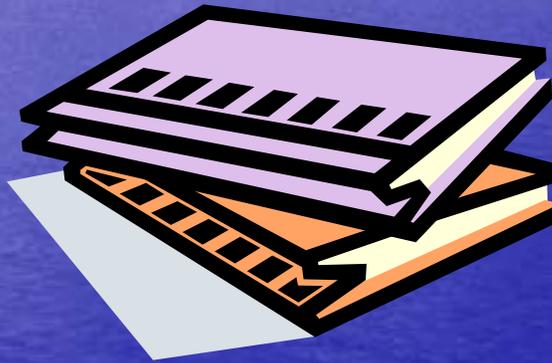
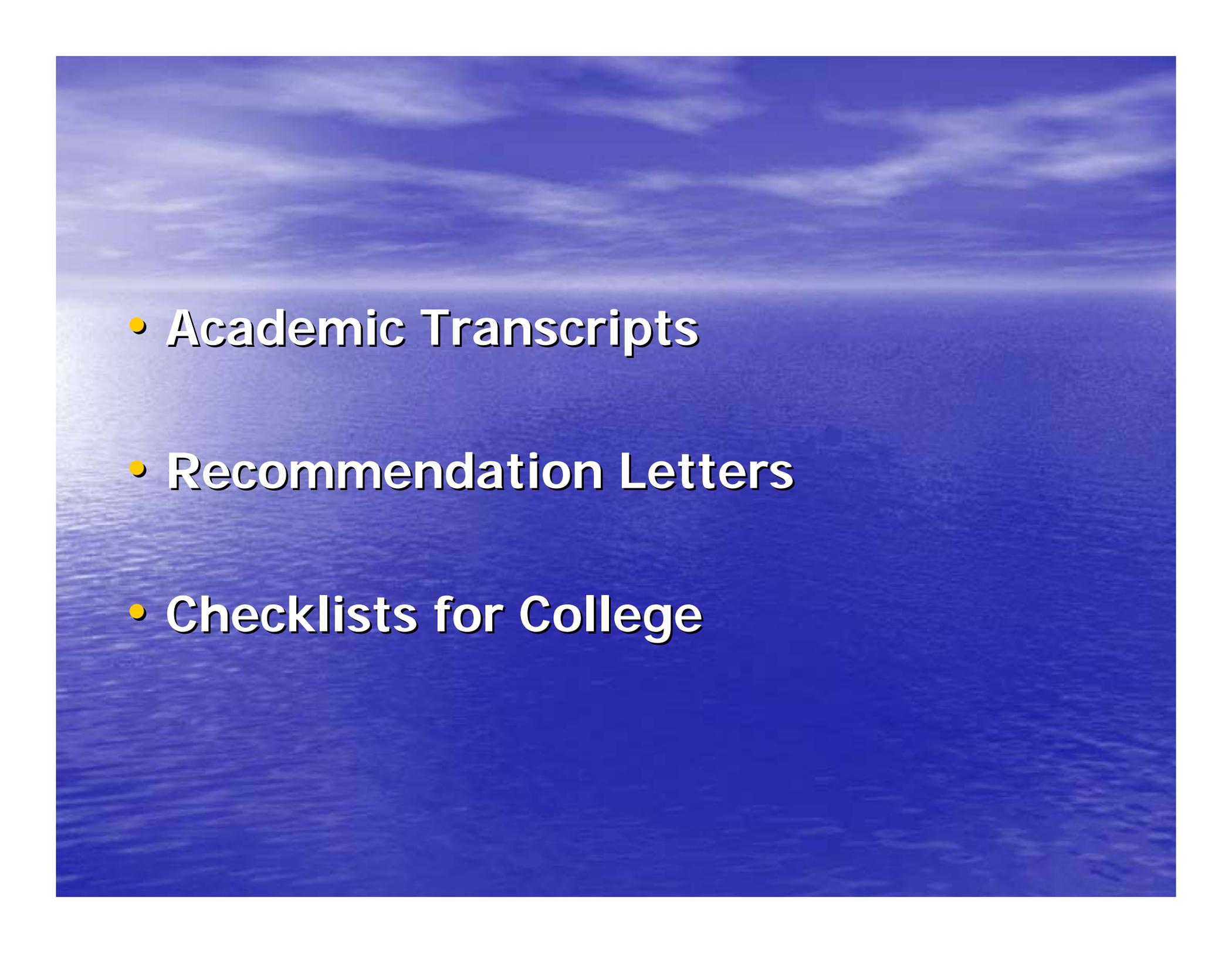


**Universal School
High School Counselor Handbook
Where Islam and Education Come Together**



**By
Hanan Abdallah**

- 
- **Academic Transcripts**
 - **Recommendation Letters**
 - **Checklists for College**

Universal School
 7350 W. 93rd ST. Bridgeview, IL 60455
 Phone # (708) 599-4100 Fax # (708) 599-1588
Mrs. Farhat Siddiqui, Principal
Student Academic Transcript

