# **2024-2025 InGenius Prep Application Counseling**

# **Student Handbook**

[InGenius Prep Honor Code](#_7bv154ygrenu)

[Advice from InGenius Alumni](#_z9httxg4rp0v)

[General Information](#_15gz24gi9g8u)

[APPLICATION COUNSELING POLICIES](#_g5l10knyn6n1)

[Basic US College Application Timeline](#_hczfjdkw8wa6)

[School List Policies](#_ob11e2r64ke8)

[1. How many Safety/Target/Reach schools should I have on my list?](#_mavz8zm8zlmy)

[2. What counts as Safety/Target/Reach schools on my list?](#_j5s7f9dn0830)

[3. What if I want to apply to schools outside of the US?](#_z8ci9vv4y73f)

[4. What Qualifies as a Safety School?](#_owczgjc9xy04)

[5. School List Changes:](#_99s5zt6gz9ed)

[Interview prep](#_r6fwpqlc30iw)

[Add-Ons/Not Included in Standard AC Services:](#_rqvffbpsh2is)

[Pause in Application Counseling Service](#_xkozc0l2sjsw)

[Timeline & Deadline Policies](#_o9z852ik8dus)

[1. What can you expect from InGenius if you have delayed your work?](#_hmv5vjw8y6vu)

[2. What can you expect from InGenius in the final days leading up to the deadline?](#_h0cezspzumk5)

[3. What can you do if you are experiencing stress or challenges with your mental wellbeing?](#_h5njd3hqa4fw)

[Counselor/PM Time Off](#_v2dz298v3igx)

[Best Practices for Application Counseling](#_i6s058obky81)

[Parent Involvement During AC](#_8dy56o1te4rb)

[How can you talk with your parents best?](#_r26ssykxfyby)

[What if you and your parents disagree?](#_85kuod22m6r)

[What should you do if your parents want to write essays for you?](#_jucmmkwz7gr0)

[Appendix A – Typical Month-to-Month Timeline](#_o9gmuydebmuw)

[Appendix B – Overall To-Do List for 1 School](#_gmfn801joasv)

[Appendix C – No Safety School Agreement](#_b8k0514vvz4y)

# 

# InGenius Prep Honor Code

As an educational company, InGenius Prep holds its students to the highest standards of integrity, both in terms of academics and personal citizenship, as shared by leading universities, colleges, and high schools. As we strive to create a diverse and equitable community, we expect our students to uphold these values through abiding by our honor code and the principles outlined below.

Alleged violations against the honor code can result in warnings to the student’s family, suspension or termination of InGenius Prep services, pending a review from our Disciplinary Committee.

* **All work produced by students shall be their own original work**. Any sort of plagiarism (whether it is lifting directly from another source, paraphrasing without proper citation (this includes the use of AI software such as ChatGPT), or any falsification of materials/information) will not be tolerated.
* **Students will immediately notify their InGenius team about any potential issues that might affect their candidacy**. These include changes concerning grades, standardized test scores, ANY disciplinary history or school-related circumstances, etc.
* Students pledge to treat their counseling team and any additional InGenius Prep-affiliated instructors (academic mentors, writing program and soft skills instructors, etc.) **with respect**, treating them as they would a trusted teacher.
* Students recognize that InGenius is a diverse community, with counselors, instructors, and fellow students of different backgrounds, and pledge to help create a **welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone**.
* Students acknowledge that **their social media presence also reflects who they are**, and their behaviors on social media have the same impact as other forms of interactions. Thus, students acknowledge that the InGenius Prep Honor Code applies to students’ online activities as well.

# 

# Advice from InGenius Alumni

*“Plan things early, stick to your timeline, and be organized. Submitting your application 2-3 days prior to the deadline is always the safest and you'll feel great =)*

*Stay proactive, be open to communication and new things, ask questions!*

*It's alright to be ambitious about your dream schools, but put the work in to get yourself there.*

*Be considerate. Your counseling team has a very busy schedule as many other students are also applying to colleges, so it's good to keep your progress and make good use of every meeting (like making an agenda). As a result, you and your team could work efficiently and no one has to rush.*

*Application season is a long process and you're not only applying to your dream school, so stay calm and keep up the good work for each application. Best of luck!*

*Don't be afraid to run through any essay inspirations with your GC, even if it feels silly and underdeveloped. It would be super helpful when running through these ideas to write them down on paper and build the skeleton of the essay from there. Also less is more! It's far more effective to narrow down the core messages than trying to encapsulate everything in one shot.*

*Carefully plan your application timetable with your team and then stick with that timetable. (If you have to make some changes, make sure you reach out to your InGenius team.)*

*Seek help immediately when you feel like you have trouble writing or revising your essays.*

*You are going to survive the college application and go to a great university!!! Be confident and trust yourself and your InGenius team.”*

