Dear EAOP Family,

Winter is always an exciting time for the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP) staff. By now, our seniors have submitted their college applications and in just a few weeks they will receive notifications from the universities and colleges they have been admitted to. The excitement in their emails, letters, and voices when they let us know about their plans for the coming fall tells us that we have accomplished our goal: to prepare students for college.

EAOP’s mission is to increase the number of students who have the opportunity to achieve a post-secondary education. Hence, in this issue you will find a great deal of information that focuses on how students can prepare themselves to be competitively eligible for college. Colleges and universities are becoming more selective and many of the students admitted to college have well surpassed the minimum GPA and coursework requirements for admission. I strongly urge you to consider the recommendations that are provided when completing your academic plan.

In the coming weeks you will receive information from our office about future EAOP sponsored events and activities. Each activity is designed so that you will have the opportunity to learn more about college preparation while obtaining the tools you need to succeed. I encourage you to join us by registering for each event you are eligible to attend.

In closing, EAOP would like to send a special THANK YOU to all of our school contacts, principals, counselors, career technicians, and community partners for the work you do to assist students with reaching their goals. We look forward to continuing our work with each of you to offer the best educational opportunities for our students.

As always, our staff is here to assist you if you have any questions or concerns, so please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Frances Calvin, Director UCR EAOP

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The California Community College System was created back in 1967 and has since grown to be the largest system of higher education in the world. Today it remains an excellent choice for students who want to continue their education after high school. For students who want to complete their bachelor’s degree, community colleges give students the opportunity to finish their general education requirements before transferring to a four-year university.

At Transfer Prep Day, we will have:

- Representatives from local community colleges to answer admissions questions specific to the community college system.
- Speakers from UCR’s Transfer Resource Center available to provide information on transferring from a community college to a UC campus.
- UCR Financial Aid representatives who will help explain different ways to pay for college.

Who can attend Transfer Prep Day?

Transfer Prep Day is specifically for students who will be graduating this summer — that’s seniors in the class of 2015. Parents and guardians of students are also more than welcome to join us!

Space is limited and attendees must register online!

You can register to attend the event online by logging on to: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/transferprep2015

Where and When?

More information will be sent out to those who register to attend as the event draws closer. We look forward to seeing you there!

The percentage of UC graduates who transferred from a California Community College.

29%

The number of students served annually by the California Community College system. These students are served by 117 campuses throughout California that offer more than 175 degree and certificate programs.

2,000,000


CAMPUS TOURS

March 24, 26, 31 and April 2

Juniors!

EAOP will be hosting Campus Tours to a number of colleges in southern California! Join us for a chance to speak with college students about what it’s like to study on their campus.

Sign up information will be sent out via e-mail in February to students in the class of 2016, so be sure to keep an eye on your e-mail for more details!

EAOP RECRUITMENT

Do you know someone who wants to join EAOP?

EAOP is currently recruiting students in grades 9 through 11 at certain schools in the Inland Empire. If you know a student who would like to participate, contact us at eaop@ucr.edu with your name, grade, high school, and an e-mail address where we can contact you!
Last year the University of California, Berkeley had the most competitive admission rate across all the UC campuses. For the 2014-2015 school year the campus received more than 73,000 applications and admitted only 17.3% of that group. The number of applications makes sense; after all, U.S. News and World Report ranked UC Berkeley the top public school in the entire nation in September 2014.

The Inland Empire is full of talented students and just last year many UCR EAOP students were admitted to top tier schools like Berkeley, Yale, and the University of Pennsylvania. For students who are aspiring to attend these schools, or any of the UC campuses, just meeting the minimum requirements for admission will not make your application stand out when it’s in a stack with 73,000 other students. For the “reach” schools, you have you go above and beyond.

Consider taking classes at a local community college. It shows that you are serious about your education and courses completed at community colleges may transfer for credit at four-year universities! Many community colleges even waive enrollment fees for high school students — although other fees may still apply and you will have to purchase textbooks. These classes are also great for getting to know what type of work will be expected of you after high school.

So... what can you do?

Challenge yourself by taking and successfully completing Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses that are offered at your school. Universities like to see that students are taking advantage of opportunities at their school, challenging themselves with a lot rigorous coursework, and doing well.

