



WHAT TO EXPECT

UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS (CAM PROTOCOL)

Although the American university admissions season runs (generally) from August 1 through early January of 12th grade, UCA's application effort begins in January of 11th grade, with essay writing beginning in June.

Admissions applications are filed electronically, often to several colleges via one form (the most widely used is the Common Application). Some colleges require use of their own forms. High schools and secondary schools complete and upload school reports, including transcripts and teacher recommendation letters. Families prompt test services to send SAT or ACT scores.

The applications are not inherently complicated – they are designed for use by teenagers – but strategy is important. To be effective in their admissions effort, students must understand how their prospective colleges are evaluating them. Some colleges focus on grades and test scores, while others use a holistic process that evaluates (1) academic performance and potential, (2) depth and breadth of non-academic activities, and (3) the applicant's human characteristics, especially personality.

Unlike other consultants, UCA utilizes an [Interactive Team Approach](#). Each student works one-on-one with a [Client Manager](#); with a second professional as additional [Strategist](#); and also with a [Primary Team Editor](#). However, there are other many professionals – editors, interviewers, department heads and researchers – working with students as well.

In December or January of 11th grade, UCA clients are asked to complete an [Idea Generator](#), which is a list of questions prompting students to think about important issues in their development. These not only help us understand our clients, but the answers often form the basis of admissions essays, giving our students a head start on their work.

Starting in January or February of 11th grade, UCA clients enter our [Comprehensive Admissions Matrix \(CAM\) Protocol](#), which starts with our [Guided Self-Analysis](#) module. Through the GSA meetings, we help our students evaluate their natural personalities, interests and learning strengths, using exercises that UCA created, including an academic preference inventory; a memory inventory; an environmental inventory; and a personalized 20-class college curriculum designed by the student. The GSA is designed to help students understand themselves, which will help them with writing essays, identifying schools that fit their needs, and making intelligent decisions once they arrive at college. After GSA is completed, UCA will present a [GSA Report](#) on what was learned about the student.

At the end of the GSA meetings, UCA will have helped each student create a [Personal Thesis](#), a personal/interpersonal message that adds value on top of grades, test scores, and resume items.



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The Personal Thesis serves as the marketing foundation for the college applications.

Around April or May of 11th grade, UCA will suggest other schools to be researched besides the student's current college ideas. UCA will instruct students on how to research schools properly. Then, the Client Manager invites both students and parents to participate in a [College List Meeting](#) to discuss their academic and environmental preferences. From this meeting, students and UCA jointly develop a "starter" college list. UCA always recommends a blended list of schools, from reach/stretch schools to mid-grade/"fit" schools to solid/safety schools. In almost every case, a student's college list evolves throughout the admissions season. Our goal is to achieve options for when students select their universities (usually April of 12th Grade).

Most applications demand a main essay, or [Personal Statement](#) (the California public universities at present use four smaller essays). In addition to the Personal Statement, America's most selective schools also require up to eight "supplemental" essays of varying lengths. Students applying to top colleges usually write 15-20 essays or more. UCA clients are trained on how to write each type of essay through tutorials and How-To guides, and we don't just edit; we demand top-quality content and each student's best effort.

With the Personal Thesis as the guide, students start work on their main Personal Statement around June 1. UCA provides specific instructions for each stage of the writing process, plus sample essays to help students understand their assigned tasks. Students first provide at least four "Vignettes," which are short anecdotes or lifetime stories that illustrate the Personal Thesis. UCA then helps students structure their essays utilizing psychological and memory principles such as the Serial Position Effect and Borrowed Imagery. Students create an [Outline](#) according to UCA protocol, which is edited by UCA and then adjusted and supplemented by each student. Next comes the [Speed Draft](#), a free-flowing effort based precisely on the outline, providing the natural voice and flow that makes an essay compelling. UCA then performs a [Content Edit](#), after which students perform their own [Student Edit](#) using [Editing Guidelines](#) provided by UCA. We then edit the essay two more times before returning it to our client, focusing on message, structure, detail and voice, polishing the essay into a fine finished product. Each edit has a different purpose, and different editors ensure more broad-based evaluation and fresh eyes for every edit. The goal is to successfully complete the essay by July 1.

After the Personal Statement is completed, UCA will conduct a [Strategy Meeting](#) with the student and their family to explain what will happen over the coming months, decide on filing strategies and priorities, and answer questions to ensure that everyone has a mutual understanding. This will likely happen in July or August.



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For supplemental essays required by many colleges, students are given instructions and examples of the “standard” types of supplemental essays. Then UCA helps students group their college essay prompts to begin work in an ordered, efficient manner. However, when student work is below par (teenagers get distracted and tired during the essay season), UCA will return essays with directions for rewriting. Top results come only from top-quality content.

Many highly selective universities use admissions interviews as part of their review process. Interview Preparation usually starts in late September or October. UCA will provide an [Interview Tutorial](#), a Q&A “Voice” session, a [Mock Interview](#), and a [Mock Interview Report with Debrief](#). To present the most realistic experience, the Mock Interview will be conducted by a UCA professional who is unknown to the student.

What should clients expect while working with UCA?

You should expect personal service and great communication. UCA will send you information not only about what has happened with your student, but about what to expect in the coming weeks and months. We want your questions answered even before you realize that you have questions.

Our service centers on communication and information, not just meetings. UCA provides Newsletters, Bulletins, Webinars, Articles, Instructions, Guides and Samples to keep clients informed step-by-step. Although the CAM Protocol is structured and defined, UCA strongly encourages students and families to email us whenever questions, issues, comments or ideas arise. realistic experience, the Mock Interview will be conducted by a UCA professional who is unknown to the student.

UCA will provide instruction every step of the way. Parents do not need to lead the efforts, nor should you attempt to do so. This is a confusing process that changes not only yearly, but even monthly. However, parents are part of the process, too. UCA asks parents to complete a [Parent Questionnaire](#) describing their students’ personal and interpersonal qualities. We also ask parents to watch our Webinars and read our Newsletters, Bulletins and instruction sheets. From time to time, we will have independent communications with parents only to address a wide array of issues.

Mutual respect is required, and to achieve the best results, our clients should stay engaged, trust our advice, and follow directions, especially UCA deadlines.

Early admission results often arrive during the second week of December (some later), and UCA provides strategies for those whose applications have been deferred. After the regular decision



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filing deadlines (usually around January 1), UCA provides strategies for updating student applications and getting the attention of college admission representatives. Regular decision results are released from early March through April 1, and UCA provides strategies for waiting list candidates. During April, UCA helps students and families decide upon your best educational option.

This is an overview of what to expect, but much more goes on behind the scenes. Each student and family is treated individually and personally. With UCA's expertise and experience, you can achieve the best possible results.