# General Information

## Counselor Roles

For most students, you are working with at least two counselors in the Candidacy Building and/or Application Counseling process. *So who is supposed to do what?* Here is how we describe the relationship between GC and FAO:

*"Think of the university application process as a mission to a new world. Having been through the journey many times before, your GC is your personal astronaut, guiding you closely, through thick and thin, as you navigate the challenges that lie ahead. Your FAO is ground control. Unlike the GC, the FAO is not there with you aboard the spacecraft, but their perspective back on Earth provides you with the best strategy and high level feedback so that you stay on course and achieve your mission in triumph. Each has the same goal in mind; each has a different perspective that can best help you succeed."*

* **Your GC will** serve as your main contact, with whom you will have regular meetings. In addition, your GC will help guide you as you explore your interests, build your profile, and perform edits on up to three (3) summer program applications. During the college application counseling process, your GC will help you conduct research on schools, check up on schedules/deadlines, and perform close edits on all aspects of your application, including your Activities List, Personal Statement, and Supplemental Essays. Your GC will help you stay organized by sending out reports with homework assignments after each meeting.
* **Your FAO will** provide high-level guidance and strategy for the development of your profile, including elements like course selection, standardized testing, application persona, summer planning, utilizing InGenius resources, school list, and strategies for your college applications, etc. Think of your FAO as someone who will provide high-level guidance for your journey.
* **Your Progress Manager** (if applicable) will relay and explain the advice received from your InGenius counseling team, but are not responsible to give direct counseling advice. The usual office hours for Progress Managers are 9:00 to 18:00, with the time zone determined by the location of the Progress Manager. With the exception of emergency circumstances (as determined by InGenius), students and families agree to respect the general guideline that they should contact Progress Managers only during office hours.

## Offline Meeting with Counselors

Occasionally, you may happen to visit the same city / town as one of your InGenius counselors. If you would like to try meeting them in-person, please reach out as early as possible. If your counselor’s schedule allows, they may agree to meeting in-person, but you should not expect that your counselor would definitely be able to accommodate your request, as this is not within our standard scope of service.

## Change of Counselors and Progress Managers

Remember that your counselors and Progress Managers are real people, and life happens! There is always a possibility that your counseling team will change during the course of your time at InGenius. In the occasional instance where this does happen, InGenius has developed comprehensive transition plans to make sure your new counselors understand your profile if you do need to switch counseling teams.

## Meeting Policies

Students should provide at least 24 hours written notice for any cancellations of appointments with InGenius counselors. Any student shall be considered to have missed a meeting if the student does not give 24 hours notice or join the meeting within 15 minutes of the scheduled time.

If you cancel a meeting within 24 hours of the scheduled time or miss it entirely, the counselor will reschedule the meeting in the following week. If the counselor’s schedule is full in your time preferences the following week, it may take up to two weeks to reschedule.

If a student misses 2 scheduled meetings within 1 month, you forfeit a CB meeting for that month. If you miss 3 meetings within a calendar year, you forfeit a CB meeting for that year and your candidacy building progress will be delayed as a result.

Due to the more time sensitive nature of the College Application Counseling stage, it may not be possible to make up meetings a student misses. Repeatedly missing AC meetings can result in the student falling behind in their application progress, leading to less time to develop and edit a strong application. In addition, official warning letters will be sent to students and parents for missing 3 meetings in a row.

InGenius Prep reserves the right to record all meetings for quality assurance purposes.

## Communication Policies:

ALL communication with your InGenius team should be done within your Google Group, via your account on the [Genie platform](http://platform.ingeniusprep.com), or through your WeChat group. Even when you think your email or message is only applicable to one of your counselors, you should **always** use group communication to ensure that your entire counseling team (FAO, GC, & PM) is updated on your progress.

Often, you may ask a question to your GC that your FAO is more equipped to answer, or vice versa, so group communication is beneficial to all parties.

In addition, you must check email and all other relevant electronic communication accounts and application portals frequently and forward any correspondence from colleges/universities/summer programs to InGenius to ensure that no deadlines or opportunities to submit additional information are missed. **You bear all responsibilities for missing important notices or messages from applied-to programs and schools.**

## 

## Parent Involvement

Our goal at InGenius Prep is to help you develop as a young adult, learning the skills you need to succeed in your education journey, like independence and taking initiative. We want to make sure we can focus on building our relationship with YOU and working with you to make that happen. For these reasons, we ask that parents are not present in meetings. Your parents will get regular updates about your work with us, and you should also talk with them so that they’re aware of your progress with us.

During your Candidacy Building service years, your parents are invited to join the Candidacy Building Strategy Meeting with you and your counselors. They are welcome to share their questions and concerns ahead of the meeting so your counselors can address them during the meeting. Additionally, your parents are invited to the annual Candidacy Building Strategy Meeting with you and your counselors.