Student Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Illinois

Soc. Sec. # _____ Date Of Birth _____ Parents/Guardian _____ Entrance Date _____

Course (9 th Grade)	Grade	Credit	Course (10 th Grade)	Grade	Credit

Current GPA		Current Credits		Current GPA		Current Credit	
Course (11 th Grade)	Grade	Credit	Course (12 th Grade)	Grade	Credit		

Current GPA _____ Current Credits _____ Current GPA _____ Current Credit _____
 CCUM GPA _____ CUM CREDITS _____

Class Rank: _____ A.C.T.: _____

Grades:		
90-100	A	Regular Courses:
80-89	B	A=4,B=3,C=2,D=1,F=0
70-79	C	Honor Courses:
60-69	D	A=4.5,B=3.5,C=2.5,D=1.5,F=0
Below 60	F	Advanced Placement Courses:
	P is Pass	A=5,B=4,C=3,D=2,F=0
		Transferred Credits are not used to calculate G.P.A.

Universal School

7350 W. 93rd ST. Bridgeview, IL.60455
 Phone # (708) 599-4100 Fax # (708) 599-1588

Mrs. Farhat Siddiqui, Principal

Student Academic Record (Transcript)

Student Name: Address: City: State: Zip:
 xxxxxxxx

Soc. Sec. # Date Of Birth Parents/Guardian Entrance Date

<u>Course(9th Grade)</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Course(10th Grade)</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credit</u>
English	A-	1.00	English Honors	A	1.00
Social Studies Honors	A	1.00	American History H	A-	1.00
Algebra	A-	1.00	Geometry	B+	1.00
Biology	A-	1.00	Chemistry Honors	A	1.00
Islamic Studies	A	1.00	Islamic Studies	A+	1.00
Arabic	A	1.00	Arabic	A	1.00
Intro to Web Design H	A	0.50	Physical Education	A	1.00
Physical Education	A	0.50	Driver's Ed	P	0.50

Current GPA 4.214 Current Credit 7 Current GPA 4.286 Current Credit 7.5

<u>Course(11th Grade)</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credit</u>	<u>Course(11th Grade)</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Credit</u>
<u>1st Semester</u>			<u>2nd Semester</u>		
Arabic	A-	0.25	Arabic	A-	0.25
Quran	A	0.25	Quran	A	0.25
Physical Education	A+	0.25	Physical Education	A+	0.25
Health	A	0.25	Health	A+	0.25
Algebra II	A	0.50	Algebra II	A-	0.50
Islamic History	A+	0.50	Islamic History	A	0.50
AP Biology	B-	0.50	AP Biology	B	0.50
Writing	B-	0.50	Writing	A	0.50
AP History	B-	0.50	AP History	C+	0.50

Current GPA 3.86 Current Credits 3.50 Current GPA 3.93 Current Credits 3.50
Cum GPA 4.132 Cum Credits 21.5

Class Rank: XXXX A.C.T: XX

Grades: _____

Universal School
 7350 W. 93rd ST. Bridgeview, IL.60455
 Phone # (708) 599-4100 Fax # (708) 599-1588

Mrs. Farhat Siddiqui, Principal

Student Academic Record (Transcript)

Student Name: _____ **Address:** _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____
 xxxxxxxx

Soc. Sec. # _____ **Date Of Birth** _____ **Parents/Guardian** _____ **Entrance Date**
 08/2001

Name: _____ SS # _____
 A.C.T: _____ Test date: _____

<u>Student Activities:</u>	<u>9th</u>	<u>10th</u>	<u>11th</u>	<u>12th</u>
1. Basketball team member	X	X	X	
2. Science Club member	X			
3. Science fair	X	X	X	
4. Regional Science fair	X			
5. Inner-Islamic Science Competition	X			
6. Aqsa Summer Camp Counselor	X			
7. JNHS	X	X		
8. NHS 12th grade Executive Committee		X	X	X
9. Volleyball team member		X	X	
10. American Cancer Soc. Club treasurer, group leader		X		
11. NYLF National Youth Leadership Forum nominee		X		
12. NYLF in Politics nominee		X		
13. Yearbook Sports editor & photographer		X		X
14. Extended Care Nursing Home volunteer		X		
15. Farragut High School Presentations		X		
16. WYSE Regional competition			X	
17. WYSE Sectional competition			X	
18. NYLF on Medicine nominee			X	
19. The National Society of H.S. Scholars nominee			X	
20. SANAD Volunteer			X	
21. DAWA club member			X	X
22. Palos Community Hosp. Volunteer candy striper			X	X
23. Girl Scouts troop 426 group leader			X	
24. Junior Achievements member			X	
25. Inner Islamic Math Competition participant		X		
26. Who's who among American H.S. Students nominee				X
27. National Honor Roll nominee				X
28. Nasheed Club				X
ACT: English	Mathematics	Reading	Science	

Last Date of Attendance: Student currently enrolled in 12th grade

Transcript issued to: _____

Signed by _____ **Date:** _____
 Assistant Principal

7350 W 93rd Street
Bridgeview, IL 60455
(708) 599-4100 Fax (708) 599-1588

Mrs. Farhat Siddiqui, Principal M.Ed.

