



Class of 2024
Senior Handbook

GENERAL INFORMATION

- If you need letters of recommendation from and/or forms completed by faculty or staff members, ask them well in advance of deadlines so they have time to do them. Please give them a *Requesting a Letter of Recommendation* form (found in the Counseling Office or on the high school webpage)
- Be very careful of scams such as scholarship or financial aid services, organizations to join, books to buy etc., that charge a fee for their services. Much of that information is free from the Counseling Office or colleges. When in doubt, bring the information to school and we will help you check out the organization.
- Learn how to, and practice budgeting your finances. High school graduates are usually poor at this. “Plastic” may make you feel like a millionaire, but the bills eventually demand payment. Using them in an emergency only is a good practice.
- Get organized. That means taking care of your physical and mental well-being. Get proper rest and eat a balanced diet. Have some method to keep track of your work, studies, commitments, (meetings, appointments, etc.), and plan your time and responsibilities accordingly.
- Be able to evaluate and prioritize all the things you must/might have to deal with on a daily/monthly/yearly basis. Use of the Agenda during senior year would be a good practice.
- Set long and short-term goals and evaluate your progress toward them on a regular basis.
- Get involved in community or on-campus organizations. They are a good opportunity to meet new people, have fun, get help, and expand your world.
- Work hard to improve your verbal and written communications skills. Colleges require homework/papers more frequently than in high school.
- If you plan to play sports in college, stop in the Counseling Office to see if you need to fill out NCAA eligibility forms and/or check with Mr. Lown or your coach.
- Listen to/read announcements in the daily bulletin. Check your student email account regularly for important information from the Counseling Office.
- Start a file of post-high school plans.
- Make copies of EVERYTHING you send to colleges/employers.
- Open and carefully read all correspondence sent to you. (Sometimes very important mail may look like junk mail)
- Get your parents involved with college / job application process
- Males must register for Selective Service – this **MUST** be done between your 17th birthday and 30 days after your 18th birthday. You may register on-line at www.sss.gov. If you do not register, you will not be able to apply for federal financial aid.

AUGUST / SEPTEMBER

- Register to take/retake ACT or SAT tests. The deadline for the October 28th ACT is September 22nd.
- Senior interview with School Counselors
- Golden Circle College & Career Fair – **Sunday, September 24th – 1:00-3:00 p.m.** – Prairie Meadows Conference & Event Center, Altoona
- Make sure you have the proper courses and credits for graduation
- Find out your G.P.A.
- Update/compile a list of all activities, honors, awards received
- Consider/Attend college fairs
- Research and narrow career choices
- Arrange college visits
- Meet with selected college representatives at school
- Finalize college choices
- Review/begin college application process (usually done online)
- Request transcripts be sent to colleges you applied to (fill out the transcript request form located on the high school webpage)
- Update/prepare a current resume
- Ask 3-5 people to be your references during the year
- Begin searching for scholarships - some have early deadlines
- Seek job information of projected careers
- Register for selective service (18-year-old males)
- Jostens's representative will be here **October 31st during Bobcat Time in the Auditorium.** Will talk about and hand out order forms for graduation merchandise (Parents do not attend this meeting)

OCTOBER

- Continue job information search
- Continue college application process
- Meet with college representatives at school
- Continue college visits
- Follow up on college applications submitted
- Attend college fairs
- Take or retake ACT or SAT if needed
- Do well on Trimester 1 grades
- Continue scholarship search

NOVEMBER

- November 3rd is the deadline to register for the December 9th ACT
- Register to vote and vote in elections
- Continue college application process and follow up
- Obtain financial aid information from colleges applied to
- Continue scholarship search
- Start studying for trimester 1 tests
- Ensure proper courses for Trimester 2
- Continue gathering job and career information
- Evaluate Trimester 1 report card and how you can improve
- Prepare personal resume to be used for job applications (if not completed)
- Meet with selected college representatives at school
- Arrange final college visits
- Watch for college acceptance letters/emails and fulfill all requirements
- Continue to see college reps (if needed)
- Register for ACT and SAT (if needed)
- Submit FAFSA if not already done

DECEMBER

- December 1st** students can begin completing the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) @ www.fafsa.gov.
- Continue college application process
- Continue scholarship search
- Obtain financial aid information from colleges
- Submit housing forms for colleges you have been accepted to
- Refine resume for job applications
- Double check credit status for graduation
- Take ACT or SAT (if needed)
- Submit FAFSA if not already done