# 

# APPLICATION COUNSELING POLICIES

## Basic US College Application Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **10/15** | University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill EA Deadline  University of Texas EA Deadline  Stanford REA with Art Portfolio Deadline  Georgia Residents only: Georgia Institute of Technology EA Deadline (10/17 – all other applicants 11/1) |
| **11/1** | **Common ED / EA Deadline**  University of Southern California Scholarship Deadline |
| **11/15** | Common ED / EA Deadline, especially for Liberal Arts Colleges  University of Washington RD Deadline |
| **12/1** | University of Texas RD Deadline  University of Southern California RD for portfolio, audition, etc.  Stanford RD with Art Portfolio Deadline (12/5) |
| **12/2** | **UC System RD Deadline** |
| **12/15-20** | Admissions results released for most ED / EA applicants |
| **1/1 - 1/5** | **Common RD / ED2 Deadlines** |
| **1/15** | Common RD Deadline  ED/EA Deferral Letter of Continued Interest Due |
| **2/1** | University of Michigan RD Deadline |
| **3/15 - 4/1** | Admissions results - Share your results with InGenius!  Waitlist Letter of Continued Interest due soon after receiving Waitlist result |
| **5/1** | Deadline to Accept College Offer |

Updated date: 8/9/2024

The info above is referring to 2023-2024 Application cycle as the 2023-2024 cycle has not been announced yet.

## School List Policies

### How many Safety/Target/Reach schools should I have on my list?

In order to ensure that your college applications are successful, we have implemented several policies to help maximize your results. Please reference the table below for the specific number of schools you should apply to in each category based on the application counseling package you purchased.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | # of Reach Schools | # of Target Schools | # of Safety Schools |
| 5-school package | 4 | 1 | Adapt Materials |
| 8-school package | 5 | 3 | Adapt Materials |
| 10-school package | 5 (including 1 “reach for the moon”) | 3 | 2 |
| 12-school package | 6 (including 1 “reach for the moon”) | 4 | 2 |
| 15-school package | 7 (including 2 “reach for the moon”) | 5 | 3 |
| US + UK school package | 5 between US + UK | 3 between US + UK | 1 US + 1 UK  OR  2 US + 0 UK |
| UK schools only | 2 | 2 | 1 |

### What counts as Safety/Target/Reach schools on my list?

While some schools are a “Reach” for some and a “Target” for others, it is important to note that any school with less than a 15% admission rate is considered a “Reach” for ALL who apply. InGenius counselors will not approve any school list that DOES NOT have at least 2 Safety Schools and 2 Target Schools.

If a student does not agree to a school list approved by both counselors, the student and family must sign an **official agreement** (see Appendix C) acknowledging that they are explicitly going against the advice of the InGenius counselors.

* 1. For students on all **5-school packages and 8-school packages**, we recommend that students select several Target and Safety schools in addition to their school list with InGenius. Since you will reuse a lot of the materials you work on with your InGenius counselors to apply to schools on your own, we ask that you share those results with InGenius as well for our record and data collection purposes.

### What if I want to apply to schools outside of the US?

If you are on the **10-school package & 12-school package**  (and haven't purchased an additional AC package) you can choose to apply to a **maximum** of 2 non-US schools with InGenius' help. Schools in non-US countries/regions we can currently help with include: Canada, Singapore, Australia, Hong Kong.

The remaining 8 or 10 US schools must have a **minimum** of 2 Safety and 2 Target schools. Our counselors will NOT determine the Safety/Target/Reach category of the non-US schools you select, and we can help with any 2 non-US schools of your choice.

**If you want to apply to schools in the UK (i.e. Cambridge / Oxford, etc.), you need to upgrade your package to work with our UK counselors.** With this upgrade, you will have an additional UK-specific counselor to work with you on the UK applications in addition to your US team. If you plan to apply for Oxford or Cambridge, you will need to upgrade before the end of **August**; if you don’t plan to apply for Oxford or Cambridge, you will need to upgrade before the end of **December**.

### What Qualifies as a Safety School?

**For US Colleges/Universities**:

Broadly speaking, for applicants currently based in the US, a school can be considered a Safety school if a student’s academic credentials (a combination of GPA, SAT or ACT, AP and TOEFL scores) fall above the school's mid 50% range for the average freshman.

For applicants currently based in Asia, a school can be considered a Safety School if a student’s academic credentials are higher than the 75th percentile. Most safety schools will have an acceptance rate above 50%.

Your counselors will be helping you define your school list proportions based on your individual profile, but you should expect your counselors to follow these guidelines.

If you don’t have an SAT score yet this year, your academic credentials will be assessed based primarily on your GPA and any other standardized tests that you DO have.

**NOTE: Schools with lower than 30% acceptance rates cannot be safety schools in any circumstances.**

**For UK Universities**:

**Reach**: An aspirational or ‘dream’ choice that will be challenging to achieve. Usually a university where you are expecting to achieve exactly the minimum entry requirements, or a G5 university.