Earning scores of 3, 4 or 5 on AP exams or 5, 6, or 7 on IB exams is a great way to show colleges that you’re ready to take on college level classes. Not only will this look great on your application, but universities may even give you credit towards your college classes with these scores.

At UCR, for example, earning a 4 on the English Language & Composition AP exam gives you credit for two entire classes!
Some colleges will accept SAT or ACT scores as late as December of the your senior year, even though that's after many application deadlines have passed!

EAOP always encourages students not to wait to take the exams. If you take the exam for the first time the spring of your junior year, that still leaves you plenty of time to study if you want to take the exam again. Or, if you’re not comfortable with one test, you still have plenty of time to take the other.

The key is to not wait until the last minute. Take the exam early so that you can properly prepare for the test.

Volunteer in your local community, participate in extra-curricular activities, and put effort into things outside of school, too. Use this as a chance to really develop experience in anything that you’re passionate about, whether it’s art, theatre, dance, leadership activities like student government or other organizations, or working with community service programs.

These experiences show that you’re willing to go beyond just the minimum, and it’s an opportunity to develop a stronger understanding of who you are in the community around you.

Each year of high school is just as important as the others, whether it’s your freshman or senior year. Use each year to show that you take your academics seriously and that you would be an asset to any college campus after high school. Although it might be tempting to take easy classes, you always want to take a full course load with advanced coursework while staying active in your extra-curricular activities.

After a semester of hard work and with summer right around the corner, keep your grades up and finish the year strong!

As you finish out the school year, remember a few things. If you earned a D or F grade in any of your classes, talk to your counselor about opportunities to retake the courses so you can earn credit and improve your GPA.

With so many colleges receiving tens of thousands of applications every year, following these six suggestions above will make sure that you are on track to attend college. Take advantage of the opportunities that are available to you, work hard, and you'll be well prepared for any challenge you face after high school.
What do you need to complete the FAFSA?

- Tax return information for 2014 from students, parents, and guardians, along with W-2s and other proofs of income.
- Your social security number or alien registration number. Students without these numbers have another avenue for financial aid, which you can check out in the next section.
- A FAFSA Pin Number, which is used as your electronic signature. Both students and their parents or guardians will need a PIN. You can register for a number at https://pin.ed.gov.

What do you need to apply for CalGrants?

- Complete your FAFSA application first. CalGrants uses the FAFSA application as part of their program.
- A GPA Verification Form needs to be filled out and signed by a school official. The form can be downloaded from the CalGrants website: http://www.calgrants.org/.
- A current e-mail address is required to receive information from both FAFSA and CalGrants. If you don't have an e-mail address, there are a variety of free providers, such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Hotmail. Create an account and check it often!

FAFSA and CalGrants Deadline: MARCH 2, 2015

Financial Aid For AB 540 Students

Back in 2001, the state of California found that many students were ineligible to complete the FAFSA, so the legislature passed a law that created a different avenue for aid applications for students who are non-citizens. The law was Assembly Bill 540.

AB540 allows undocumented students to pay in-state tuition, and the California Dream Application allows these students to also apply for financial aid. Much like FAFSA, filling out the California Dream Application will help open doors to scholarships and grants for college.

There are a few requirements, but the application process is similar to FAFSA and CalGrants: You will need to register for a PIN at the California Dream Application website, submit a GPA verification form, gather any proof of income statements you have, and submit all documents no later than March 2.

Student requirements to submit the California Dream Act:

- Cannot file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Have attended at least 3 full years in a California High School.
- Will graduate from a California high school or obtain a GED before college.
- If without lawful immigration status, have or will file an affidavit with the college they will attend stating that they have or will file an application to legalize their immigration status when they are eligible to do so.

For more information and to start your application, visit: https://dream.csac.ca.gov/
More Financial Aid

The UC system, just like other colleges and universities, offers a variety of financial aid to eligible students. The UC Blue & Gold Opportunity offers further tuition assistance for students who are eligible for aid and whose family income does not exceed $80,000. The UC system also has the Middle Class Scholarship Program, which focuses on aid to students whose family income is below $150,000.

Both of these programs are only available to students who submit a FAFSA or a California Dream Application, which is why we strongly encourage all students to file the applications every year.

In addition to system-wide financial aid, individual UC campuses may also offer scholarship awards to students based on a variety of factors, like academic excellence. For many of these scholarships, there is no application process outside of filing the UC application and applying for FAFSA, but you should check with each individual campus to see what types of aid they offer and how you can apply.

