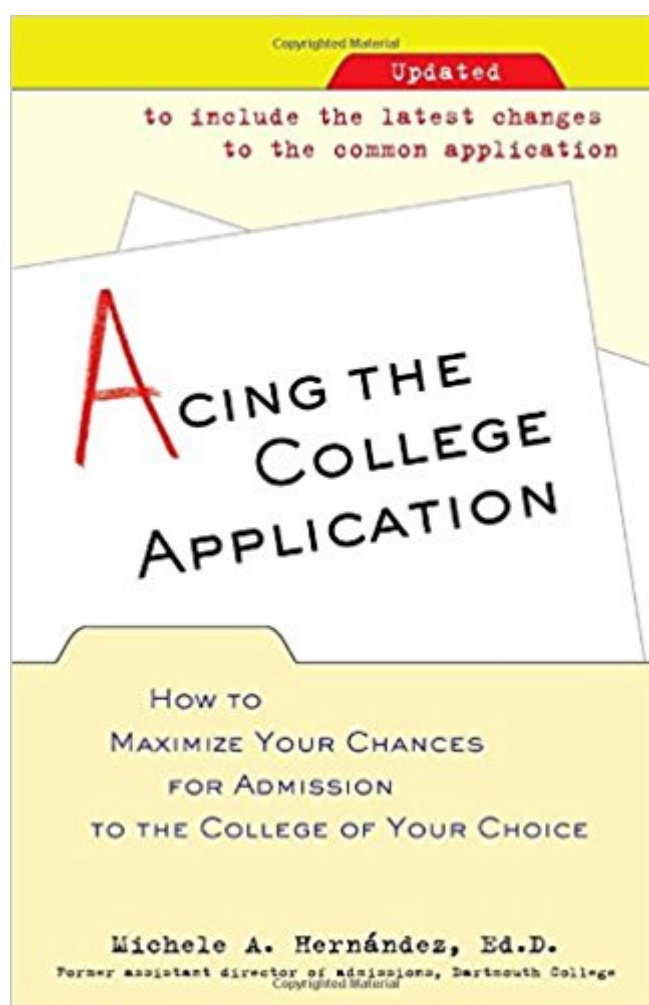


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# Acing The College Application: How To Maximize Your Chances For Admission To The College Of Your Choice



## Synopsis

With so many qualified applicants, competition for college admissions is fiercer than ever. Now you can put yourself ahead of the pack by making your application flawless! When applying for college, good grades and high standardized test scores are not always enough to guarantee admission. What sets you apart, argues Michele Hernandez, is the way you describe yourself in your application. But how do you present yourself with flair, and highlight all your talents, skills, and passions, in just a few pages? A former assistant director of admissions at Dartmouth College, Dr. Hernandez takes you step-by-step through the entire application process, revealing the details that make or break an applicant. From the multitude of short and longer essays to the myriad of charts, lists, and personal data sections, she offers essential advice, useful anecdotes, and vivid examples. Included are:

- A line-by-line look at the common application
- The truth about the essays, with samples of those that made the grade
- The best way to ask for teacher and guidance counselor recommendations
- When to provide colleges with optional essays and peer evaluations
- The ten common myths and misconceptions of the on-campus interview
- The most meaningful academic subjects, work experience, and extracurricular activities to mention
- Early action versus early decision
- the trade offs

With this helpful, savvy book, prospective college students and their parents and counselors can now vastly improve their chances of getting into the college of their choice.

“Want to scale the Ivy wall? Michele Hernandez gives you the tools to do it. This brisk, no-nonsense book is built on inside dope, and Hernandez’s experience allows her to challenge conventional admissions thinking.”

—HARRY BAULD Author of *On Writing the College Application Essay*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Hernandez delivers some brisk, straight talk to teens with sights on high-profile colleges, and having worked in admissions at Dartmouth, she knows the territory. What's somewhat different about her approach is its focus on the common application, which, according to her, can give a talented student a way to stand out. She looks first at filling out the activities section, following with tips on writing the main and supplementary essays--including polishing the style ("eliminate almost every adjective and adverb"), selecting a subject, and injecting passion and enthusiasm into the work. Many sample essays illustrate her points. In addition, she includes a generous section on the personal interview, which not only takes some of the fear out of the process but also explains how teens can use the opportunity to best advantage. A useful addition to the college shelf, just in time for the fall rush. Stephanie Zvirin Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Want to scale the Ivy wall? Michele Hernandez gives you the tools to do it. This brisk, no-nonsense book is built on inside dope, and Hernandez's experience allows her to challenge conventional admissions thinking.”  
—HARRY BAULD Author of *On Writing the College Application Essay*

