Hello GSSV Seniors,

GSSV’s summer reading and writing assignment this year is meant to benefit you as you prepare for your time after GSSV. Since applying for college and also applying for scholarships and grants can be time-consuming and worrisome . . . especially when added to your senior year work, complete the following to the best of your ability this summer. Our hope is that your doing so will make your application process much smoother.

Please complete the following over the summer and turn it in by the end of the second week of school. This will be one of your first grades of the grading period. You will find that the more thorough you are with this assignment, the less stressful the application process will be.

This assignment is to be your BEST writing. Do not give me unorganized, poorly worded responses that show little or no reflection. I want to help you move good or great writing to stellar. If I see contractions, page-length paragraphs, slang, or grammar problems, my response to you will simply be that you gave me a first draft and your grade will reflect that lack of effort.

1. Research at least three colleges/universities that you are considering applying to this coming fall.
2. Read and include each school’s guidelines for the following ***(You may put this info in a table, a list, or paragraph format. Do what works for you):***
3. average or minimum SAT scores for acceptance
4. tuition costs per semester
5. early decision/action policy (binding, non-binding, etc.)
6. size of school (student population)
7. majors that the school has that interest you
8. deadlines for applications
9. Visit the FAFSA website to get familiar with the financial aid process. ***Give three details that surprised you or three items you have located for its completion.***
10. Visit the Common Application or the Coalition site and set up your account. You may research your first choice to see which one of these applications it uses. Also, some colleges have their own applications. Whatever works best for you, choose.

***Simply provide a sentence stating the account/s you have created.***

1. ***Address (in one to two well-developed paragraphs) how realistic your choice is.*** Will your parents let you attend this college/university? If it is out-of-state, can you afford the extra expense (tuition, travel, etc.)? Do you have the grades and SAT/ACT scores that you need to be accepted to this institution?
2. Craft a ***one-paged personal statement*** that would work for any application that says “write a personal statement.” You may wish to research this on the colleges’ websites and on other Internet sites. For most, this statement will be for the reference’s benefit. To get you started,

**Website:** <https://thescholarshipsystem.com/blog-for-students-families/college-personal-statement-examples-template/>

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pj1mjW0TlxA>

1. Complete ***one of the Common Application essay prompts***. If the website has not posted them, contact me and I will send you last year’s; they don’t change often. I will not request access to submissions and I will not read pdf’s. I must be allowed to see, comment, and mark on these documents. These links may help: **Video:** <https://youtu.be/E2egtpU3kQQ>;

**Values Video:** <https://www.collegeessayguy.com/blog/the-values-exercise>

1. ***Student Profile Sheet*** for your chosen References: Complete a senior profile sheet so that those you ask to act as your references—teachers, employers, pastors, respected members of the community—will have the extra information they will need in order to write that recommendation.

This profile sheet should also include your ***grade point average***, ***class rank*** out of how many in your home school senior class (get that info from guidance), your ***volunteer work, community service, church, travel, employment, clubs, honors, awards, objective*** for attending college, etc. Any specific information that makes you stand out from the next person is what reference writers need.

**ADVICE: The following is ADVICE about choosing references. I do NOT want you to give me copies of your recommendations from the people you have chosen.** You need to get your recommendations from people who know you, your work quality, and your strengths and interests. If you are majoring in biology, then you need a rec from a bio teacher. If you are going into engineering, get your rec from a math/science teacher. Spread them around GSSV, the home school teachers, and other people such as employers and ministers. The better rounded you are, the better it looks. Do not get two recs from two similar teachers. Ex: If you ask me to write a recommendation for you, do not also ask any past English teacher. You want a variety of subjects and instructors. **All recommendation requests need to be e-mailed or asked for in person with an e-mail follow-up**, and they need to have the resume/this info attached. As a rule, you should give teachers at least two weeks’ notice for a recommendation. Start looking at college apps online in August; many come available then. **In writing, formally thank your references for their time.**

**Note:** I do not write recommendations if you do not complete this assignment. Also, you should waive your right to read the recommendation ... waive your FERPA rights. Most teachers do not write recommendations if they are not confidential. **I do not.**

1. **Collect all of this information in one computer folder.** I will post the due date in Canvas and you can submit this by the date, which will be two weeks after our return in August.
2. If you have the opportunity to **visit** the colleges you are seriously considering applying to, please do so. Often a visit will help you make your decision.

**Recommendation:** Investigate scholarships. You’ll be applying to those by Spring if not before.