December

Dear Admission Officer,

I am writing to you on behalf of NAME, Oak Lawn, Illinois.

NAME is a mature, bright, and expressive student. She is very studious achieving straight A's since fourth grade. NAME is also brilliant in the classroom, and her determination in achieving her goals is unprecedented. She is a model student with exemplary behavior. Her teachers and peers also well like NAME. She has a natural talent to communicate and inspire others to achieve their best.

NAME's hard work, academic capabilities, and dedication allow her to take three Advanced Placement courses and become an AP Scholar in her Junior Year. NAME is not only competing with top ranked students from the senior class, but she is motivating them to try harder as a result of her drive.

NAME is not only committed to her studies but to numerous activities as well. She has done extensive research this past summer at Columbia College and was accepted into summer programs at Harvard, Princeton, Northwestern and Yale. She has won numerous awards ranging from student of the year to Who's Who among High School students, as reflected in her transcript. She competed in WYSE and won an outstanding presentation award at the State Science Fair. (These are just a few of NAME's accomplishments!) It is clearly evident from NAME's impressive transcript that she has a balance between her academics and extra curricular activities. NAME makes achieving a 4.50/4.0 GPA while participating in extensive activities seem effortless.

I feel that NAME will achieve many successes as a result of her intellectual capabilities, organization, and ambition. NAME would also make an excellent addition to Northwestern, and I highly recommend her.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Hanan Abdallah
Assistant Principal/ Counselor

Universal School
7350 W 93rd Street
Bridgeview, IL 60455
(708) 599-4100 Fax (708) 599-1588

Mrs. Farhat Siddiqui, Principal M.Ed.

December

Dear Admission Officer,

I am writing on behalf of **NAME**, SS#, of **ADDRESS**, Orland Park, Illinois.

Name is a hardworking, mature, and dedicated student. Her outlook is optimistic, and her attitude is always positive. **Name** displays an exuberant amount of energy that attracts people to her. She is also very much liked and respected by her teachers and peers.

Name is not only a very diligent student, but she is also dedicated to several extra curricular activities. She is a member the National Honor Society, the yearbook staff, and has served as treasurer of the student council, and secretary of the Science Club. **Name** is also very athletic and a valuable member of the volleyball and basketball teams.

Name is always busy and has done extensive work with the community as a dedicated member of the Diversity Club, SANAD etc...

Name would make an excellent addition to the College of Choice, and I highly recommend her.

Sincerely,

Mrs. H. Abdallah
Assistant Principal

School Profile

- **Demographic Information**

- Universal School, 7350 West 93rd Street, Bridgeview, Illinois 60445
- CEEB Code: 140404
- Counselor: Hanan Abdallah, Phone (708) 599 – 4100, Fax (708) 599 - 1588, e-mail haldabe@hotmail.com.
- 95 – 100% of Seniors attend 2 or 4 year colleges
- Our school is made up of 55% White American (including Hispanic and Middle-Eastern), 30% Asian American, 10% African – American and 5% other.
- We are a Pre-k – 12th grade institution.
- 25% of our student body has received a partial or full scholarship to attend Universal School.

Curriculum

- 28 credits is the minimum requirement for graduation.
- Honors classes are available in Mathematics, English, Social Studies and Science.
- Advanced Placement classes are as follows: Biology, Calculus (AB and BC), English Literature, English Language, Human Geography, and US History.
- Students are allowed to take Honor courses beginning in 9th grade.
- Students are allowed to take AP classes in 11th and 12th grade
- All seniors are required to research and present an paper to their class and English teachers to graduate.
- "All Students are required to complete 25 hours of community service in order to graduate."
- Universal School is on semesters, and quarter's system.

Grade Point Average

- Grading scale, A = 90 to 100, B = 80 to 89, C = 70 – 79, D = 60 – 69, F is below 60.
- GPA is weighted.
- Explain what is included in your cumulative GPA - only academic courses, all courses, only 11th grade, all years, etc.
- Then, calculate a cumulative GPA, or at least a GPA for each school year.

Rank in Class

- Make a clear statement of whether you provide rank in class or not.
- We provide a specific rank and it is weighted? It includes: a weight of .5 for Honors classes, and a weight of 1 point for AP? How much weight is given?
- Many schools give two ranks: a weighted rank and an un-weighted rank (all course rank).
- Do you have shared ranks? If no rank is given, colleges need a percentile of where the student places in his class.
- GPA range: The lowest GPA in the class is 1.9, the highest GPA in the class is 4.3 and **the mean GPA for the class is above a 2.5.** There is a minimum requirement of 2.0 GPA to continue to participate Providing a grade distribution by deciles or quintiles or quartiles is preferable
- Grade distribution by each course taught in the 11th grade (or for 9th, 10th, and 11th grades).