For more information, click any of the links below:

- UC Berkeley
- UC Davis
- UC Irvine
- UCLA
- UC Merced
- UC Riverside
- UC San Diego
- UC Santa Barbara
- UC Santa Cruz

The CSS/Financial Aid Profile

The CSS Profile is an application run through College Board, the organizers of the SAT. It’s an additional application for financial aid that is used by about 400 independent and private colleges, such as Stanford, Columbia University, or the University of Notre Dame.

If you’re applying to any private, independent, or out-of-state colleges, we highly recommend that you check the list of CSS Partner Colleges to see if your school accepts the CSS Profile. Click here to view the full list of colleges.

Be aware that there is a fee for submitting the CSS Application, so make sure that the schools you are applying to require the CSS Application before you complete it. The cost is $25 for the initial school and $16 for every additional school. College Board does offer fee waivers for the CSS Application, which waives the fee for up to 8 campuses. Whether you receive a waiver is based on family income and assets reported on the profile.

To get started on your CSS Profile, visit http://css.collegeboard.org/

The Senior Timeline

January 1: Start filing your FAFSA applications

January 1-30: Submit any SAT or ACT exam scores from December.

February 1-30: Continue to file your FAFSA or California Dream Application

February 1-30: Attend a Cash for College night at a local high school.

March 2: The FAFSA Deadline

March 1-30: You might be receiving college acceptance letters during March.

March and Beyond: Each school will have their own deadlines for placement exams and fees. Do not miss them!

March 1-30: You might be receiving college acceptance letters during March.

April: You may begin to receive financial aid reward letters from the schools you applied to.

April: Take tours or visit campuses if you haven’t seen them yet. This might help you make your final decision.

May 1: College Decision Day

For many schools, this is the deadline to submit your Student Intent to Register (SIR). Only submit one SIR and only to the school you will enroll in for the fall.

May: Applying for housing? Be sure to check with your school so you know when the deadline is.

May: You may also need to take placement exams at the college during May. These are required, so do not miss them!
For-Credit Summer Classes At UCR!

Want the chance to take a college level course at the University of California, Riverside? Every year over the summer, UCR Summer Academy accepts 150 current high school students to take for-credit classes during UCR’s Summer Session.

Students who participate will earn college credit that might transfer to another campus, receive an orientation and UCR campus tour, and will have the opportunity to meet with currently enrolled UCR students. Available courses include a variety of subjects like Biology, Art, and Political Science, and span five to seven weeks.

If you plan on attending, you should be aware that there are course fees that are required for the program, as well as fees for textbooks, parking, and a UCR ID card. However, there is also financial aid available for students who meet certain criteria.

Eligibility Criteria

- Currently in grade 9, 10, or 11
- Must demonstrate a 3.5+ cumulative GPA
- Provide a letter recommendation from a teacher or counselor

For more information or to start your application, be sure to check out the Summer Academy website, at:

http://summeracademy.ucr.edu/

For information on the required fees and financial aid that's available to students, visit:

http://summeracademy.ucr.edu/fees.html

PSAT Results, Scholarships, and More!

Back in October high schools throughout the country administered the PSAT/NMSQT exam. For many of you, this was probably the first time you had the chance to take an exam that’s similar to the SAT, which makes it a great experience for your junior year when most students take the SAT.

In December, the score reports for the PSAT are returned to students who took the test. This report will give you the chance to see where your strengths are along with any weaknesses that you should try to work on for the next year. The score report contains other useful information, too. To see a sample report, click here!

National Merit Scholarship

If you did exceptionally well on the PSAT, you’re automatically entered into a competition to receive one of more than 8,000 scholarships!

Award recipients won’t be notified until spring 2016, and to be eligible students normally need to score into the 96th percentile or above. Still, if you did really well, keep an eye on your mailbox to see if you are eligible!

Personalized SAT Prep

Your score report not only shows you the answers to any of the questions you missed, but it also gives you access to online SAT prep that’s specifically tailored to you based on your PSAT results!

Collegeboard.org/quickstart is a great place to continue practicing for the SAT. In order to sign up for the website, you’ll need the Access Code from your score report.

AP Potential

The score report will also tell if you have the potential to take and succeed in an Advanced Placement (AP) class based off your PSAT results.