**Target**: A strong choice where you are more-likely-than-not to be accepted. A university where you are certain to meet or exceed the minimum requirements.

**Safety**: A good choice where you are very likely to be accepted. A university where you are certain you will comfortably exceed the minimum requirements.

NOTE: G5, St. Andrews and Durham cannot be safety schools in any circumstances.

### School List Changes:

We understand that it is a big decision to select where you are going to live and study for the next 4 years. Thus, we are supportive of students’ decisions to add or omit schools from their lists. **We recommend that students finalize their EA/ED school choices by September 15 and RD/EDII school choices by November 15th so that they have enough time to prepare great supplemental essays.** After November 15th, however, your school list is considered finalized, and you cannot alter your list.

If there is a significant change to your applications, such as access to new and notably different test scores or acceptances from EA/ED applications, you may consult your counselors about changing your school list ***slightly***. For example, if you are accepted to early schools, you may choose to not apply to any additional safety schools during the regular decision round.

If you are rejected from ALL of your EA/ED schools, we will help you change / add 1-2 safety schools. We strongly urge students to refrain from the temptation to make substantial changes to their applications (for example, restarting their personal statements), even in this situation.

We understand that rejections can be difficult to face but we also want to reassure students to trust the hard work they have put into their applications. Every year, we see students with disappointing early round results receive much better news for their regular decision applications without making changes to the application materials. **It is very, very unlikely that a rejection is due to a student’s personal statement.** Instead, you should focus your energy on completing RD supplemental essays.

As soon as a counselor has started giving you feedback on a supplemental essay, that school is “officially” on your list and counts as one of your schools with InGenius.

**Our final deadline for adding a school is December 5th. If you add any schools after December 5th, you may or may not have the ability to work with your current counseling team. A team of backup counselors / editors may work with you on these additional applications.**

## Interview prep

Your counselors will help prepare you for your first interview by doing interview preparation exercises. You will then have the opportunity to conduct a mock interview with an interviewer you don’t know and receive feedback.

Once you’ve prepared and conducted your mock interview, you should be able to use what you learned to do a great job in all of your interviews. Each student is allowed up to two (2) mock interviews (ideally one for the EA/ED round, and one for RD). You won’t need to do a separate mock interview for each interview you schedule.

## Add-Ons/Not Included in Standard AC Services:

### BS/MD Programs:

Students who are interested in applying to BS/MD programs can either upgrade to a package that offers support for 3 schools and their BS/MD applications for an extra cost OR convert 2 regular schools on your list with us to count as 1 BS/MD program (and those programs are always considered “reaches”).

### 

### Special Program Application Support:

For students applying to specialized programs with extra essays (outside of BS/MD programs), such as film/architecture/studio art/music programs, **we can help with up to 1 extra essay required by this specialized program per school you are applying to, for up to 3 total extra essays**. If the special program application requires more than 1 extra essay outside of the college’s regular essays or there are more than 3 extra essays total, then it will need to count as an additional school on your package with InGenius.

### Scholarship Support:

InGenius Application Counseling services do not help with external scholarship applications or scholarships within a school’s application. If you want to apply to scholarships with extra essays, you may count that scholarship application as a school on your list (it will count as a reach school) or purchase a separate scholarship application package.

### 

### Additional Schools:

Students may add more schools to their package on or before December 5th

### 

### Financial Aid support:

Not included in any package.

### Art/Music Portfolios:

Not included in any package.

## Pause in Application Counseling Service

If you choose to take a pause from working with InGenius for whatever reason, you can extend your AC package for one year but you will not be entitled to a refund.

**If you pause, you can return to working with us at the same date in the following calendar year** (i.e. if you pause service in October, you can resume service in October of the following year) to complete the remaining work that you didn’t complete in the original year.

You are not eligible to pause after November 1 (in this case, you would forfeit your remaining service).

You will only be able to extend the package for a maximum of **one** year, and there will be no guarantee that you could work with the same counseling team when you return.

# 

## Timeline & Deadline Policies

### What can you expect from InGenius if you have delayed your work?

InGenius wants to support you as much as we can in the days leading up to your deadline. However, if you have not shown investment in your work as we approach deadlines, your counseling team may no longer have the capacity to support you in your applications. We will also send warning letters to you and your parents.

**Here is what you can expect from us if you have:**

**a) Missed 3 meetings in a row**

**b) Have not completed any assignments for 3 weeks without explanation or asking questions for clarifications OR**

**c) Have not communicated anything to your counselors in more than 3 weeks without explanation:**

**Within 2 weeks of a deadline**:

* Our team of backup editors will work on essay edits for you, and you can expect essays turned around in 2-3 days.

**Within 1 week of a deadline**:

* Our team of backup editors will work on essay edits for you, and you can expect essays turned around in 1-2 days.

**Within 48 hours of a deadline**:

* At this point, we will no longer offer a final review on your materials, but we can give you 1 round of feedback, which may be done by any counselor or backup editor on the InGenius team.

