

# ILUMIN EDUCATION

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## SPRING INTO ACTION

As March blossoms forth, so too does the promise of new beginnings, growth, and opportunities. We invite you to embrace the vibrant energy of the season with us as we propel our students forward on their college journeys with the expert resources they need.

In this issue, we share tips for solving what is, for many students, a decision just as difficult as choosing a college: the college major conundrum. Go on any college tours over this spring break? Check out what our ILUMIN team recommends students do after their college campus visits to draw the most out of their experiences! Also, catch up on breaking news in the college admissions sphere, including the latest in higher education lawmaking and trends in standardized testing.

We want to prepare your student for growth and decisions ahead of them this blooming season. Let's spring into action together!

FROM THE ILUMIN TEAM



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# THE COLLEGE MAJOR CONUNDRUM

## RESEARCHING MAJORS AND CHOOSING THE ONE(S) FOR YOU

can be a difficult task, especially for students with diverse interests.

Maybe there are too many majors that interest you, making it difficult to boil your choices down. Maybe you want to pick a major that sets you on a career path, but you haven't committed to your intended career yet!

Whatever the case is for you, here are some of our expert tips and tidbits to help you make your choice.



## TIPS FOR COMPARING MAJORS

### 1. ASK: "WHAT DO I ACTUALLY LIKE ABOUT MAJORS I'M INTERESTED IN?"

Get at the heart of why certain majors interest you, beyond good grades or seemingly solid career aspirations.

### 2. LOOK AT COURSE REQUIREMENTS ACROSS DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

How many course units and course prerequisites does each major require? Are there any cross-department courses you could take? Do the majors require a thesis? Get an idea of what you actually would be signing up for in that major.

### 3. LOOK INTO THE MAJOR-CHANGING PROCESS AT DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

Would you need to apply to a specific college within the school for a major? When are students required to declare?

## REMEMBER!



You **do not have to know your major** before college.



You're **not stuck with your major**; 33% of students change majors in college.



You can **take classes outside of your major**.



**More** majors/minors **is not always better**.



Your major **does not equal your career**.

LEARN 5 MORE THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT COLLEGE MAJORS [HERE](#)



“After college campus visits, I like to sit down with my students and **review what they like and dislike about each campus**. It helps to take notes on your phone as you're visiting campuses to prompt your memory when you look back at the unique aspects of each college. In addition, I suggest that you start a developing college list document so you can write down your pros and cons more formally. For instance, you might love a campus aesthetically, socially, and the amenities provided, but the college might not have the major you're interested in. College visits are pivotal in the admissions process because it gives you more **clarity about what you're looking for** so I highly encourage you pursue these either in person or virtually if travelling is difficult.”

— **Dr. Dayna Meyer**, *Educational Consultant*



“By tonight, **go for a short, observant drive outside of campus**. By tomorrow, **add to and straighten out your notes!** Set your future self up for success by noting interesting campus features, student resources and clubs, major-related info, and names of any ambassadors, professors, and admission reps you met.

By the end of the week, **send a brief, polite thank you email to the office of admissions**. From signing up for tours to asking follow-up questions, use the same email address to stay organized, professional, and traceable.”

— **Kyra Jee**, *Educational Consultant and Essay Lead*



“Take time to reflect on the **environment, facilities, class sizes, and overall vibe**. What **stood out** to you?

Dive deeper into the college website, social media pages, to learn about programs, faculty, student life and opportunities available to you. If you have questions, the admissions advisors are usually open to help you. Attend further info sessions and webinars to get an even deeper understanding and to show interest.

You can also talk to friends and family and share your thoughts and impressions and get their input.”

— **Kelly Pofahl**, *Educational Consultant*

# THE LATEST NEWS

FROM THE COLLEGE ADMISSIONS SCENE



## MORE TOP-RANKED SCHOOLS BRING BACK STANDARDIZED TESTING REQUIREMENTS

After an admissions trend of removing standardized test requirements in light of COVID-19, MIT returned to requiring SAT/ACT scores for their freshman applicants in 2022, and now more and more selective schools are following suit.

Over the past few months, Dartmouth College, Yale University, and Brown University have all announced their return to the standardized testing requirements that had been the pre-COVID-19 precedent. This signals that many schools who also adopted temporary test-optional or test-blind policies over the past few years may shift back to

test-required policies in the coming cycles—but many schools will also likely join the ranks of the University of Chicago, Columbia University, and the University of California system, which have all elected to make their test-optional or test-blind policies permanent.

The status of standardized testing in college admissions will no doubt continue to shift over the next few years, and will vary from school to school. The best that students and families can do now to prepare is to keep test prep in mind and stay in the know about the policies of their schools of interest.

## VIRGINIA SIGNS A NEW BILL INTO LAW THAT BANS LEGACY ADMISSIONS IN ALL THE STATE'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

Early this month, the state of Virginia signed a new law that officially banned legacy admissions in any public institution within its state boundaries, joining Colorado, which did so in 2021.

Controversy has long surrounded legacy as a non-merit-based criterion that may disadvantage qualified students with no familial tie to particular schools.

While Virginia Tech already put an end to its legacy preferences in 2023, most

institutions across the nation, including top schools like Brown, Cornell, and Yale, have announced their intention to keep legacy in admission consideration.

While this may be discouraging to some, note that legacy is not a free ticket. A study from Duke University found that of Harvard's legacy applicants, two-thirds of them were rejected despite their familial connections. Legacy can be a huge bonus—but only if an application is already impressive on its own terms.