Testing

- Mean ACT score is 23.
- Mean AP result at the end of the junior year is an 85% of students received scores of 3 or higher.
- Over 40% of our students who are enrolled in AP courses have been recognized as AP scholars.
- 6 students have been recognized as National Merit Scholars in 2006, the elite few from the 144,000 tested in Illinois.

Optional

- Colleges our students have attended for the past several years are University of Chicago, Northwestern University, Harvard, Cornell, UIUC, UIC, Benedictine, Loyola, DePaul, St. Xavier, Governor State College, Prairie State College and Community Colleges.
- Web site address for the high school is www.Universalschool.org.
- Our students last few years were invited to participate in the State Spelling Bee, the State WYSE competition, Illinois Math League, Math Counts, Regional and State Science Fair etc.

This past school year we added two new AP courses and will continue to add AP course that benefit our students.

Course Guide for High school students

**The following are examples of tracks you
may wish to use**

High School Course Schedule Recommended by Colleges

- **English** Four or more years (grammar, composition, literature, etc.)
- **Mathematics** Three or more years (Algebra I and higher—does not include general math, business math, or consumer math)
- **Natural Sciences** Three or more years (Earth science, biology, chemistry, physics, etc.)
- **Social Sciences** Three or more years (history, economics, geography, civics, psychology, etc.)
- **Additional Courses** Some colleges and universities require other classes as prerequisites for admission, such as two or more years of the same foreign language or courses in the visual arts, music, theater, drama, computer science, etc.

MATHEMATICS

- Track I - Math
- Pre-Algebra
- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Consumer Math
- Algebra II
- Track II- Math
- Algebra I or Algebra I Honors
- Geometry or Geometry Honors
- Algebra II or Algebra II Honors
- Pre-Calculus or Pre-Calculus Honors

- Students that enter Universal in 9th grade may be placed in Track III or allowed to take a summer course of Algebra or Geometry if they fulfill all the requirements to allow them to enter Track III
- Track III – Math
- Pre-requisite of Algebra I in 8th grade
- Geometry or Geometry Honors
- Algebra II or Algebra II Honors
- Pre-Calculus or Pre-Calculus Honors (inc. Trigonometry)
- AP Calculus AB or BC

SCIENCES

Track I

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physiology OR
- Genetics OR
- Environmental

Track II or III

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- AP Physics OR
- AP Biology

Scheduling Classes

I
Universal School

Date: _____

Name of student: _____

Grade: 11/12 Girls

Tentative Schedule for Junior and Senior Students

Period	Subject	Teacher	Room
1	Health M. W. F.	Syed	201
	Desktop Publishing M.W.F.	Ibrahim	218
	P.E. T. Th.	Abusafa	Gym
	Islamic Studies	Khudeira	203
2	AP English	Jarad	201
	Honors English	Khudeira	203
	English	Ibrahim	217
3	AP Biology	Syed	Lab
	Physiology	Qureshi	204
4	Pre-Calculus	Sahloul	202
	Algebra II	Hamayel	206
	Consumer Math	Madhi	217
5	AP Biology T. W.	Syed	Lab
	Lunch		Cafeteria
	AP Calculus	Sahloul	202
6	AP History	Benameur	209
	AP Geography	Madhi	217
	Psychology	Syed	203
7	Journalism	Alshair	218/Comp Lab
	Islamic Studies	Khudeira	203
8	Arabic	Jammal	206
		Khater	202
		Martini	209
		Azhari	214B

Tentative Schedules

Universal School
2006

Name of student: _____ Date: _____
Grade: 9

Tentative Schedule for Freshman Students

Period	Subject	Teacher	Room
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			

Universal School

Standardized Tests

- Universal School has planned a **Free Parent Seminar by Princeton Review on October 8, 2006**. This seminar will help prepare parents for what to expect in the sophomore, junior, and senior years of their child's High School career. It will inform students about the benefits of taking and preparing early for such mandatory college admission exams as the ACT and SAT.
- It is also mandatory for all Universal students to take the PLAN exam, a Preliminary College examination that will help your child estimate their ACT scores and receive mailings from the colleges that are interested in their academic strengths. This exam will be administered on September 28, 2006.
- We have also scheduled a mandatory PSAT Exam, an exam that assists in the same way that the PLAN does, yet also allows students to qualify for a National Merit Scholarship.
- The costs of these examinations are \$8.50 each.
- Why are they mandatory....

Give students the opportunity to make The PSAT an Important Test

- The most common reasons for taking the PSAT/NMSQT are:
- to receive feedback on your strengths and weaknesses on skills necessary for college study. You can then focus your preparation on those areas that could most benefit from additional study or practice.
- to see how your performance on an admissions test might compare with that of others applying to college.
- to enter the competition for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.
- to help prepare for the SAT. You can become familiar with the kinds of questions and the exact directions you will see on the SAT.
- to receive information from colleges when you check "yes" to Student Search Service.

