

Make that application list and check it twice

Welcome back, everybody. I hope this column finds you happily relaxed from a summer well-spent.

Let's kick off the new school year with advice for rising seniors: You are entering application crunch-time! So, here is an overview of the important college admission tasks coming up to help keep you on track.

Basically it boils down to three things: List, applications, deadlines. I will walk through the items, but please keep in mind that applying to college is an individualized process so each student may or may not have all of these steps to address.

And, this list might not entail everything that needs to be completed because often each college — think specialized programs such as dual degrees, performing arts, etc. — has its own set of requirements.

If you want even more details than I provide, go online and follow this general senior year checklist: <https://bit.ly/2mKx8xD>

1. List: OK, first of all, rising seniors will want to have a finalized college list. This should include about eight-to-12 schools, of which at least two are

“likely” schools with acceptance rates greater than 70 percent. Acceptance rates can be found at the College Board website; <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/compare-colleges>.

As you add a college or university to this list, you will see its acceptance rate.

Remember that acceptance rates are a rough estimate of the likelihood of admission. The landscape changes every year. Hence have at least two “likely” schools.

2. Applications: Plot an application work plan. Once the college list is finalized, students should research application deadlines and requirements. Find out which schools offer early deadlines. (None of the public colleges/universities in California do so.) Check college websites for more information on deadlines.

A note on early action/early decision: I always suggest taking advantage of early action deadlines provided that the student is ready to put their best self forward with respect to grades, test scores and essays. Applying early



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action can increase the chance of admission and merit money.

Regarding early decision, which is binding, only apply if you have a hands-down favorite school that your family supports. If you choose to apply early that means applications are usually due Nov. 1 or Nov. 15. Watch out: Some are due even earlier, like Georgia Tech which is due Oct. 15.

3. Deadlines: Complete applications in order of their due dates. Make a spreadsheet with each school's requirements: Early deadline applications go first, which often are for schools using the Common Application or the Coalition Application. Then focus on the UC and CSU applications, which are due Nov. 30. Once submitted, work on the regular decision deadlines, which are usually due in January.

Now let's drill down into some of the specifics of applications:

■ **Essays:** Along with straight-up data entry about you, your family, your high school and activities, you will need to write several essays. I highly recommend getting these essays finished as soon as possible. Once the school year gets going, you're only going to get busier.

Essay questions for the Common, Coalition and UC applications are available online now. There are often many school-specific essays to complete as well.

■ **Testing:** Finish taking all standardized tests — SAT, ACT, Subject Tests — that you will be submitting. If you are applying early, then usually October/November are the last test dates available since scores need to be sent in by the deadline.

Remember that even though applications ask for test scores, official scores need to be sent directly to each school from the College Board and ACT websites.

■ **Letters of recommendation:** Make sure you have lined up teachers to write letters of rec for you. This is needed for most private schools and many public out-of-state schools; also certain UCs “invite” students to submit these. Davis High students need to meet with their

counselors in October and turn in a “Letter of Recommendation” packet. It's on Naviance, <https://bit.ly/2LEQqTR>, if you want to get that out of the way now.

■ **College visits/interviews:** It's not too late to visit to see whether or not it makes sense to apply. Also visiting signals demonstrated interest and therefore may increase the chance of admission at schools that track this. Know which schools conduct interviews and by when. Often there is a deadline for interviewing (USC by December 1, for instance) so be prepared to interview and don't miss out on the chance to help yourself stand out.

■ **Grades and transcripts:** Probably goes without saying that you want to keep up your GPA. Even though for the UCs and the CSUs GPA is based only on the 10th and 11th grade, you will send a final transcript to whichever school you choose to attend.

Senior grades that take a dip can raise alarm bells at a college. Don't give them any reason to rescind their offers of acceptance. Remember to order and send official transcripts by the deadline to schools that require it.

And, lastly, a few general tips:

■ Check your checklist regularly.

■ Don't procrastinate — get apps done. Do not submit at the last minute. Seriously!

■ Don't submit applications without checking them over thoroughly.

■ Once you have submitted, make sure to check that each application has been received along with all the other necessary information.

■ Continue to check portals to make sure your application is complete. Schools may ask for additional information. You don't want to miss out on a request. That can undermine your acceptance.

■ Enjoy your senior year. This is hard to do in the midst of applications but it is so important for overall mental and physical health. Plus it is fun! Best of luck and hope your new school year is off to a great start.

