

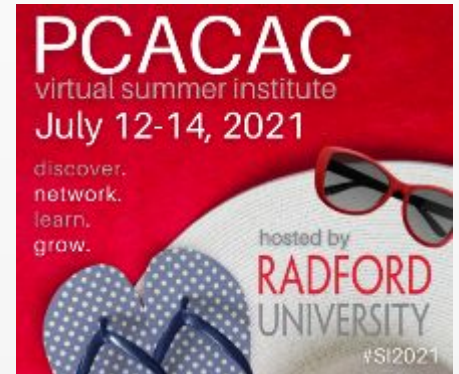
Welcome to PCACAC's Virtual 18th Annual Summer Institute



**A4 - Finding True North In a Demagnetized
World - Ethics in College Admission_s**

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FACULTY



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Learning Objectives



1

- Overview of NACAC's Guide

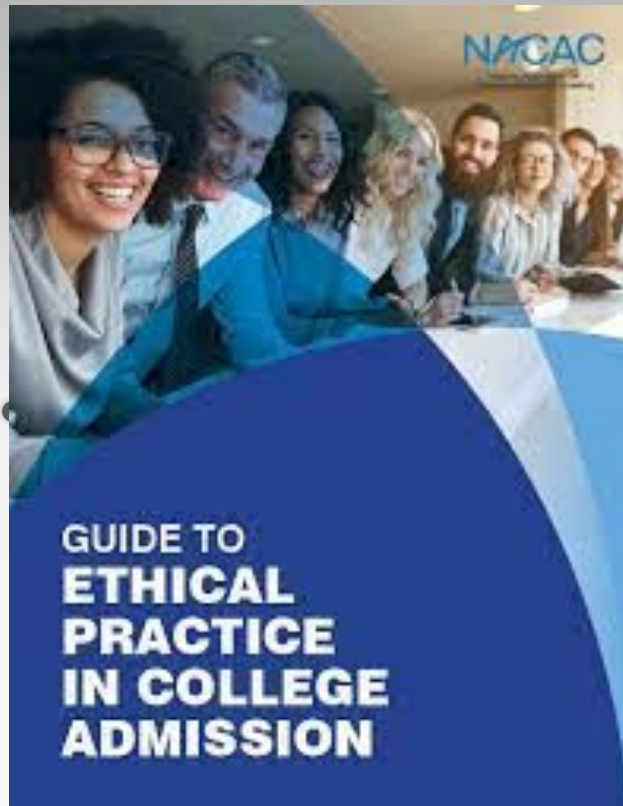
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- Key Elements

3

- Dilemmas

Our Ethical Guide



Guide's Core Values

- Education
- Fairness and Equity
- Professionalism
- Civility
- Collaboration
- Trust
- Social Responsibility



The *Guide*: What Really IS it?

- A brief history
 - Meant to help all parties navigate the intersection of idealism, "meritocracy", commercialism, equity and access, and institutional fiscal survivalism
- Relationship to Admission Practices Committee
- Education



The *Guide* Covers:

- Professional conduct
- Transparency
- Conflicts of interest
- Application plan definitions
- Deferred and mid-year admission
- Transfer admission
- Wait lists
- International recruitment



Section 1

Section I: The Ethical Core of College Admission

- Truthfulness and Transparency
- Professional Conduct
- Respect for Confidentiality



Section 1: Keys



- Section A.
 - Publish data that is as accurate as possible.
 - Don't lie or intentionally mislead.
 - Reveal how housing is awarded.
 - Don't obfuscate Financial Aid award letters.
- Section B.
 - Advise families to be honest in all parts of process.
 - Don't take bribes.
 - Don't trash the competition.
- Section C.
 - Protect confidentiality.
 - Don't ask candidates to rank order

Section 2



Section II: The Responsible Practice of College Admission

- Admission Cycle Dates, Deadlines, and Procedures for First-Time Entry Undergraduates
- Wait Lists
- Transfer Admission
- International Admission

Section 2: Keys



- **Section A: Admission Cycle Dates, Deadlines, and Procedures for First-Time Entry Undergraduates**
 - October 15th should be earliest app deadline
 - May 1st should be common notification deadline
 - This includes individual school departments
 - Candidates should not be asked to commit prior to May 1st
 - Applicants should not be offered admission prior to conclusion of junior year