Send letters home to Parents

- PSAT, ACT and SAT reminders

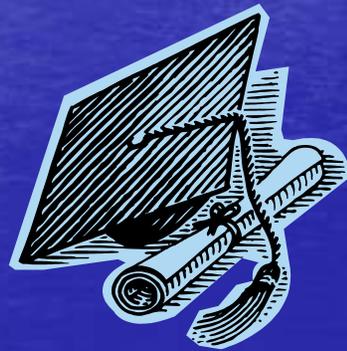
I am sending this letter to you in regards to the recent PSAT and PLAN exams that your child has taken. The PLAN and PSAT are pre- ACT and pre-SAT exams which are fairly ordinary college entrance exams with **extraordinary powers**. Every student who plans on attending a four-year college needs to take one of these exams and do everything they possibly can to succeed.

Help your students prepare for the SAT/ACT

- A follow up letter stating the importance of the SAT/ACT prep classes.
- The Princeton Review SAT/ACT preparation classes beginning this Saturday December 4th, 2006 and continue through March 26th, 2007
- (Letters are enclosed in the handouts you have received today)

Perform Regular Workshops with all
your students.....

Help your students with College
Planning



Freshman Year

- Settle into the routine of high school.
- Strive to improve your study, organization and time- management skills.
- Begin Taking Strong academic courses. Plan on taking four years each of Math, Science, Social Studies, English and Foreign Language.
- Commit as much as possible to volunteer activities.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities. Pick one or two you plan to continue with for four years.
- Look for leadership opportunities within those organizations.
- Strive to join NHS and Honors Courses.
- Do self-assessment. Consider what areas of study you might like to explore, what activities you enjoy and what courses you would like to take in your high school career
- Attend Career Day and begin exploring future options. Talk to professionals about their careers, why they chose it and what they would do differently if they had the choice.
- Talk to your teachers, parents and friends about your future plans.
- In the summer volunteer, as much as possible, take a summer course to enrich your knowledge and explore other programs. Take a summer job part-time if possible.
- Behavioral Detentions and Suspensions may affect your college plans. Avoid being labeled as a student with behavioral concerns,

Sophomore Year

- Continue to take Honors Courses and AP courses if allowed.
- Take the PSAT And PLAN standardized exams in October. These will help you assess your aptitudes, skills, talents, interests and personality. This will help you to organize your thoughts about future college and career plans.
- PSAT and PLAN exam scores are used by Universal to assess your capabilities in AP classes, though a program provided by the College Board called AP Potential.
- Talk to your parents about college and financing your education. See what SAT and ACT scores the colleges are using as acceptance criteria's.
- Involve yourself in extra-curricular activities and volunteer work.
- Be an active participant in your classes. Teachers will recommend strong academic students with minimal behavior issues to AP courses.
- Maximize your summer by working, volunteering or taking courses.
- If you contact local hospitals ,they are always looking for volunteers.

Fall of Junior Year

- Begin to think about what you are looking for in a college, in terms of size, location, majors available, etc.
- Remember that colleges look for a high school record that reflects challenging course work, a strong GPA, involvement in extracurricular activities/community service and leadership skills in its applicants.
- Study for and take the PSAT in October.
- Go to the local College Fairs i.e. Moraine Valley and Navy Pier in October, as well as, local community colleges.
- Attend meetings with college representatives who visit Universal School for College Fair.
- Attend all meetings with college representatives and make sure you attend with your parents.
- Compile a list of 10 schools to research. Send away for catalogues, check the Internet, do other research about the colleges and the scholarships that they offer.
- Visit colleges (especially during vacations and days off).
- Research Financial Aid and Scholarship opportunities.
- Complete an interest inventory if you are unsure about what careers you might be suited for.
- Check college web pages to search for application information, early admissions applications, essay information and potential college scholarships that you are eligible for, such as Fastweb and College search sites.

Spring of Junior Year

- Sign up for the SAT 1 and ACT and send official scores to the colleges of your choice.
- Take test preparation courses, if necessary.
- Continue to visit college campuses. Set up interviews with college admissions officers and plan to stay overnight at the colleges you are most serious about attending.
- Set up informational interviews with people in careers that interest you. Find out where they went to college, what education and experience they have, how they got the job, and the positive and negative aspects of their work. Consider volunteering or working in a field of interest to you to explore what a career in that area might involve.
- Make plans for a productive summer. That might entail summer school, a job, travel, volunteering, etc.
- Keep records of your work experience and extracurricular activities.
- Begin writing your college essays (check on line to see if college essays are posted).
- Ask teachers to start preparing your college recommendation letters.
- Take the SAT and ACT. Register for SAT I and SAT II exams like Chemistry, U. S. History, Writing and Math, if required at the colleges to which you are planning to apply.
- Register for challenging courses for your senior year.
- Take AP and other exams.