To see what classes are recommended for you, sign into collegeboard.org/quickstart, register with your Access Code, and then talk with your counselor about if these classes are right for you!
As you work your way through your second semester you'll need to start thinking about which classes you'll take next year. If you find yourself doing well in a particular subject area, you might want to consider taking AP, IB, or Honors level classes if they are offered at your school. These classes give great experience for what college level classes might be like and allow you to challenge yourself academically, but it’s important to remember that they are also a lot of work!

Here are a few points to remember as you weigh the pros and cons of taking advanced coursework. Remember to talk these over with your parents, your teachers, and your counselors, as it’s important that you do well if you do choose to take AP, IB, and Honors classes.

### Why take an advanced class?

- **To challenge yourself.** Advanced coursework gives you the chance to experience the work of a college-level class and to push yourself beyond the expectations of normal classes.
- **To prepare for college.** Students who take more advanced coursework arrive at college better prepared and ready to take on the academic responsibilities that come after high school. By taking advanced classes, you can develop strong critical thinking, reading, and writing skills that are a must for higher education.
- **To earn college credit.** Students who earn 3, 4, or 5 grades on AP exams or 5, 6, or 7 on IB exams might earn college credit. This means you will have fewer classes to take while in college, which may help you graduate faster and save you some real money.
- **To improve college admissions chances.** Students who take advanced classes and do well may see an increased GPA. Advanced classes also look great on your transcript and will make your college applications shine.

### Who should take an advanced class?

- **Students who are doing well in their regular coursework.** If you’re already receiving great grades in all of your math classes, you may want to think about taking an advanced class. The same goes for any subject, whether it’s English, science, or art. If you’re doing well, use these advanced classes as a chance to push yourself.
- **Students who are ready for a challenge.** Advanced classes require a lot of work outside of the classroom in order to stay on top of your assignments. They have more reading, more writing, and more homework than normal classes, so you should be prepared for work that will really challenge you academically.
- **Students who are able to make time for advanced coursework.** AP, IB, and Honors classes require not just a lot of effort, but a lot of time. If you have a number of extracurricular activities or if you’re working a part time job, be aware of the time commitment required by these classes. You don’t want to take advanced classes if it will have a major impact on the rest of your schoolwork.

One of the best ways to know if taking higher level classes is right for you is by talking to your teachers and counselors directly. They will understand your abilities the best and will be able to let you know if you can thrive in these types of classes. Although there are a lot of benefits to taking more rigorous coursework, it’s important that you balance those with the realities of what these classes will demand from you. But, if you’re ready to go above and beyond, talk to your counselor to see how you can enroll into these classes for next year!
College Campus Virtual Tours and Information

Campus Tours
www.campustours.com

College Application Links

University of California
www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions

California State University
www.csumentor.edu

California Community Colleges
www.ccco.edu

The Common Application
www.commonapp.org

Undergraduate Admissions

University of California Undergraduate Admissions
http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/admissions/

California State University Undergraduate Admissions
http://www.calstate.edu/admission/

College Examinations

SAT Reasoning and SAT Subject Exam
www.collegeboard.com

ACT + Writing Exam
www.actstudent.org

College Mentoring and Advising

The College Board
www.collegeboard.com

Early Academic Outreach Program–UC Riverside
http://eaop.ucr.edu

Early Academic Outreach Program-UC Systemwide
http://eaop.org

Department of Education College Information
www.college.gov

Financial Aid

Financial Aid Forecaster
www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov

Free Application for Federal Student Aid
www.fafsa.ed.gov

College Scholarship Service Profile
Profileonline.collegeboard.com

UC Blue+Gold Opportunity Plan
www.universityofcalifornia.edu/blueandgold

Scholarship Information

FinAid! Unusual Scholarships
http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/unusual.phtml

Black Excel’s Minority Scholarship List
http://www.blackexcel.org/100minority.htm

Free 4-U Minority Scholarships
http://www.free-4u.com/minority.htm

Inland Empire Scholarship Fund
http://iesfbecas.org/

NCAAP Scholarship Information
http://www.naacp.org/youth/scholarships/information/index.htm

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)
www.maldef.org

Hispanic Scholarship Fund
www.hsf.net

Other Scholarship Search Engines
www.scholarships.com
www.fastweb.com
www.scholarshipssearchsecrets.com
www.finaid.org

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