

College Admissions:

How to **work** and **study** with **high returns**

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Introduction

- Overall acceptance rate is **~12%**
- **20%** of applicants who rank within the top **1% of their high school** will be accepted.
 - **80% will be rejected**

I'm here today to help, because I believe these statistics strongly affect the Chinese community.

Recent News from 3/14/06

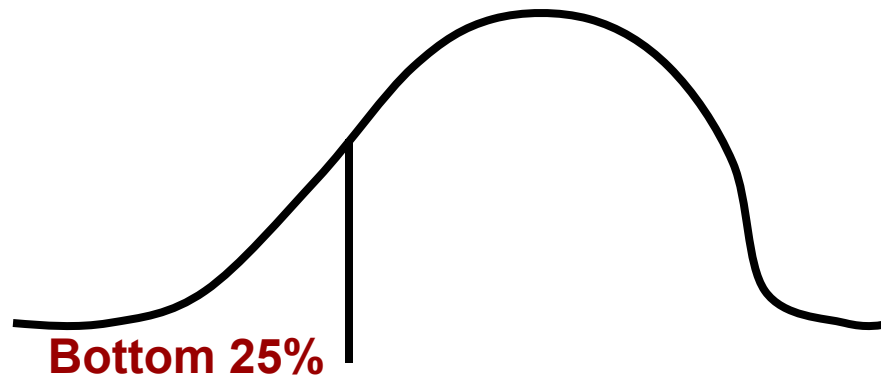


Intel STS Competition - “Junior Nobel Prize”

- 8 of 40 winners were Chinese
- “Model Minority”
 - 0.6% of the US population
 - Highest mean SAT and GPA

Why is admissions subjective?

- Why not take people with the highest GPA/SAT?
- In college, students will inevitably fall into a normal distribution



Colleges want their students, even those at the bottom, to be happy and successful in the future.

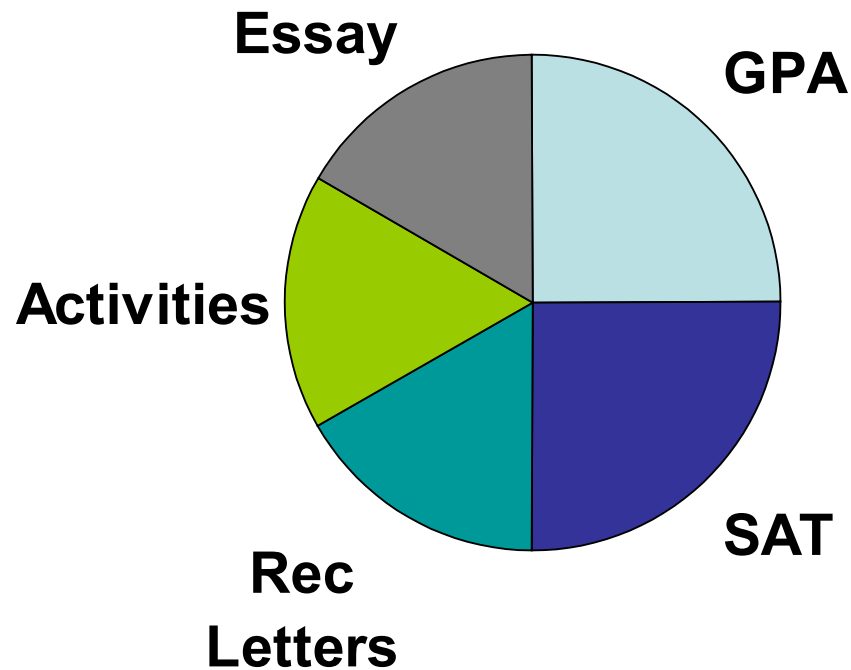
George W Bush

About Me

- Typical Chinese American Boy
 - Grew up in Irvine, California
 - Worked very hard
- Senior at Stanford
 - Changed my lifestyle – had lots more free time
 - My interactions with other students allowed me to better understand the application system.
- Future
 - UCSF Medical School