Section 2: Keys



- **Section B: Wait Lists**

- Schools should provide historical data
- Deposits should not be required
- Candidates should have at least 48 hours to respond
- Candidates should receive all financial aid offers prior to responding
- Wait Lists should not extend beyond August 1

Section 2: Keys

- Section C: Transfer Admission
 - Schools should clearly state all deadlines
 - Be transparent in admission requirements
 - Publish articulated transfer agreements
 - Provide a good-faith estimate of transfer credits



Section 2: Keys



- Section D: International Admission
 - Colleges should make their information and deadlines clear
 - High schools should provide accurate and comprehensive information, including information about grading scale and grade distribution
- Agents
 - If a college or university uses an agent to assist them in recruiting students internationally, the institution should ensure that the agents are held to the same ethical standards as their staff members

Section 3:



Section 3: Application Plans, Definitions of Procedures, and Glossary

- Application Plans
- Definitions and Glossary

Section 3: Keys

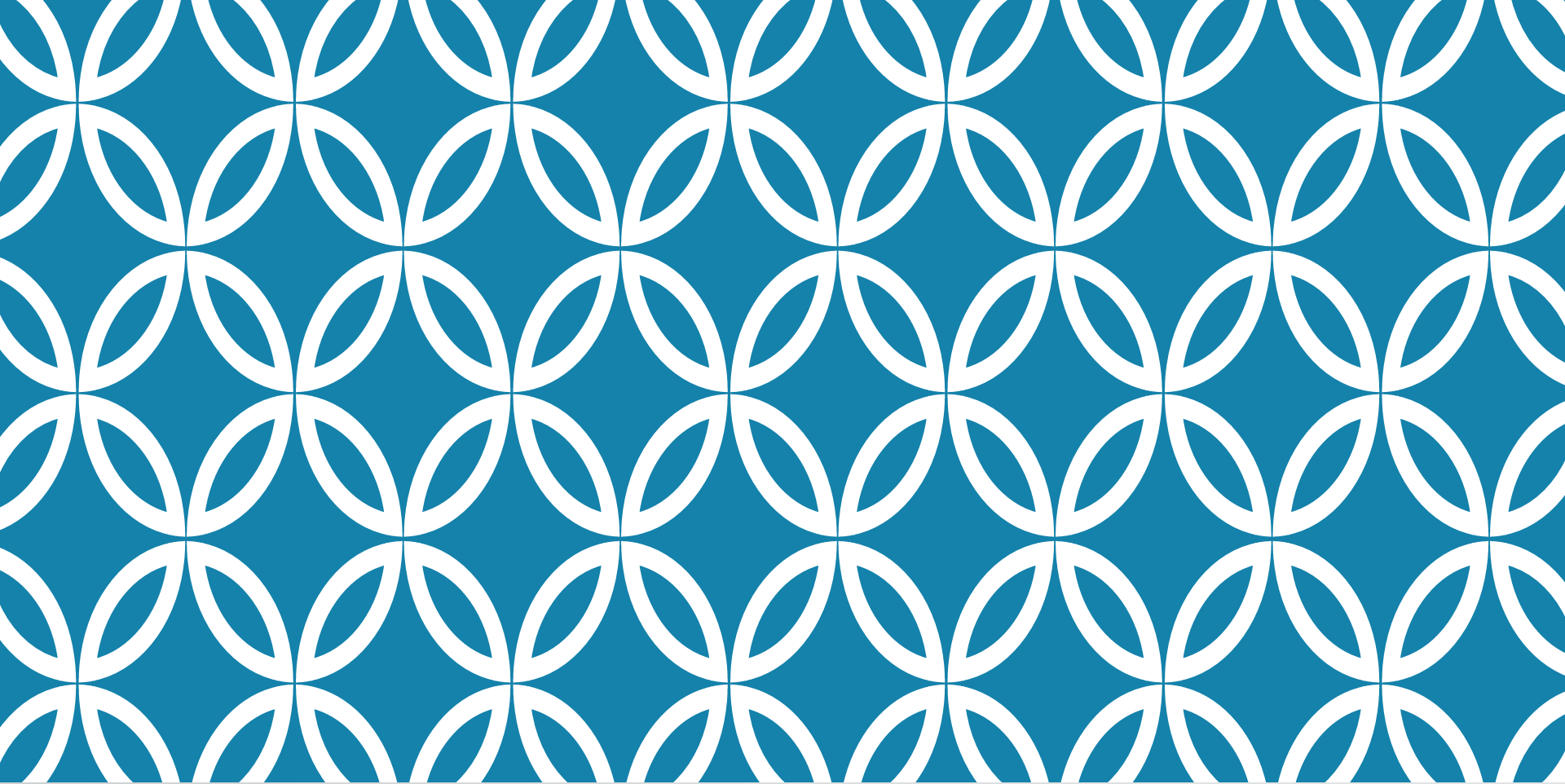


- Application plans
 - Non-restrictive plans
 - Early Action: students apply by an earlier deadline to receive a decision in advance of the college's Regular decision (see below) notification date
 - Regular Decision (RD): Students submit their application by a specified deadline and are notified of a decision within a clearly stated period of time
 - Rolling Admission: Students apply at any time after a college opens their application until a final closing date. Students are notified of a decision as applications are completed and reviewed.

Section 3: Keys



- Application plans
 - Restrictive Plans
 - Early Decision (ED): Students commit to first-choice college at time of application. If admitted, students agree to enroll and withdraw other applications. Deposit may be required before May 1
 - Restrictive/Single Choice Early Action (REA): Students apply to a college of preference and receive a decision before RD notification date. Colleges place certain restrictions on applying to other colleges under their early application plans.



NACAC'S GUIDE TO ETHICAL PRACTICE IN COLLEGE ADMISSION:

DILEMMAS

DILEMMA #3

Having been accepted to a nursing program, Flo Nightingale is told the housing deposit is due March 15. Flo wants to wait to hear from another nursing program that won't notify until April 1. She approaches you as her counselor, wondering how to make the request for an extension of time for admissions' consideration between the two programs.

High School Side

How do you advocate for or help your student advocate for themselves?

What would be your approach or main talking points when connecting with the undergraduate admissions' offices at the different institutions?

College Side

Do you grant an extension if requested?

What do you say to your housing director, program director, or president who has instituted this policy?

Is there any penalty to the student for missing the original deadline?

DILEMMA #3: DISCUSSION TOPICS