### What can you expect from InGenius in the final days leading up to the deadline?

**If you send your FR 3+ days before deadline**:

* Your FAO will perform a thorough final review of your whole application (for EA/ED) and supplemental essays (RD). You will receive an email with feedback. It will take 24-72 hours to receive this feedback.
* You will take your FAO’s feedback and revise your application based on their feedback.
* For any higher-level feedback, your GC will help you implement the changes that your FAO recommended and approve you to submit your application.

**If you send your FR 1-2 days before the deadline**:

* Your FAO will do their best to review, but your material may need to go to someone else on the InGenius education team due to time constraints
* You will have very limited time to address any feedback
* Your GC will have almost no time to double check that FAO feedback was fully addressed. Your GC will check to make sure you don’t have any typos and have addressed feedback from the FAO.
* You are likely to submit your application on the day of the deadline (risking website crashing and other potential issues).

**If you send your FR on the day of the deadline**:

* Your FAO will not be able to complete a full final review. Your materials are likely to go to someone else on the InGenius education team due to time constraints.
* You will only receive feedback on grammar and typos. You will not receive content editing feedback.
* You will have no time for GC Approval.
* You will likely be submitting your application within hours of the deadline (risking website crashing and other potential issues).
* If you need support in the submission process, your team may not be available at the moment you press submit.
* If you send any application materials within 3 hours of the deadline, your materials won’t get reviewed at all.

### What can you do if you are experiencing stress or challenges with your mental wellbeing?

We know that the application season is incredibly stressful for students and families. You may be dealing with lots of high expectations from many different places, including yourself.

**What should you do if you feel like you need a “pause” from application counseling?**

You should communicate with your counselor and say that you need a break. You and your counseling team should decide on the length of the break so you can create a plan together on how best to catch up on your work when you resume application counseling.

It’s never helpful for you to simply “disappear” from your counseling team without any notice: you could fall behind and/or lose your counseling team. We want to ensure we can support you if you need a break, so please communicate so we can help you catch up.

**What kind of support can you expect from your counselors regarding mental health?**

Your counseling team are admissions counselors, not counselors trained in mental health. Your counseling team wants to give you emotional support but we cannot professionally give you advice regarding how to handle mental health diagnoses.

You should make sure that you know a professional counselor or psychologist at your school or local community whom you can contact if/when you need additional support.

Additionally, ALL IGP students have access to one month of free therapy (up to four live sessions) with a therapist through Better Help/Teen Counseling. You can visit [this website](https://www.betterhelp.com/igpstudent/) and use the access code 1ae77 to start the intake process any time.

InGenius Prep will have NO information on whether you actually pursue care through BetterHelp and CANNOT access any information you provide to BetterHelp. We are by no means promoting BetterHelp’s services over other care providers, nor are we profiting from this opportunity. We are simply providing this additional resource in the hopes that it can help improve access to professional emotional and mental health support if or when IGP students need it.

## Counselor/PM Time Off

Counselor/PM time off is important to keep everyone fresh and bright-eyed, especially considering all the reading and editing your team is doing :). The following dates are some of the dates when your counselors and PMs will be offline and unresponsive via WeChat/Whatsapp and email, depending on their location and the holidays we observe. We will remind students about these breaks closer to the date, and your counseling team will make sure you have a clear to-do list before going offline.

Specific Holidays that Impact the Application Cycle:

**Juneteenth (June 19, 2024):** Counselors/PMs in the US will be offline on Wednesday, June 19, to commemorate Juneteenth.

**Independence Day (July 4 and 5, 2024):** Counselors/PMs in the US will be offline on Thursday, July 4th and Friday, July 5th, to celebrate US Independence Day. Any urgent emails sent on the 4th or 5th will be responded to by the 6th.

**Labor Day (September 2nd, 2024):** Counselors/PMs in the US will be off on Monday, September 2nd and will return to work on the 3rd. Any messages sent will be responded to by the morning of the 6th in the counselor’s local time zone.

**Post-ED Break (November 2-4)**: After the Early Decision round of applications are submitted in early November, InGenius counselors/PMs take a much-needed few days off. This is often a good time for students to take a break as well before diving into further application work.

Please respect this time off and know that they will respond to you as soon as they return from the break.

**Veteran’s Day (November 11)**: Counselors/PMs in the US will be offline on November 11 in observance of the holiday.

**Thanksgiving (November 28-29, 2024):** Counselors/PMs in the US will not work on Thanksgiving or the next day. However, any emails that you send to InGenius counselors on Thursday or Friday will be responded to by Saturday morning in the counselor’s local time zone.

**Christmas (December 24-25):** Both Christmas Eve (December 24) and Christmas Day (December 25) are recognized holidays where counselors will be unavailable. However, any emails that you sent to InGenius counselors on the 24th or 25th will be responded to by the morning of the 26th in the counselor’s local time zone.