*Acing the College Application: How to Maximize Your Chances for Admission to the College of Your Choice* by Michele A. Hernandez, Ed.D. (2007) is a step-by-step admissions guide for prospective students applying to competitive colleges. It is designed to help college applicants improve their chances of admittance to their preferred college. Dr. Hernandez is a former the assistant director of admissions at Dartmouth College. This is a major selling point for the book because it touts author's ability to divulge information that only an admissions insider would know. Dr. Hernandez claims that although school counselors and others who advise prospective college students offer guidance, they do not know the whole "behind-the-scenes admissions story." I believe that point has some validity because it is necessary for prospective college students to view their applications from the admissions office's point of view create most effective applications. However, I believe that educational professionals outside of the admissions office often provide useful advice to prospective

college students. The main focus of the book is on completing the application and its supplemental forms, such as essays and recommendations. The book includes detailed information about sections of the application and the forms and instructions on what information to include. It also offers advice from the author's point of view throughout the book. An example of the Dr. Hernandez's advice is for applicants to complete their applications by hand and mail them in unless otherwise required by the college. The author recognizes that this advice is contrary to popular opinion and explains the benefits of completing the application by hand, such as listed by the author include appearing more personal, showing that the application was completed by the actual applicant, decreasing the likelihood that the applicants is using the same application to apply to multiple colleges and conveying that a sense of realness. In addition to offering advice on completing a college application and required supplemental forms, the book offers advice on other topics including college interviews, ethical dilemmas and making decisions after acceptance to college. In my opinion, the advice in the book should be weighed against students' own opinions and advice from other professionals. Other admissions counselors may have a different perspective on some of the topics included in the book. Overall the book is a helpful tool for students applying to college because it offers detailed advice for every section of the application and guidance on related issues. While the book focuses on students applying to selective colleges, the book is still helpful for students applying to any competitive college because it walks applicants through sections of the application process that can be confusing and offers advice that can give them an advantage. However, this book may turn off applicants who are not at the top of their class because it is written for the above-average student applying to highly selective colleges. The book may also unnecessarily concern applicants into believing they cannot gain acceptance into any college unless they are extraordinary. In reality, there are colleges with various degrees of selectivity and the majority of applicants are able to find a college suited them.

When I found this book and read it from cover to cover for the first time, I felt extremely poised for the daunting task of applying. I know what I want out of my college experience. From my towering pile of college preparation books and dense, thick guides and manuals, this succinct chapter book is WONDERFUL. Written by a former assistant director of admissions at an Ivy League, the book's methods work and work quite well as it were. So DON'T let your parents spend hundreds on lots of fat, dense textbooks that claim on their covers that they will help you. This book forces you think deeply on what you really want out of your four years in college. Where do you see yourself thriving? What are your true interests? It is easy to follow; it is straight-forward, affordable, and one

of the most comprehensive guide out there. Students who are college bound (or even Ivy bound), read these books early in your High School career. They will literally guide you down the winding college path. If you really care about your future and your happiness and prosperity in college, then read this book and learn from it. I learned that college doesn't merit all this hype when a world of opportunity will unfold no matter where you attend and your ultimate success may hinge less on which college you choose than what you make of it once you are there. I've got four of the most invigorating and rewarding years of your life just ahead and this book makes sure I will make the most of them at the place of my choosing. It's all in the application.

Our son is currently engaged in his college hunt. He's a fairly well qualified high school junior...top 10% of his class, varsity sports, Eagle Scout, outside job, etc. We thought this college thing would be a fairly easy process. **WRONG!** We are so thankful to have discovered this book. Dr. Hernandez does a superb job of explaining the entire process of applying to a "highly selective" college or university. She provides a behind the scenes look at how a college application is screened, while providing many practical and insightful recommendations on completing the process. Had we not discovered this book I can assure you our son would have made some egregious errors when completing his applications. To date we've visited Cornell, Duke, Wake Forest and UNC-Chapel Hill. Each of the college admissions lectures we received at these institutions validated the information in this book. It was as though Dr. Hernandez was prescient. If you've not already done so, I cannot encourage you enough to VISIT COLLEGES. Listen to their admissions presentations. Take their tours. Talk to their students. You'll learn a great deal that's not addressed in the U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review college selection guides. And it's FUN! Run, don't walk to purchase this publication. It's a quick read. Have a highlighter handy. I also highly recommend "The Early Admissions Game" by Christopher Avery. It's imperative you understand the effect of "Early Decision" on the college acceptance process. Good luck during your college hunt! Jim

I've read my share of books about the complicated college application process, and I thought this one was the best. I actually want to give it 4 1/2 stars because I think it could use an update, especially given the changes in the online application process and the shift in questions individual colleges ask in the required supplemental section. Other than that, I'd say this book is a fabulous resource.

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