Senior Year



Early Fall of Senior Year

- Narrow your list of college choices to five.
- Make sure that you have applications for all the colleges you plan to attend. Applications can be downloaded from college web pages, or submitted electronically. Check to see if the colleges accept the Common Application.
- Make copies of the applications and begin filling them out.
- Immediately inform your high school counselor. Meet with her regularly and inform her of where you are sending out applications. Transcripts need to be sent out from the school, often times the counselor will send out your application, counselor recommendation letter and transcript in one envelope.
- Finish writing college application essays.
- Ask teachers to prepare recommendation letters for you. Give them an information sheet about yourself, as well as the names and addresses of the colleges to which you are applying, and the deadlines. Attach a stamped envelope to your formal request.
- Meet with college representatives who visit Universal School..
- Continue researching scholarship opportunities for which you might be eligible.
- Check to see if the colleges to which you are applying require supplemental financial aid forms or the PROFILE form, and if so, complete and file them.
- Attend special meeting for seniors.
- Register for the SAT or ACT in the early fall, if retaking.
- Register for SAT II Achievement Tests, if needed.
- Continue to visit colleges, if necessary.

Senior Year cont.

- DECEMBER

- Begin completing the FAFSA, which will be accepted beginning January 1st.
- Finish any applications that have December 15 or January 1 deadlines.
- Prepare for midterm exams.

- JANUARY

- Give Mid-Year Reports with addressed, stamped envelopes to your counselor.
- Mail FAFSA forms any time after January 1. The FAFSA can be sent electronically.
- Give any January 15 and February 1 deadline applications to your counselor.
- Make sure the colleges have all the necessary applications materials and that you have contacted the SAT and ACT Testing Services about sending score reports directly to the colleges. Send official Act scores directly to the college.
- Arrange Admissions interviews, if required.
- Continue to visit colleges you are most interested in attending.

Senior Year cont.

- FEBRUARY
- Submit FAFSA no later than February 15.
- Retake the SAT I try to visit college campuses during the February Break.
- MARCH
- Receive March 15 notifications.
- Visit colleges during spring break.
- Receive Financial Aid Students Aid reports (SARs) and make corrections, if necessary.

Senior Year cont.

- APRIL

- Receive April notifications from colleges.
- Visit colleges to which you have been accepted.
- Make a decision on which college you plan to attend and notify the Admissions Office and Financial Aid Office of your decision.
Send in tuition and housing deposits by May 1.
- Let other colleges know of your plans to attend college elsewhere.
- Receive SARs and forward to the college you plan to attend.
- Finalize plans for summer programs or work.

- MAY

- May 1 is the due date for college deposits (DO NOT POSTPONE!)
- Take Advanced Placement exams.
- Inform your counselor of your college choice so that final transcripts can be sent there after graduation.
- Let your counselor know of any acceptances/denials and scholarship offers.

The End of Senior Year and High School!!

- *JUNE*
- GRADUATION!
- Register for and attend any college orientations.

Checklist for Making the Most of High School

- Take classes recommended for college preparation. Talk to your counselor.
- Use testing information. Examine your scores and take extra courses or get tutoring assistance for weaker academic areas.
- Establish goals for each school year. Talk to your counselor about what you should be doing in light of your college and career plans.
- Explore careers through research and experiences. Use a career counseling program and job shadow or do internships in careers you are interested in pursuing.
- Surf the Internet for information on education and career planning.
- Take a college entrance exam during your junior year.
- Never stop learning. Education is a lifelong pursuit.

Help your students to attend College Fairs

- List All available Fairs on an announcement Board in The school. Announce throughout the school year, whenever possible.
- Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) on September 24, 2006.
- The University of Chicago on October 11th, 2006
- MVCC (over 200 colleges will be represented.)
- Navy Pier College Day.
- COD on October 21st, 2006 (Over 200 Universities will be represented.)

Hosting College Reps

- Universal will be hosting college admission officers and representatives on October 6th, 2006. The following universities will be represented:
- DePaul University
- UIC
- Loyola University
- Benedictine University
- St. Xavier
- Moraine Valley Community College

Questions to ask College Reps..

- What is the GPA and SAT/ACT test score requirements?
- What is the cost of attendance? Are there other costs, such as lab fees or health fees?
- What applications and other documents are required to apply for admission and financial aid?
- Is there an admission application fee? When is the fee due? Is it refundable? If I cannot afford to pay the fee, can it be waived?
- What are the applications deadlines for admissions and financial aid? Does the school award institutional scholarship? How do I apply?
- Is there adequate housing for everyone?
- Are students required to live in the residence halls?
- Is the residence halls co-ed? Is there a deadline to secure freshman housing? Can you choose your roommate?
- Does the college offer a freshman orientation?
- Do most students who graduate obtain a job in their field?
- Do they get admitted to graduate school?
- Do employers do on-campus job recruiting?
- What is the student/faculty ratio?
- Does faculty include teaching assistants or do professors teach the majority of the classes?