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of *The Right College For You*. Her column is published monthly. Reach her at jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org, or visit www.therightcollegeforyou.org

Blarney and beer, but no green

During part of my travels this summer I flew over parts of Ireland and drove through the countryside. It was not the Ireland of former trips nor of my imagination. I think of Ireland and the color green as synonymous. This comes from green beer on St. Patrick's Day, the green kit of their national sports teams and its poetic name: The Emerald Isle.

But what I saw was not green. Rather it was parched brown. The Irish Times published a dramatic photograph, taken from space, of Ireland before and after some 6 weeks of drought. The after shot could easily have been some sun-blasted drought-plagued Western State that we, in this sun-blasted drought-plagued Western State, know so well.

England was no better off. Kew Gardens, normally an oasis of verdant pastures interspersed with exotic plants and enormous glass houses was wall-to-wall yellow grass, and hot and sticky.

Now Ireland and the Irish are accustomed to some rain on a lot of days, and a lot of rain on some days. The same is true of much of England, though London and the South East are normally drier and warmer than northerly and westerly locations. These normally wet regions do not have a sufficient

infrastructure to survive extended droughts and so the notable lack of rainfall was a hot topic of conversation in the British news second only to the machinations of Brexit.

Much of that conversation revolved around global warming, climate change, melting ice-caps and sea-level rise, and sought to justify cause and assign blame. These conversations are frustrating because they obfuscate progress or aim the solutions in directions we humans generally do not wish to go.

It occurred to me that if Ireland is in drought — Ireland! — we are in deep doo-doo and it is time to stop arguing the pitch and toss but start focusing on the infrastructure that will be needed for human kind to survive on a hot planet. I've addressed this idea previously suggesting we need to think like new Romans, who were the great builders of ancient times.

I did see a piece of such infrastructure in London: it's called the Thames Barrier that came into service in 1984. This is literally a steel wall built from one bank of the River Thames to the other, equipped with gates that are open most of the time for ships to pass. The gates are closed when London is threatened by flood: that happens when



MICHAEL J. LEWIS
A POINT OF BREW

there is high river flow, a high tide and a storm surge off the North Sea.

The gates closed about a half-dozen times in recent years, but with increasing frequency. In today's dollars, the barrier cost about \$3 billion to build, is half a kilometer long and, given rising oceans, it should be effective until about 2060 or so. Futurists, who assume London will still be there in 2060, are predicting the need for a new barrier across the Thames estuary that will be some 16 kilometers (10 miles) long!

Of course I drank a lot of beer while traveling even in the wine-growing areas of Portugal and Spain. It's not so much that I prefer the taste of beer (I do) but these days I also find wine a bit too acid, and a couple of glasses sets off an esophageal conflagration that can only be doused with a handful of antacid pills. It was also a pleasure to visit a former student of mine who has opened a brewery in Madrid called Cerveceria Peninsula; we had a grand few hours together.

The effect of wine on my

digestion caused me to pay attention to a headline exclaiming, “There is no safe amount of alcohol.” In the New York Times on Aug. 30, Aaron E. Carroll examined and criticized the study that sparked this rather startling, panic-causing news. He calms the fluttering heart with this opening: “The truth is much less newsy and much more measured.”

Turns out the journalists who wrote the hot headlines, either deliberately or through ignorance, failed to understand the kind of research they were reporting on (a so-called meta-study) and the level of risk of illness detected. Aaron

soon cuts to the chase: “For each set of 100,000 people who consume one drink per day per year, 918 can expect to experience one of the 23 alcohol-related problems in any one year.”

But here's the thing: of 100,000 non-drinkers, 914 will have the same disease risk. Thus, of 100,000 people, only 4 may be affected specifically by drinking one drink per day and 99,996 are unaffected by alcohol. The risk goes up with more drinks per day, and it is true that zero consumption has the lowest risk, but even at a high rate of consumption, that is excessive by any measure (five drinks per day), the

“vast majority” of people are unaffected by alcohol.

I was pleased to note, however, that the study agreed that modest intake of alcohol somewhat reduces a drinker's risk of diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Aaron's common-sense conclusion is that if you drink, you should drink modestly. If you drink, do not stop drinking for any perceived health benefit. If you abstain from drinking, do not take it up for any perceived health benefit.

— Michael Lewis is a longtime Davis resident; his column is published every other week. Reach him at cymro@sbglobal.net.

WEDDING

Wingfield-Evans

Enterprise staff

Emma Charteris Wingfield and Patrick Ryan Evans are to be married on Sunday, Oct. 7, 2018, at Craigmillar Castle in Edinburgh, Scotland. Emma will be given away by her parents and Davis legends, John Wingfield and Marilyn Ramenofsky.

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