

Fox Curriculum

Curriculum design and instructional research

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FACILITATION GUIDE

College Prep Intensive

A ten-day postsecondary transition program, written so another instructor could run it, and rebuilt in full after the first cohort.

LEVEL	High school, graduating seniors
DURATION	10 sessions across two weeks, 90 minutes daily
VERSIONS	2024-25 first cohort; 2025-26 revised
OUTCOME	90% college acceptance rate among participants
AUTHOR	Taylor Fox

Materials are named rather than linked. The source guide hyperlinks every handout, deck, and template to a school-managed account, and those links are not reachable from outside the institution. One colleague's name has been replaced with their role.

DESIGN PREMISE

The program was built backward from a single measurable outcome, admission to a postsecondary institution, rather than forward from a list of topics. Every session therefore ends with a deliverable that feeds the next one, and the two weeks accumulate into a completed application rather than a set of understandings about applications. The guide is written for a facilitator: each block is timed, each material is specified, and student preparation between sessions is stated explicitly so the next day can begin on the assumption that it was done.

WEEK ONE

Day 1 · Introduction, major exploration, and university search

Time	Segment
11:30-11:50	Welcome and course overview. Icebreaker: Would You Rather, college edition, run as a self-activity to surface what students think they want before any detail is introduced. Overview of objectives and materials, including the self-tracking spreadsheet shared with parents. Four stated goals: decide your major, decide on six schools, develop your application materials, craft your essay.
11:50-12:30	College selection. Presentation, then a chart handed out for revised Would You Rather thinking after the presentation.
12:30-1:00	Self-assessment and major exploration. Presentation on majors and career paths with a career paths handout. Interest-profiler self-assessment posted to the class platform.

Student preparation for Day 2: complete the self-assessment; print the homework; bring the tuition rates handout to parents; hold the discussion handout conversation with parents.

Day 2 • University search and understanding program requirements

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Recap. Discussion of majors chosen. Names and majors added to the major wall.
11:40-12:30	University search and spreadsheet creation. Direct instruction on how to search, worked against a set of five named institutions spanning private, public, and community college. Research recorded in the shared spreadsheet.
12:30-1:00	Group activity: university matchmaking. Students research and present what they have gathered.

Student preparation for Day 3: complete the research spreadsheet for three schools; continue the parent conversation thread.

Day 3 • Program requirements and entrance essay, part one

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Recap on prerequisites. Two guiding questions: is this realistic for the grades I have, and does it require anything extra such as auditions or additional testing. Students share findings. Major wall updated.
11:40-12:30	Activity: major comparison chart across top university choices.
12:30-1:00	Evaluating universities in speed dates. Structured peer-to-peer exchange using guiding questions.

Student preparation for Day 4: complete the spreadsheet for the remaining three schools; continue the parent conversation thread.

Day 4 • Application strategies and entrance essay, part two

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Recap on progress and challenges. Major wall updated. Individual teacher check of spreadsheets.
11:40-12:20	Introduction to entrance essays, delivered by presentation.
12:20-1:00	Crafting your story. Paper outline handed out and followed against a parallel presentation outline. Drafting begins with individual support.

Student preparation for Day 5: decide on an essay concept and write a rough introductory paragraph; complete the entire spreadsheet; continue the parent conversation thread.

Day 5 • Finding your fit and entrance essay, part three

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Class discussion on search progress. Major wall updated.
11:40-12:40	Building your application. Securing recommendation letters, with three required from distinct categories: a teacher, an employer or someone the student has worked for, and the school counselor. UC application checklist and supplemental questions; Common App checklist and supplemental questions.
12:40-1:00	Workshop: essay continuation with instructor support.

Student preparation for Day 6: finish a first draft of the full essay; complete the parent discussion handout, due Monday, including a sit-down conversation showing parents the research spreadsheet and discussing options.

WEEK TWO

Day 6 • Application enhancement and essay review

Time	Segment
11:30-11:50	First drafts collected. Discussion on making an application stand out. Major wall updated.
11:50-12:10	Building an impressive resume, delivered by presentation with a companion handout.
12:10-1:00	Workshop: resume building, hands-on with feedback, using a template gallery and a worked example.

Student preparation for Day 7: proofread and edit the essay for grammar and spelling; continue the major chart; work on the resume; apply the instructor's digital feedback on the first draft.

Day 7 • One on ones and peer collaboration

Time	Segment
11:30-11:50	Discussion on how admissions committees evaluate applications, covering testing, advanced coursework, grades, and activities. Major wall updated.
11:50-1:00	Essay one-on-ones with the instructor. Students work on all materials until called.

Student preparation for Day 8: update the essay from instructor and peer feedback; complete the college resume; finish the major chart; prepare to present the resume to the class.

Day 8 • Individualized counseling and essay enhancement

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Recap and open questions. Major wall updated.
11:40-12:30	Student resume presentations. Students present and market themselves to the room.
12:30-1:00	Workshop: peer to peer. One-on-one essay review with the instructor as needed; structured peer review using the review worksheet.

Day 9 • Finalizing applications

Time	Segment
11:30-11:40	Discussion on finalizing applications, next steps, and open questions. Major wall updated.
11:40-1:00	Individualized counseling sessions. Peer review during downtime.

Student preparation for Day 10: complete the final draft of the essay; ensure all materials are finished.

Day 10 • Course review and check out

Time	Segment
11:30-11:50	Course reflection. Students write a one-paragraph reflection on what the seminar changed and what they discovered, submitted on the class platform. Open discussion on what was learned and how to apply it.
11:50-1:00	Personal check-outs with the instructor to confirm every student has every resource finished and in hand.

SECOND-COHORT REVISION

The 2025-26 version is a rebuild, not an edit. The first cohort surfaced six problems, and each change below addresses one of them. The daily block also shrank from two and a half hours to ninety minutes, so every addition had to be paid for by a cut.

What changed	First version, 2024-25	Revised version, 2025-26
Course materials	Built on a purchased college guide and its companion essay book. Readings assigned from both across Days 1, 3, 4, and 5.	Textbook dependency removed entirely and replaced with materials written in house: presentations, handouts, and outlines for every segment. Removes a cost and access barrier and puts the content under my control.
Family engagement	A single parent conversation, assigned once at the end of Day 5.	A daily thread. The tuition rates handout and the discussion handout travel home every session, and the research spreadsheet is shared with parents from Day 1 so families track progress alongside the student.
Commitment tracking	Majors discussed verbally in each recap, with no persistent record.	The major wall, a visible artifact updated at every recap, so drift in a student's stated direction is public and addressable rather than private.
Instructor time	Day 7 ran a simulated admissions review, with peer interviewing for students not in the simulation.	Day 7 converted to essay one-on-ones with every student. The simulation was engaging and the conference is what actually moved the drafts.
Application scaffolding	Recommendation letters and transcripts discussed; a personalized application timeline built from a calendar template.	Concrete checklists added: UC application checklist and supplemental questions, Common App checklist and supplemental questions, a major comparison chart, and peer-to-peer guiding questions.
Closing	Day 10 ended in open discussion and a final peer feedback round.	Day 10 ends in a written reflection submitted on the class platform. The closing became measurable instead of conversational.