20 Questions A High School Counselor should answer before asked!

- What are the required and recommended courses -- for graduation and for college prep?
- How should I plan my schedule so I'll complete them?
- Which elective courses do you recommend?
- Which AP® courses are available?
- When is the PSAT/NMSQT® going to be given here?
- Is this school a testing center for the SAT®, or will I need to go somewhere nearby?
- Do you have any after-school or evening sessions available for college planning, or the SAT?
- Do you have college handbooks or other guides that I can browse or borrow?
- Do you have a copy of the free *Taking the SAT* booklet, which has a practice test in it?
- What activities can I do at home and over the summer to get ready for college?
- What kinds of grades do different colleges require?

20 Questions cont.

- Are there any college fairs at this school, or nearby?
- Where do other kids from this school attend college?
- What are the requirements or standards for the honor society?
- Can you put me in touch with recent grads who are going to the colleges on my wish list?
- Do you have any information to help me start exploring my interests and related careers?
- If my colleges need a recommendation from you, how can I help you know me better, so it can be more personal?
- Are there any special scholarships or awards that I should know about now, so I can work toward them?
- Can I see my transcript as it stands now, to see if everything is as I think it should be?
- Do you have any forms I need to apply for financial aid?
- How does our school compare to others, in terms of test scores and reputation?

Reality Check!

Always tell your students that “your school counselor may be the most wonderful and accessible person on the planet, or she or he may barely know the name of the students in attendance. So remember that the person who has the biggest stake in your academics is you. It's up to you to stay on top of opportunities and deadlines, to take control of your future.”

Colleges Care

- The good news is that colleges pay attention to your life inside and outside the classroom. Yes, your academics probably come first, but your activities reveal a great deal about you, such as:
- How you've made a meaningful contribution to something?
- What your non-academic interests are?
- Whether you can maintain a long-term commitment?
- Whether you can manage your time and priorities?
- What diversity you'd bring to the student body?

School Activities

- It's pretty easy to find out about activities available at school. Once you start exploring, sometimes the challenge is figuring out how much to do. Here are some quick tips:
- Most importantly, when you find something you like to do, stick with it.
- If you're interested and have extra time, try to excel in more than one area. For example, write for the paper and volunteer. But make sure you're giving your all to each activity, and, most importantly, to your school work.
- Don't worry about being president, or captain. The key is whether you've done something significant, center stage or behind the scenes.

Work Experience

- Work experience -- paid or volunteer, year-round or summer -- can help you identify career interests and goals, gain work experience, and apply classroom learning to the real world. It's also a great way to earn money for college, of course. Consider arranging for an internship or to shadow someone at his or her job.

Community Service

- You can also gain skills and experience through volunteer work, such as by tutoring elementary school kids or spending time at a local hospital. Some schools even offer academic credit for volunteer work.

Test Taking Strategies

AP, ACT, SAT or other

- **School Counselor's can help with the following:**
- Have students take a practice test the day before with conditions as much like the test as possible.
- Have your students review summary sheets for an overall view of the material. Recite in their own words
- Tell them to get enough sleep. Avoid caffeine, which increases anxiety.
- Remember to encourage them and STOP critical statements.
- Tell them to give themselves time to feel composed and to be on time for the exam and to avoid anxious classmates who are talking about the exam.

Test Taking Strategies

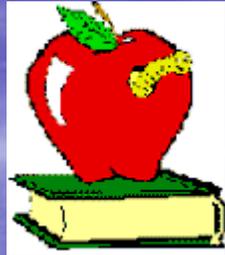
- **During, Tell your students to**
- Look over the entire test, READ THE DIRECTIONS, plan your approach, and schedule your time.
- Start with the easiest question first.
- Focus your attention on the test. Don't waste time and energy worrying, thinking about the consequences of not doing well, or wondering what others are doing.
- If you don't know an answer, mark the question.
- Suggest to yourself that you probably studied it and the answer will come to you when you get back to it.
- If you start to feel anxious, practice your relaxation techniques. Use anxiety as a cue to relax. Close your eyes, take three deep breaths and then back to the task.

Test Taking Strategies

- Essay Exams. Organize your thoughts in a brief outline. Look for key words such as compare, contrast, describe, identify. Start with a short summary or topical sentence and then make your points. Don't ramble. Remember what the professor emphasized.
- Objective Exams. Think of your own answer before looking at the choices provided. Eliminate clearly wrong answers and make an educated guess (unless there is a severe penalty for wrong answers). After you have answered those you know, return to those you checked. Think about only one question at a time. After you have answered those you know, return to those you checked.
- If your time is running out, concentrate on those questions you know well and/or have the most weight.
- Use all the time allowed for reviewing your answers, completing ideas. Only change answers if you are sure of yourself.