What I learned to do differently by accident

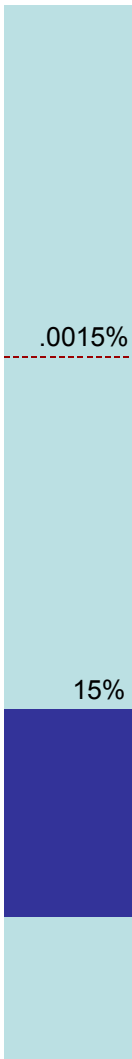
Considerations in an Application



Sample Breakdown – varies by school

Tip: Balance your time according to the application's emphasis

- If you study 10 hours for a final which raises your grade from a B to an A, you improved your application by **10% of 5% of 30% ~ .0015%**
- It's worth it to spend 100 hours on the **essays (worth 15%)**, yet some people spend less than 10 hrs.



SAT Scores

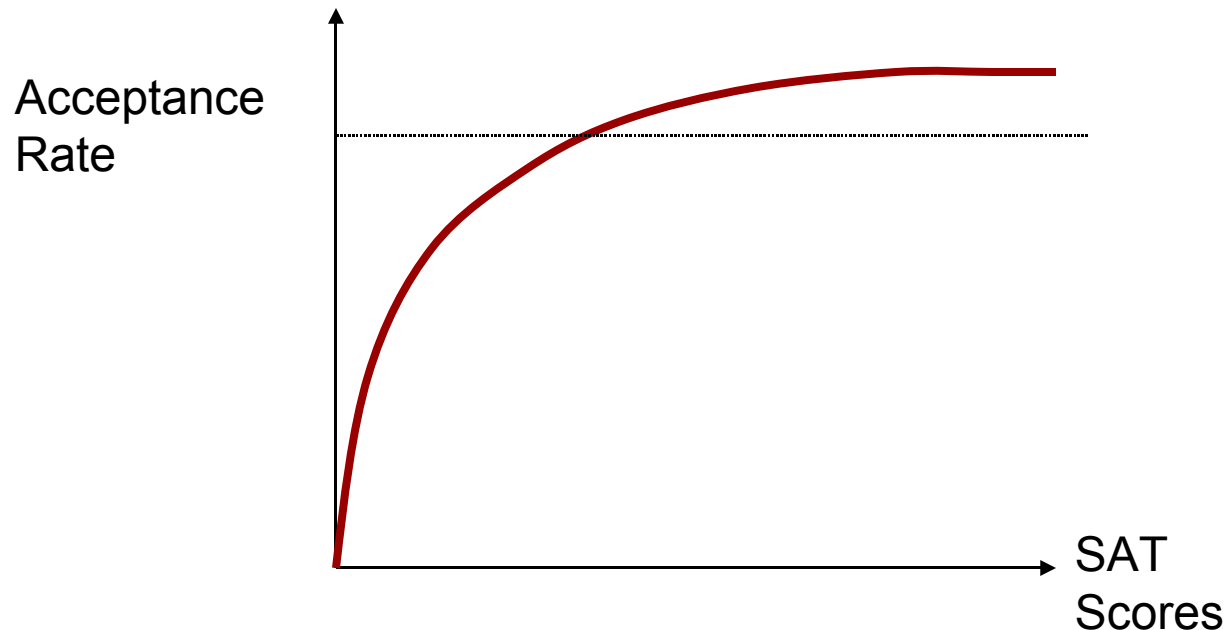
Background: Test is out of 2400 points for Writing, Verbal, and Math Subjects – each 800 points.

