy to field quick questions.

Enroll Sophomore Year - 10 Monthly Meetings per Year

High school sophomores can start the program or continue to build on the work they have done in the prior year - exploring academic majors, possible future vocations, and the numerous connections between academic interests and eventual career paths. As academics come into clearer focus, students begin to build preliminary lists of schools and even take virtual tours to become more familiar with the various school options. Additionally, we continue to support students in their exploration and pursuit of extracurricular activities and paid or volunteer jobs and summer opportunities, for all of which students will create resumés and prepare short narratives. Students read new sample application essays each year and continue to refine their understanding of what constitutes a "good" college essay.

Enroll Junior Year - 10 Monthly Meetings per Year

A consolidated focus on freshman and sophomore activities becomes dominant in the fall and spring of junior year when students explore the various application options such as early decision and early action and create a list of dream, match, and safety schools to apply to the following year. Students concentrate on their writing skills as they read successful application essay samples and work through the challenging process of drafting effective, distinctive personal statements for each of their target schools.

Students at this stage are now able to learn about questions of college financing, scholarships, registering for the Common Application and other application portals, and the more specific questions related to their particular academic focus. Planning for the upcoming summer begins early in the year to maximize the chances of landing meaningful activities, and students finalize resumés and applications for summer.

Summer Prior to Senior Year - Weekly per Student Availability

Depending upon the status of pending and completed essays as well as student availability, students may enroll for a package of classes during the summer (typically weekly or more frequently but flexible based on student availability) to make sure they are on track.

Enroll Senior Year - Weekly Meetings, Mid-Sept to Dec. 23

During senior year students begin weekly meetings in mid-September to finalize college essays and complete college applications. During these sessions, students fine-tune personal statement essays and complete any required college- or major-specific supplemental essays, statements of purpose, narratives, and short-format responses. If needed, each student may also receive coaching on other application-related tasks such as interviews and auditions for fine arts departments. This careful application guidance continues right up until the New Year's break.

Throughout this process, counselors continue providing feedback and revision guidance between meetings so that students can maintain momentum and complete applications effectively during the busiest phase of the admissions cycle

Post-Holiday Wrap Up

If, after the New Year's holiday, students need help with any remaining applications or post-application tasks, e.g., drafting wait-list appeals, evaluating/negotiating offers, or any other factors that may impact their final college choice, it is possible to sign up for additional sessions with their counselors on an as-needed basis.

See "CCP Options & Policies" for package configurations, pricing for programs led by Mr. Cohen or other Mercer Education staff, and policies specific to the CCP.

Fee Schedule & Policies Herein Effective June 2026