**New Year’s Eve/New Year’s Day (December 31 - January 1):** Counselors will be offline from noon on December 31 through noon on January 1 in their local time zone. It is in your best interest to have all of your applications that are due on January 1 submitted before the holiday!

Note: Counselors/PMs in other countries will be off based on the local national holiday policies.

## Best Practices for Application Counseling

* **Check Genie/Email/WeChat regularly & use GROUP communication**

ALL communication with your InGenius team should be done within your Google Group, via your account on the [Genie platform](http://platform.ingeniusprep.com), or through your WeChat group. Even when you think your email or message is only applicable to one of your counselors, you should **always** use group communication to ensure that your entire counseling team (FAO, GC, & PM) is updated on your progress.

Often, you may ask a question to your GC that your FAO is more equipped to answer, or vice versa, so group communication is beneficial to all parties.

* **Be respectful/polite to your counselors**

Your counselors work very hard on your behalf, especially working very long hours leading up to deadlines. They are also highly educated people who have your best interests at heart. You should always treat your counselors with respect, just like you would for your teachers at school.

If your counselor isn’t meeting your expectations, you can talk with them honestly but politely about what you are hoping to accomplish or how they can better help you.

* **Develop your own independence**

The college admissions process is a time for you to show the colleges of your dreams what YOU can do. We are here to help guide you through the process and help you brainstorm, but the work is ultimately your own.

If somebody else completes work for you, college admissions teams will often notice a change in a student’s voice in different essays. Again, the work must be your own!

* **Communicate even if you disagree with your counselor**

It’s important to note that your counselors are very talented individuals who either have experience working in an admissions office, or have attended colleges that are fiercely competitive. In other words, they know what they are talking about!

However, it is understandable that you may have other ideas about what you can write about in your essays, or you might change your mind about how you feel about writing about certain topics. **In these cases, you should share your feelings and explain why you think your alternatives are better.** Successful communication will ensure that everyone is on the same page and moving forward together. Our counselors are more than happy to accommodate your feelings, as we don’t want anybody to be uncomfortable!

* **Attend (and be on time for!) all meetings with your counselors**

At the beginning of the application season, students will meet with their Graduate Coach (GC) and Former Admissions Officer (FAO) to get to know each other. After that, students will meet with their GC about once per week for the next 5 weeks (for a total of 6 weekly meetings), while their FAO provides guidance from the sidelines.

FAOs will also join calls in which students solidify their college list and their essay topics. Once the weekly meetings have been completed , students and counselors will transition to biweekly meetings and will be able to do much more of their work through written feedback, so students will have less frequent meetings with their GC.

Students should provide at least 24 hours written notice for any cancellations of appointments with InGenius counselors. Any student shall be considered to have missed a meeting without advanced notice if the student does not join the meeting within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. Missed meetings will not be made up on a different date.

* **Complete homework and adhere to deadlines**

You should complete your homework for your counselor at least 24 hours before your meeting time or by the due date your counselor set (whichever is earlier).

If you get your homework to your counselor ahead of time, that means that you’ll be able to get more done during the meeting!

Students are responsible for checking their emails, especially any notifications in their university application portals, and submitting your applications by the time of the deadline.

* **Follow logistic details to ensure efficient & effective communication**
  + You should name your documents with your NAME, TITLE, and DATE. For example, Harry Potter would title his document:

“Harry Potter Duke Supplement 7/30/23”

* + If you are working on UK applications, please name all UK application documents by starting the title with ‘UK’. See how Harry would do it:

“UK: Harry Potter Personal Statement 7/30/23”

* + Use your Google Drive folder as the central place where you keep all documents related to Application Counseling.

Add all of your documents here and remember to name them as described above.

## Parent Involvement During AC

### How can you talk with your parents best?

Your parents will likely want to be involved in your application process, and you may have mixed feelings about this. Some students really want their parents to help them, while others want to make sure that this is a process about them. Either way, things will go the most smoothly if you TALK with your parents about what their expectations are and what your expectations are.

We recommend that you have a check-in with your family at the beginning of the fall semester to make sure you are on the same page. You should continue to check in with your parents, especially about their thoughts on your school list.

### 

### What if you and your parents disagree?

Your counselors are not here to solve your family miscommunications! You and your parents should talk about what you want out of your college experience so that you can advocate for yourself. We will do our best to advocate for you while also meeting your parents’ expectations.

### 

### What should you do if your parents want to write essays for you?

Some parents, with the best intentions in the world, want to help their children by writing essays for them. We have seen, time and again, that this is not effective (and, of course, it’s not ethical either).

It is obvious to an admissions officer that an adult has written an essay because of the tone and content of the essay (your counselors will likely know as well!). Instead of being a benefit to you, this will be a “red flag” that the admissions committee will take into consideration in your admissions decision.