SAT Math Score

	Percent of Applicants	Admit Rate	Percent of Admitted Class
700–800	64%	16%	76%
600–699	27%	10%	21%
500–599	7%	5%	3%
Below 500	1%	<1%	<1%

Marginal Cost & Benefit

- **Threshold only** – you cannot stand out with good numbers
 - Try to get above 700 on each SAT subject
 - Try to be in the top 10% of your class GPA-wise



Extracurricular Activities

Many students do **as much as possible:**

End up with
a **very busy
schedule**

Burn out very
early in your
professional lives.

Create a **negative
atmosphere of
competition** with peers

Do tasks with little
personal or career
development value

Don't do this. Don't be a gunner.

Tip: Look at the real application early

6. ACADEMIC HONORS AND PROGRAMS (PLEASE DO NOT ENCLOSE A RÉSUMÉ OR EXTRA PAGES OF INFORMATION.)

List any academic awards or special academic programs (e.g., independent research, science, summer) during your high school and college years and include dates. PLEASE PRINT or TYPE.

7. EXTRACURRICULAR AND PERSONAL ACTIVITIES (PLEASE DO NOT ENCLOSE A RÉSUMÉ OR EXTRA PAGES OF INFORMATION.)

Please list your principal extracurricular, community and personal activities in the approximate order of their interest to you. These may include art, drama, dance, music, forensics, journalism, athletics, and organized school or community activities. In the "Positions Held" column, include major accomplishments and awards, musical instrument played, number of varsity letters earned and other relevant details. Please use only the space provided, but do not feel compelled to fill all of the blanks. PLEASE PRINT or TYPE.

HIGH SCHOOL:

	ACTIVITY OR INTEREST	GRADE LEVEL		APPROX. TIME SPENT		POSITIONS HELD, HONORS WON, LETTERS EARNED, ETC.
		10	11	12	HRS/WK	
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						

(varies)

Choose High Yield Activities

- Choose something you are passionate about
 - You will have to write an essay about what you chose and **why you chose it**
- Figure out what you enjoy doing early
 - Duration is dedication
- Spend just as much time finding/researching your activity as much as you do it.

Activities – Be Creative

Very Common

- Piano
- Tennis
- Officer of a club
- Community service
- Summer programs

Unique

- Research internship
- Political advocacy
- Volunteering for a personal cause
- International work
- Starting a business

Don't compete with your peers

Don't fall into the cut-throat culture

- Shed the “you’re supposed to do this or that” misconceptions
- Don't let classmates intimidate you, they are in the same position as you are.
 - Find an older student who has already gone through the process to be your mentor.
- Find activities not advertised at your school
- You can be successful while still keeping your humanity

How to find a good job

“By 19, Jon had served in the Coalition for Adopted Children for three years. As an executive member of the foundation’s steering committee, he was instrumental in the fundraising campaign which net \$60,000 and was an integral advisor in California State Senator Ortiz’s proposed legislation supporting child rights.

- 3) **Find** out the issue that you really care about.
- 5) **Search** for a community partner.
- 7) **Cold call:** figure out who makes hiring decisions
- 9) **Write** a professional letter requesting for a meeting, talk about your interest
- 11) **Get** the high-yield position at a research lab or public service org. and have an amazing experience.

The process of self-discovery

- The most important thing is to figure out what you want to do *after* college.
- Think hard about what your experiences say about your
 - strengths & weaknesses
 - learning style
 - affective skills
- Develop yourself in a **sustainable** manner

Tip: Get to know your teachers / community leaders

- You will learn more and enjoy school more
- Broaden your contacts
- Give your teachers a real basis of which to support your application to college.

If you are enthusiastic about developing a rapport with your teachers, you can enrich their day as well. It's a win-win situation that many students pass up.

Myth: I need success to be happy.

Needing success to be happy will only keep you as happy as your next 'A.' It is like **chasing the wind**.

An inner joy derived from innate satisfaction combined with an outward drive for personal improvement is the most powerful combination.

I offer my observations not to provide shortcuts but to free you from unneeded stress and to show you that there can be more creativity to the admissions process than you imagine.

Thanks

- Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.
- For detailed issues, I offer personal advising and tutoring.

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