Managed admissions programs often have a good deal of information conveyed from sources outside of the undergraduate admissions department itself, and it's not always the case that everyone across campus is aware of those communications. Regardless of where and when that information is publicly disclosed, the admissions department at the institution could serve as an intermediary between the student and the nursing and housing departments on its campus: not every staff and faculty member on campus is likely aware of the national candidate reply date of May 1st, and regardless of the competitive nature of a program or of housing availability, all parties will likely want a student to make an informed decision in choosing their institution, rather than one made from pressure, to matriculate and retain the student from their initial point of admission.

DILEMMA #3: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #3

Which section of the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section I. A:

Colleges should make publicly available comprehensive, accurate, and current information concerning:

- All deadlines including admission, scholarships, financial aid, and housing.

As outlined in Section II.A:

National Candidates Reply Date: Colleges should use the widely recognized date of May 1 as the earliest enrollment confirmation deadline. Before being asked to make an enrollment decision and to commit to an institution, students should have time to hear from each school that admitted them and receive notice of

- offers of financial aid and scholarships
- admission to honors and other special programs
- availability of housing

Members are encouraged to work with other campus offices such as academic departments, housing and financial aid to create a consistent deadline that does not require students to make a commitment or accept an offer prior to May 1.

DILEMMA #4

You see the following post on the College Admissions Counselors' Facebook page:

"I have a student who deposited at Atlantic Ocean University (AOU) prior to May 1st, got their welcome packet in the mail, secured off-campus housing, etc. In contacting the university during the second week of June about another issue, AOU informed the student that he was not enrolled for the fall. Apparently, they sent out a preference letter in an email to him, and the student thought he had already completed all his preferences, so he overlooked it. Nope! There is not a spot for him. He was told he can reapply next year. Is this an attempt to weed out the over enrolled population? Or is this normal protocol..." Replies to the post all put AOU on blast and pile on, relaying similar stories of ways people feel AOU has acted unethically.

It appears that the original post and respondents feel the university knowingly acted unethically.

How do the three pillars of communication, education, and advocacy apply to this dilemma?

**If you do decide to act, to whom do you reach out?;
Reply privately to the original poster?**

What if the university is unaware of any guidelines for professional practices?

Does that change how you might view this situation and if you should respond?

Reply publicly in the thread?

