



TIPS ON APPLYING TO COLLEGE

Advice curated from ACE GNY Alumni on best practices before and during the college application process.

Written by Siam Suleri and Yadhira Morocho

BEFORE YOU APPLY

1. Identify what **specific pre-requisite high school courses** you might need to take for the college program you are interested in. For example, when applying for any engineering program, you will likely need to have taken certain science and math courses such as physics, chemistry, pre-calculus, or statistics.
2. Think about the type of **college setting** you would prefer as a student. Think about the location and convenience since it will be like a second home during your college experience.
3. If you are applying to Architecture School, make sure you **clearly understand what kind of architecture program each school you are applying to offers**. Typically, there are three undergraduate programs that architecture students can pursue:
 - Bachelor for Arts in Architecture (4 year Program)
 - Bachelor for Science in Architecture (4 year Program)
 - Bachelor's of Architecture (5 year Program)

[Learn the differences between these programs](#) and reflect on which one would be the best for you. Talk to any architects on your ACE Team about what is the best path to pursue. Go through [NAAB's Accredited Architecture School List](#) to see which accredited architecture schools best match your desires in a college education.
4. Double, triple, and quadruple check if the colleges you are applying to are **financially viable**. Talk to your Guidance Counselor or other informed individuals about how much your family can contribute (EFC), how much financial aid you'll be receiving, and if loans/scholarships are available for you to finance your education.

WHILE YOU APPLY

5. If a college you are applying to uses their own application portal instead of the Common App, make sure you fill out every section carefully before submitting your final application. **If you do not receive a confirmation email that your application has gone through for a college, email that school's region-specific admissions counselor** (this information should be available on the college's website) to confirm that your application went through.

6. Balancing schoolwork and college applications can be challenging. To ensure you are meeting your school's academic expectations while also working on your applications, **identify a good time management routine that works for you.**

- Mark deadlines for your applications and schoolwork on a calendar, using a different color code for each category.
- For any items you will need from other individuals, such as teacher recommendations, be sure to ask for those with plenty of time so neither you nor they feel rushed.
- Plan ahead on tasks that will take you a lot of time, such as essays. Work on a first draft far in advance of the deadline so you have time to edit and ask others to review your work so you can submit the best versions.

You may also want to **set a designated time frame during which you will work on college applications;** for example, block off every Monday and Wednesday from 6-7pm to work on your college applications.

7. Secure **strong letters of recommendation.** Seek out teachers or mentors who understand the major you are interested in pursuing and are able to best speak to your passion and excitement in that field. If majoring in a STEM related major, ask a math or science teacher for a letter of recommendation. If majoring in architecture, you might want to ask your CAD-tech teacher or any coordinator for an afterschool program such as robotics. You can also ask ACE Mentors for letters of recommendation.

RESOURCES

8. Network! **Building and maintaining relationships** with your teachers, mentors, industry professionals, and peers will be useful for your career both personally and professionally. Communicating with people in your network can look like sending someone a polite note on LinkedIn after meeting them at an event, emailing a professor to discuss a point further from a class, or simply asking a mentor for advice. Networking can support you in your college application process, as well as during and beyond college years when you begin to apply to internships and jobs.

9. There are many resources about the college application process, specifically for architecture or engineering school. Sites such as [Applying To College](#) or [College Essay Guy](#) are rich with tips and advice that you can utilize.

10. **You have a community of people who want to see you succeed. Utilize us!** Ask your ACE Mentors about their college experience and advice. Reach out to ACE GNY and ask to be connected with an ACE GNY Alumni at the college you are interested in. **Ask questions, be curious, and use your community to reach your goals.**

EMAIL US AT GREATERNY@ACEMENTOR.ORG WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE WITH COLLEGE APPLICATIONS. WE ARE HERE TO HELP!