If your parents want to write essays for you, you can talk with them and tell them that this is a process where you want to have ownership, since it is about **your** college experience, and suggest productive ways for them to be involved, such as brainstorming potential essay content with you, helping you find resources on schools of interest, connecting you to current students / alums of different colleges, etc.

# Appendix A – Typical Month-to-Month Timeline

Typical Month-by-Month Timeline

This timeline provides general information about the progress students are expected to make during the Application Counseling process. This timeline is subject to change given a student’s individual situation and progress. Thus, it should not be interpreted as a guarantee of service delivery dates.

**May**

* Finalize Summer Plans
* Finalize Testing Plans
* Determine & Ask for Letters of Recommendation (LoRs)
* Watch AC Orientation videos: [Session 1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C9tlW4uDeI), [Session 2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9BF4NbkfJE&feature=youtu.be), [Session 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRcVfNhwRf4), and [Session 4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HGKSr4Lncs).
* Complete Pre-AC Homework Prior to Three-Way Meeting with GC and FAO, including:
  + - Create and Share Common App Account
    - Share Score Reports and Transcripts for Grades 9-11 (as available)
    - Share School Profile and Past Results from High School
    - Select Teachers who will Write LoRs & start LoR Cover Letter

**Summer Months (June - August)**

* US Independence Day Break Counselors Offline July 4
* Complete Introductory Three-Way Meeting with GC and FAO
* Develop Working Relationship with Counselors
  + Research Schools a few days a week for ~15-30 min
* Application Persona
  + - Develop Application Persona with FAO
    - Review Application Persona Strategy in the Context of PS and Activities List with counselors
* Activities & Honors Lists
  + - Draft Activities & Honors Lists in Common App Format
    - Develop strategic list of Activities, Honors and Descriptions with GC
* Personal Statement
  + Brainstorm Personal Statement Topics with GC
  + Brainstorm University of California (UC) Personal Insight Questions (PIQs) as fodder for Personal Statement and supplemental essays (even if you are not applying) with GC
  + Select and Counselors Approve Personal Statement Topic
  + Complete at least 2 rounds of edits of full draft of Personal Statement
* Attend AC Bootcamp
* Develop Tentative School List (choose 3-5 schools) with counselors
  + Schedule Third-Party Interview (e.g., InitialView, Vericant) for Sept/Oct (if applicable, consult your counselor) & Schedule InGenius Mock Interview
  + LoRs
    - Submit LoR Cover Letters to teachers & Consider Additional LoRs
* Non-AC Work
  + Make Sure Academic Mentorship is good in progress (if applicable)
  + Make the Most of Summer Experiences:
    - Reflect on the Experiences
    - Brainstorm Stories that Could Be Included in Supplemental Essays
  + Important Notes:
    - You will transition from weekly meetings with your GC to biweekly meetings and written feedback after your 6th weekly meeting. You may have more frequent meetings based on the need and timing
    - By this time, you should have, *at the very least*, started on every aspect of the Homework, including the “High Achiever Status” (refer to Appendix for details)

**September**

* US Labor Day Counselors offline
* Collect Transcripts with Final Grade 11 Scores and Grade 12 Courses
* Edit and Finalize Activities List (add summer activities)
* Check-In with Letters of Recommendation Writers (if needed, translate the letters of recommendation by the certified teacher or organization)
* Finalize EA/ED Strategy and Early Schools
* Schedule EA/ED Alumni Interviews & Schedule InGenius Mock Interview (only schedule mock if you didn’t already do one for third-party interview)
* Revise Common App Personal Statement
* Review Common App Form
* Brainstorm EA/ED Supplemental Questions
* If applying, begin writing UC PIQs based on earlier brainstorming
* Parents prepare for Financial Certificate for EA/ED schools (if applicable)
* Discuss test score submission strategy: SAT, ACT, SAT Subjects, AP, TOEFL
* Send Standardized Test Scores to EA/ED schools

**October**

* Complete third-party interview (e.g., InitialView, Vericant) by mid-October (if applicable)
* School counselor and teachers submit transcript and LoRs for EA/ED schools (certified translation if needed)
* Parents sign ED agreement (if applicable)
* Finalize Common App Personal Statement
* Finalize EA/ED Supplemental Essay(s)
* Revise UC PIQs (if applying)
* Complete EA/ED Schools Application Final Review
  + - Send Final Review of application to FAO ideally 10 days - 2 weeks before deadline
    - Implement Final Review feedback
    - Wait for GC approval to submit
* Verify ED/EA Application Submission
  + - Send submission screenshot to Google Group
    - Upload submitted application to your Google Drive Folder