Approach the university directly?

DILEMMA #4: DISCUSSION TOPICS

In the spirit of pillar of education, it appears that the university and the social media posters need to be made aware of the *Guide*. The university needs to know that the *Guide* exists and that there are professional best practices. The posters need to know that the ethical guide that they feel the university isn't following also states NACAC members shouldn't disparage each other.

As an individual, you can reply to the thread, encouraging the original poster to contact the university directly (perhaps emailing their regional contact and copying the director), assuming the university is unaware that they haven't followed NACAC's best practices, and cite the section of the Guide to illustrate this point.

DILEMMA #4: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #4

Which section of the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section I.B:

Members should:

- **Maintain a culture of collaboration and collegiality, members should not disseminate inaccurate, misleading or disparaging information about other secondary schools, colleges, organizations, or individual professionals.**

DILEMMA

#5

As a counselor, you always ask students to read their essays so you can assist them (and it often helps you to get to know their story). Millie Van Nilly is a student who has been receiving Cs in their regular English classes since 9th grade. But when she brings you her essay, it is beautifully written. In fact, it doesn't sound like Millie at all. It sounds professional.

**How do you approach this
with Millie?**

**Do you get parents
involved?**

**What is your obligation to
colleges in this case?**

**If you are a college
admission officer and this
essay, along with the
transcript showing Cs in
English, comes your way,
what is your next step?**

DILEMMA #5: DISCUSSION TOPICS

Start asking questions of Millie. Some possibilities are:

- **How do you feel about this essay?**
- **Which parts are you most proud of?**
- **Where is your voice in this?**
- **How did you come up with the idea for the topic?**

You could even be direct with Millie and ask her outright if she wrote it. If she admits that she either didn't write it or had "too much help," you might suggest she start over. And reminding her that it is her ethical obligation to turn in work that is her own might also be a great idea!

DILEMMA #5: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #5

Which section of the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section I.B:

Members should:

- **Educate students and families of their ethical responsibilities in the admission process, including counseling students that it is unethical to:**
 - **Submit false, plagiarized, or fraudulent statements on applications or other documents.**

DILEMMA #6

An admission representative from the University of Demonstrated Interest places a call to a counselor at Eagle High School to discuss an applicant. In the conversation, the admission rep asks if the counselor knows if UDI is at the top of her list or not, saying that “the kid is on the bubble, and it would be great to have this information.”

Are these conversations ever professionally appropriate?

**Why do you think the admission officer is asking this?
And why might it be perceived as a problem to the counselor?**

Does the scenario change based on when the question is being asked (original admission review? Deferred student? Waitlisted student?)

DILEMMA #6: DISCUSSION TOPICS

On the phone call, a counselor might consider asking the admission officer why it is important to know the answer to their question.

- Counselor can remind the admission officer that the student has a careful and thoughtful list - one in which every school on the list is a place that the student would be delighted to receive an admission offer.
- Counselor can also state that it isn't the counselor's role to tell, or even know, any kind of rank order and that they stand behind that student's candidacy at the particular institution.
- Counselor might remind the admission counselor that some factors may influence a final decision and that it is the student's right to compare FA packages, merit scholarships, or a multitude of other factors that are unknowable until all offers are received.

DILEMMA #6: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #6

Which section of the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission can you find information relating to this topic?