JANUARY

- January 5th is the deadline to register for the February 10th ACT
- Begin serious job search if you are entering the workforce after graduation
- Continue college application process and scholarship search
- Continue work on Financial Aid and Housing
- Submit FAFSA if not already done
- Do well on Trimester 2 grades

FEBRUARY

- Finish college applications
- Continue scholarship search
- Continue work on financial aid and housing
- Submit FAFSA if not already done
- Carefully examine Student Aid Report when you get it from FAFSA processors
- Prioritize college choices
- Be very diligent to meet all deadlines and follow all instructions very carefully
- Make sure you understand all correspondence received. When in doubt, ask your counselor, the college, or perspective employers
- Begin to seek full time employment prospects for June
- Visit with college reps making second round of visits
- Start studying for trimester 2 tests

MARCH

- March 8th is the deadline to register for the April 13th ACT
- Evaluate Trimester 2 report card and how you can improve
- Continue housing and financial aid processes at colleges
- Follow up on all correspondence from colleges promptly
- Prioritize college choices
- Continue scholarship search
- Watch for Student Aid Report to come from FAFSA processor
- Make sure you have Student Aid Report sent to all colleges you are considering (designate this on FAFSA application)
- Check academic progress/status in courses
- Watch for Financial Aid Award letters from colleges you have been accepted to
- If you do not receive your Student Aid Report within 4-6 weeks of sending it in, call Student Aid Information Center at (319) 337-5665 for a status report
- Continue job search
- Begin applying for full time employment to begin in June (if needed)

APRIL

- Finalize / edit resume if necessary
- Continue search for job information and applications (if needed)
- Submit job applications for full time work beginning in June
- Continue scholarship search (many local scholarships become available in the spring)
- Compare Financial Aid Award letters from colleges
- Determine costs you will have to pay as you attend college or pay back after finishing your education when comparing costs of education
- Follow up on all materials received from colleges on housing, financial aid, registration, etc. for all colleges you are still considering
- Monitor progress / grades
- Submit final transcript request (There will be a form sent to your school email from the Counseling Office)
- Send/submit college acceptance letters and notify the colleges you do not plan on attending
- Begin graduation plans / arrangements
- Enjoy Prom!!

MAY

- Study/do well on trimester 3 exams
- Submit job applications for full time employment
- Make final decision on the college you will attend
- Finalize financial aid and housing plans for the school you will attend
- Prepare for graduation
- Continue scholarship search even through college (scholarships are always available)

MAKE AND FILE COPIES OF EVERYTHING.

HAVE A SAFE AND HAPPY GRADUATION!

SUMMER - AFTER GRADUATION

- Begin your first “real” job
- If you took college credit in high school, submit transcript request to NICC @ www.nicc.edu/transcript requesting them to send your transcripts to the college you will be attending in the fall, NICC does charge a \$5.00 fee for this service. For PLTW courses, see you instructor for instructions.
- Gather materials to take to college
- Follow up on all correspondence
- Make final financial arrangements
- Notify colleges you will not attend (if needed)
- Have fun!

JOB APPLICATION PROCESS

- Narrow career choices
- Try to get a mentoring position in your field of interest
- Prepare resume
- Look to see what jobs are available and where
- Do background homework on the job and company
- Apply for jobs
- Follow up with any contact the company makes with you
- Ask 3 people to be your reference (ask them before you apply)

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION FOR COLLEGE OR JOBS

- Counseling Office
- Materials sent in the mail
- Internet (best source)
- Newspapers/Magazines
- Bookstore
- Library
- Family members/Friends
- Professionals in the workforce
- Friends and acquaintances in college
- College Representatives/College Visits
- College Fairs
- Employment agencies

This handbook comes to you as a tool and outline of some of the important things you will have to do before you leave Western Dubuque High School. By no means are the lists all-inclusive. However, they are meant to be guidelines for you throughout your last year at WDHS. The Counseling Office is available to you as much or as little as you choose to use it. Please do not hesitate to see us if you need anything; we are here to help! We wish you much success throughout your senior year and in your future endeavors!!

Mr. Bryant (A–Ho), Mrs. Phillips (Hu–L), Mrs. Edgin (M–Z)
Ms. Steffen, Secretary