**November**

* InGenius Counselor/PM Break Offline 11/2-11/4, Veteran’s Day
* US Thanksgiving Break Counselors/PMs Offline
  + Set up EA/ED school portals and confirm that ALL schools have received ALL required materials
* Finalize School List (including ED2 and RD)
* Schedule RD Alumni Interviews (if applicable)
* Make any adaptations needed to the PS (word cuts) for Coalition Application, UC Application, or other application formats for November, December, January deadlines
* Submit Standardized Test Scoresto ALL schools *(including ALL RD schools)*
* School counselor and teachers submit LoRs and Transcripts to all schools (as early as possible and no later than 2 weeks before deadlines)
* Parents Prepare for Financial Certificate for RD schools (if applicable)
* If Applying to UC Schools:
  + - Complete and Review UC System Application Form, especially the courses section (it takes a lot of time!)
    - Finalize UC PIQs
    - Finalize majors for each UC
    - Complete UC System Application Final Review
      * Send Final Review of application to FAO ideally 10 days to 2 weeks before deadline
      * Implement Final Review feedback
      * Wait for GC approval to submit
    - Verify UC Application Submission (if applying)
      * Send submission screenshot to Google Group
      * Upload submitted application to your Google Drive Folder

**December**

* Don’t Leave All Your Work for Winter Break — You’ll Thank us Later!
* Christmas Break Counselors/PMs Offline 12/24-12/25
* New Year Break Counselors/PMs Offline noon 12/31 to noon 1/1 local timezone
* EA/ED Results typically come out by 12/20
  + Parents sign ED2 agreement (if applicable)
* Draft, Revise and Finalize ALL supplemental essays and materials
  + Schedule RD Alumni Interviews (if applicable)
* Complete ALL RD Application Final Review
  + - Send Final Review of applications to FAO ideally 10 days to 2 weeks before deadline
    - Implement Final Review feedback
    - Wait for GC approval to submit
  + Verify Application Submission
    - Send submission screenshot to Google Group
    - Upload submitted application to your Google Drive Folder

**January**

* Conduct Alumni Interview Prep
* Share follow up emails from schools with InGenius Prep counseling team
* Set up school portals and confirm that ALL Schools have received ALL required materials
* Submit ED/EA Deferral Letters of Continued Interest (if applicable)
  + InGenius Prep Education Team Break: January 27-31

**February**

* Submit other relevant RD applications with later deadline

**March**

* RD Admissions Results are announced

**April**

* Share admissions results with InGenius Prep counseling team (by 4/5)
* Counselors assist with Waitlist Letter(s) of Continued Interest (if included in package)
* Counselors assist with Decision of Attendance (if needed)
* Student & family provide Feedback and Testimonial to InGenius

**May**

* Make a deposit at college of choice (by 5/1 or college’s stated deadline)
  + Enjoy your summer before college. Answer InGenius Service Survey.

# 

# Appendix B – Overall To-Do List for 1 School

Overall To-Do List for 1 School

Here’s the average list of the work for 1 school (ED as an example) for a student between the beginning of your work with us and Nov. 1st:

1. Attend or Watch AC Orientation Videos ([Session 1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3C9tlW4uDeI), [Session 2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9BF4NbkfJE&feature=youtu.be), [Session 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRcVfNhwRf4), and [Session 4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7HGKSr4Lncs)) & complete “Required” section of the Homework assignment prior to first meeting with FAO and GC. (See Appendix B for full Homework details.)
2. Select your ED school (1 school) and research it thoroughly with your counselors’ guidance.
3. Write your Activity & Honors list & incorporate multiple rounds of feedback from your counselors.
4. Write your personal statement and incorporate multiple rounds of feedback from your counselors.
5. Write supplemental essays (normally between 1 and 3 essays for an ED school) and incorporate feedback from your counselors.
6. Fill out the rest of your Common Application, including activities & honors section, as well as additional information / COVID question (if applicable).
7. Send all your test scores to schools (TOEFL, SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests, AP Exams). If school is test optional, follow your counselor’s guidance on whether to submit.
8. Talk to your school guidance counselor about sending your transcript. Note: 9th grade is still middle school in China and South Korea, but U.S. and Canadian high schools include 9th-12th grade. Admissions officers will need to see your 9th through 12th grade transcript. If you repeated 9th grade, they will need to see both 9th grade transcripts.
9. Ask teachers for letters of recommendation either before leaving school for summer, or when returning to school in fall. Follow-up and remind teachers, build a strong relationship and share information about yourself with these letter writers, and pay for letter translation and notarization services (if needed). Make sure your teachers submit the letters online.
10. If applicable, register for a Third-Party Interview, complete practice interviews with your counselor, and send Third-Party interview videos to your ED school.
11. Parents and school counselor sign ED agreement.
12. Parents prepare the financial certificate (if the ED school asks for it).
13. Finally, allow time for a comprehensive Final Review from counselors before the application is submitted. For the Final Review, send a PDF of your completed application to your counselors.

The FAO will provide one round of comprehensive feedback. Then, you will implement all these changes (proactively ask your FAO questions, as needed). After this feedback has been incorporated, your GC will do a Final Check and give you approval to submit the application.