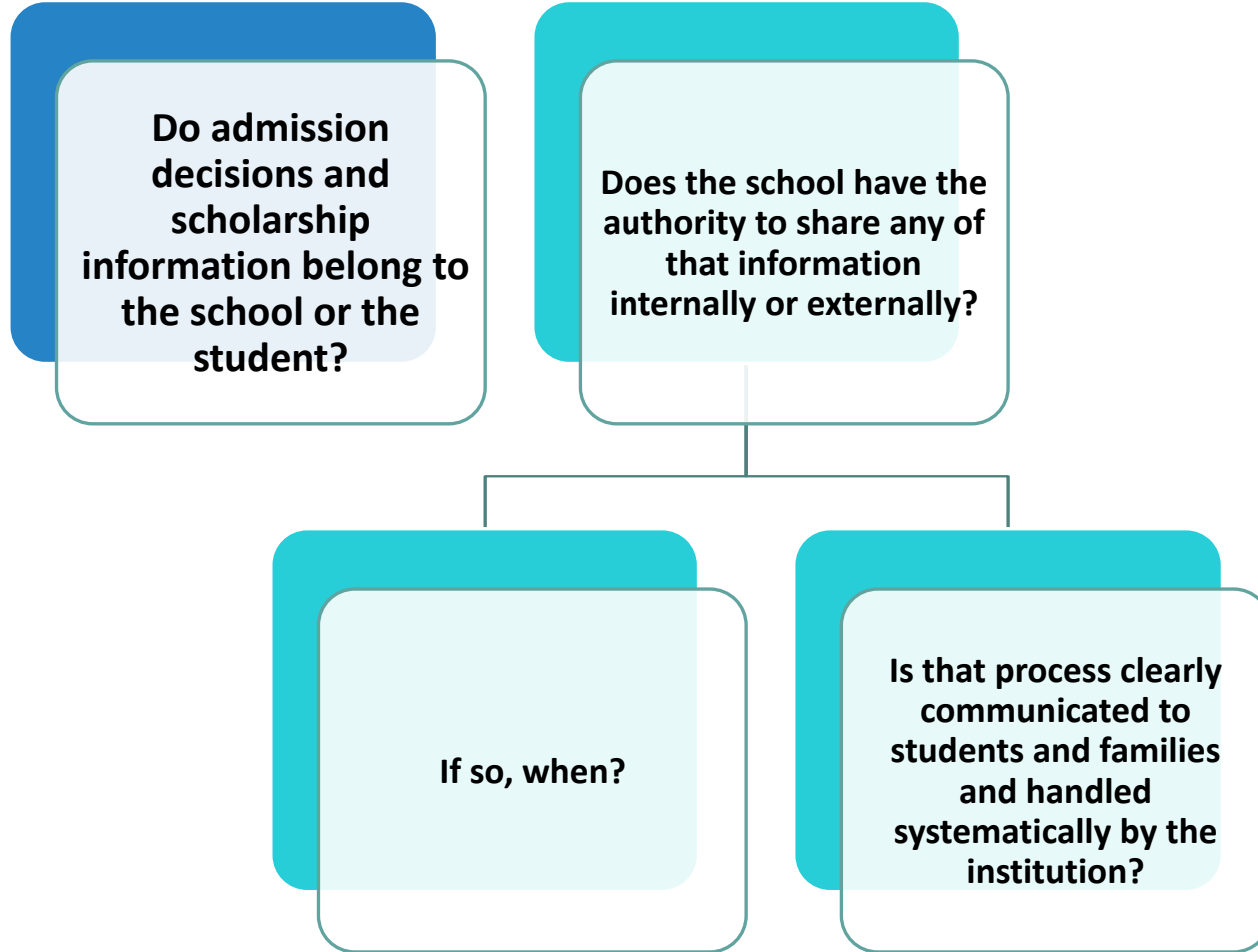
As outlined in Section I.C:

Members should:

- **Not ask candidates, their counselors, their schools, or others to divulge or rank order their college preferences on applications or other documents.**

DILEMMA #9

During lunch, the Social Studies teacher says, “Oh, where did Elizabeth get accepted? I bet she applied to some big-name schools. How much scholarship money has she received?”



DILEMMA #9: DISCUSSION TOPICS

“Elizabeth has future plans she is really excited about. You should ask her about them! We encourage students to be in control of their process, including how and if to share their admission decisions. It is ultimately their information to share, their story to tell.”

Then, you could take the conversation a few different directions. You could encourage the teacher to connect with the student, or you could steer the conversation toward the entire class, by saying something like “I’m so proud of the Class of 2021. They have been working extra hard this year!”

DILEMMA #9: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #9

Which section of the Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section I.C:

Members should:

- **Not divulge an individual student's college application status, admission, enrollment, or financial aid and scholarship offers without express permission from the student.**

DILEMMA #13

Coffey University accepts a student off of the waitlist. In the email informing the student of this decision, Coffey University states that the student has 24 hours to respond to the offer or it will be revoked.

Is this happening before or after May 1st? Why does that matter?

When will the student be given information about availability of housing and a financial aid offer? Why is this important?

As a school counselor how do you advocate for or help your students advocate for themselves to be given more time?

What are some different ways you could handle this situation?