Test Taking Strategies

- **After:**
- Reward yourself for having tried. Don't go over the test questions with others. No matter how the test went, you can learn from the returned exam.
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Test Preparation

[ACT](#)

This link to the ACT organization gives current information about all the products ACT markets. It allows students to register for an ACT test, learn test taking strategies to maximize ACT scores, see sample questions, read research and information available from ACT.

[ACT/SAT Conversion Table](#)

Site sponsored by the College Board allows direct comparison between an ACT and SAT score.

[College Board Online Home Page](#)

Students, parents, & counselors will find a comprehensive menu of information to aid in the transition to college. Includes EXPAN (for free) college, career & financial aid database.

[Kaplan](#)

Test Prep on line. Self tests plus many topics.

[TEST PREP.COM\(tm\) Home Page](#)

A web site loaded with free and complete online test preparation solutions. The WebWare(tm) for the SAT test is a complete SAT test-prep course.

[The Princeton Review](#)

The Princeton Review helps people find and get into the right college or other school. They have great resources to help with testing, admissions, financial aid etc.

Address Students Who are having academic difficulties

- Send letters home often (at a minimum, once a quarter)
- Assalamu-Alaikum, in order to ensure your child's academic success, we are sending this letter to remind that he/she has either one or more D's or F's and/or currently has a GPA below 2.0. Since Universal School is working with a system based on semester credits, if your son or daughter receives F's for two or more credit hours over the course of the school year, he/she will not graduate.....

Academic Difficulties

- We regret to inform you that NAME has received one or more failing grades on his/her report card this semester.
- The Universal Parent/Student Handbook clearly states, "High School students must have a minimum G.P.A. of 2.0/4.0, earn 28 credit hours (including one credit for senior project), and perform 25 hours of community service in order to graduate from Universal."
- Thus as a consequence, students failing a subject must repeat these subjects over the summer at a summer school program and receive a grade above a 2.0. If your child does not make up this credit over the summer, he/she may be held back a year or may be refused readmission to Universal the following year.
- We suggest contacting the following educational institutions to inquire about summer programs:
- **Moraine Valley (708) 974 4300**
- Keystone National High School (online courses available)

Valuable Web-Sites@com

- There are thousands of Internet Sites available to help you and your students, from the College Board and fastweb to FAFSA.
- Grants, Common College Applications and scholarship opportunities await every student. Take advantage of the internet, its there for you!

Scholarship Web-Sites

- [College Scholarships.com](http://CollegeScholarships.com)
- While this commercial site promises to build a personalized list of scholarships that fit a student, it also includes regularly updated scholarship information that is available to anyone who visits the site.
- There are several organizations that offer scholarships for culinary school. Awards are based on financial need and aptitude. Find out more by visiting www.jamesbeard.org. Awards for hospitality including culinary arts are available through the American Culinary Federation at www.acfchefs.org.
- [Engineering Scholarships](#)
- Part of a comprehensive site on engineering career information.
- *[Fast Web](#)
- Very comprehensive site contains a database of over 600,000 scholarships and is growing all the time. Complete a questionnaire and
- Fast Web will give you a list of scholarships for which you are eligible. Some scholarship applications are available on line.
- Fast Web will also notify you if additional scholarships are added to its data base that are a match for you.
- [Free 4 U](#)
- Mega scholarship site with links to special interests and specific majors.
- [Free Scholarship Search](#)
- While this data base was created for students who attend UCLA, students attending any college would find useful leads at this site.
- *[FRESH](#)
- Weekly newsletter of scholarship and financial aid information. Also has list of contests students can enter to win money for college.
- [Guaranteed Scholarships](#)
- This comprehensive site lists scholarships that are unlimited in number, and require no interview, essay, portfolio, audition competition
- of other "secondary" requirements. The scholarships are listed by college. This site would be especially useful to valedictorians and other students with outstanding qualifications.
- [Hispanic Fund](#)
- This site lists scholarships for Hispanic students and universities who participate in the Hispanic Fund scholarship program.
- [Hispanic Scholarship Fund](#)
- This site lists scholarships for Hispanic students, including some for undocumented students.
- [Hope Scholarship](#)
- Information about this scholarship provided by the US Department of Education.

Always Encourage your students to use their Imagination To Find Success

- Visualize what you want.
See it, Feel it, Believe in it.
- Your mind is a mental workshop.
You can build anything in it.
Make your mental blueprint,
And begin to build.
- The beginning is in your imagination;
First think, then organize your thoughts into plans
Then transform your thoughts into reality by taking some
positive action.
- Use your imagination to perceive your reality,
Even when it is not fully materialized.
- You must first see it clearly in your mind
Before you can do it.
- First visualize and then actualize your way
To success.
- You really can live your dreams.
All you need to do is try.

- Author Unknown

Jazakum-Allahu Khairun

- No web-site names and or addresses were left out intentionally
- I hope you found this seminar beneficial
- If you would like any additional information please feel free to email me at haldabe@hotmail.com