DILEMMA #13: DISCUSSION TOPICS

If the student has been admitted off the waitlist post May 1, technically the college is allowed to shorten the timeline. That being said, the student and counselor should still feel empowered to call and request an extension. The student should say something like “Thank you for the offer of admission. I am so excited! Could I have an extension on the decision deadline? I need a little bit of time (give an exact amount of time if possible, such as 3 days) to discuss this opportunity with my guardians.”

DILEMMA #13: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #13

Which section of the *Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission* can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section II.A:

NACAC members believe that college choices should be informed, well-considered, and free from coercion. We believe that admission practices should be student-centered and should not be designed to manipulate students into applying to or enrolling at a college or university before they are ready.

And Section II.B:

Colleges should:

- Not require a deposit or set a fee for remaining on the waitlist
- Allow students who are offered admission from the waitlist after May 1 at least 48 hours before requiring a verbal or written commitment to enroll
- Notify students of their financial aid offer and availability of housing before requiring a commitment to enroll

DILEMMA

#14

Taylor has been admitted to Goal University and contacts the university's transfer admissions department about next step after applying. Taylor worked hard at her current institution, and does wonder how coursework will transfer in, too. They inform Taylor that the university's policy is that in order to produce a transfer credit evaluation and run a degree audit, the university must receive an enrollment deposit and will not produce a formal degree audit until that's received. It does, however, send students a link to their online transfer credit equivalency database to review potential transfer credit. Taylor's deposit is due in two weeks.

Questions around the nature of the process could help Taylor or an advocate gain a better understanding of the institution's practice.

How do you coach Taylor to navigate this conversation with the transfer counselor?

Is the transfer credit evaluation tool an accurate means for what to expect to transfer into the institution?

Can the fee be waived?

Are there other items Taylor can do or provide (such as syllabi) to expedite the process?

Is there an appeal process for a course that might not transfer at first?

DILEMMA #14: DISCUSSION TOPICS

The transferring of course credit at many universities can be a complex process involving numerous departments, faculty and staff. While credit transfer databases may be helpful in answering some credit-related questions, they rarely address all courses requiring review. However, most universities should be able to confirm how many credits will likely be transferred, as well as how they apply to the curriculum at the receiving institution. In the dilemma, the tool is really key: if it's efficacious and derives from the transfer data set, then it could give Taylor a sense of what transfers. If not or if vague, then ideally the college explains the nuances in more detail (which many transfer counselors are happy to do!). The student should be empowered to ask that enrollment confirmation and/or deposit be deferred until additional information is provided by the university.

DILEMMA #14: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #14

Which section of the *Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission* can you find information relating to this topic?

As outlined in Section II.C:

To ensure an equitable and transparent process, transfer candidates should not be asked to make a commitment to enroll until they are able to review all relevant information including financial aid awards and estimates of how credits earned at previous institutions will transfer and apply toward a degree at the receiving institution.

DILEMMA #17

Paul Privilege, an outstanding student from an affluent family, is delighted by his ED acceptance to his highly selective dream school. Before withdrawing applications to his other schools, as his counselor suggested, he hears from an EA college that he has been offered their Presidential Scholarship - a \$35,000 per year merit award. His parents want him to accept that despite their signed ED agreement.

**How might a college
respond to Paul's
request?**

**How might Paul's
counselor advise Paul
and his family?**

**What are the possible
repercussions for Paul
or his school?**

**What are some
different ways you
could handle this
situation?**

DILEMMA #17: DISCUSSION TOPICS

Paul should request a meeting with his school counselor to discuss this dilemma. Together, they should revisit the terms of the binding ED agreement that was signed and discuss the ethical responsibilities involved in the admissions process.

Additionally, the counselor could share what negative implication such a breach of agreement might have on future students from his high school.

DILEMMA #17: POSSIBLE APPROACH

Dilemma #17

Which section of the *Guide to Ethical Practice in College Admission* can you find information relating to this topic?

Section I.B

To provide college admission counseling in the best interest of students, members should:

- Educate students and families of their ethical responsibilities in the admission process, including counseling students that it is unethical to:
 - Fail to notify colleges where they have decided to decline their offers of admission.

Section III.A:

Students commit to a first-choice college at the time of application and, if admitted, agree to enroll and withdraw their other college applications. Colleges may offer ED I or II with different deadlines. Students may be required to accept a college's offer of admission and submit a deposit prior to May

Questions?



YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS!

Please complete a session evaluation at
www.pcacac.org/summer-institute.

Thank you!

