

PIUS XI

CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL



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Gabrielsen, Greg	207	Eldredge, Mary	318	Herbst, Maggie	420
Hupfer-Riedel/Lartey	300	Farrar, Charles	507	Horky, Jeremy	116
Griffin/Kahler	417	Gilgannon, Michelle	520	Look, Hayden	414
Kallio, Emily	206	Hyatt, Talia	508	Reiter, Vivian	613
Parlier, Mary	322	Kehoss, Kevin	202	Romans, Anthony	200
Rogaczewski, Ben	512	Morgan, Mercedes	204	Ruszkiewicz, Amanda	404
Smith, Murphy	320	Rowder/McKowen	330	Scherrer, Aubrey	310
Stutzman, Mary	416	Swenson/Harvey	610	Schimmels, Lauren	418
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SENIOR COLLEGE HANDBOOK

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The Application

College, University, Technical School, or 2-year University applications generally have two parts: personal information and essay (one or more).

Some colleges give you a writing prompt for the essay, usually about your college goals and why you want to go to their college. Other colleges let you write your own personal statement about yourself. Still other colleges allow you to upload a research paper or other writing sample you have done in high school.

Have a teacher, counselor, parent, writing center tutor, or trusted person **PROOFREAD** your essay.

There is no fixed number of how many applications are right for you, but there are a couple of recommendations. If you have a number of “reach” colleges (either academic reach or financial reach) on your list, you should have at least one backup school that you are confident in being admitted to and can afford.

While some colleges may send a confirmation email that your application is complete, most do not. If your colleges provide an online tracking/status system, use it. It is ultimately up to you to monitor your application by staying in contact with each admissions office. **Xello** (introduced on page 5) will help you stay organized. Add ALL colleges that you are interested in applying to on your Xello Student page.

Early Decision application VS. Early Action application?

Early Decision means you are committing to go to that college if you are admitted, regardless of scholarships or financial aid.

Early Action is non-binding, with a decision being made in early Fall if you meet the Early Action application deadlines.

You may only identify one application as Early Decision.

“Wait listed” or “Postponed Decision”

This really means that the college is very interested in you, but they either need to see your first semester grades to confirm your potential, or they need to get responses back from their highest tier admissions to see how many seats they will have available for you. If a college really did not like your application, they would have let you know that with a denial letter.

While we are encouraging you to be optimistic when wait-listed, it is also a good idea to lock in your spot at your second choice. This should reduce your anxiety about going “somewhere” and again let you move forward with planning.

Shared Application Sites

It is a website that allows you to fill out an application once and then send that application to any college that is a member of that site.

- University of Wisconsin System
- The Common App
- The Coalition for Access and Affordability

While there is no fee for using these Shared Applications sites, each college may have an application fee that must be paid before your application will be reviewed.

UW Wisconsin System

Resources and application here: <https://uwhelp.wisconsin.edu/admission-guidelines/>

Start your application for a number of University of Wisconsin schools in one place. Fill out your personal profile once. Add all UW schools that you are interested in. Each campus may have their own essay prompt or a fee for their application.

If you applied and were accepted through the UW Direct Admit program, please refer to the acceptance letter for next steps. Counselors have access to the letter of acceptance if you need further information.

Common App

Common Application is an independent service that allows you to fill out one application that is accepted by over 600 colleges.

Look for your Common App schools here: <https://www.commonapp.org/explore/>

Since the Common App is more challenging to navigate and manage than most regular college applications, we recommend only using the Common App if you are using it for at least three colleges.

Although the basic personal information is the same, typically, each Common App college will have their own Supplement and/or individual essay prompt.

A complete toolkit of tips and best practices to give yourself the best chance at success:

<https://www.commonapp.org/apply/first-year-students>

Common App account must be matched with your Xello account.

To match your accounts you must first create a Common App account, add at least one college and complete the FERPA documentation.

FERPA Family and Educational Rights and Private Act It is recommended that you waive your right to see letters of recommendation. By waiving your rights, it tells your college you are confident that your letters of recommendations are completely honest.

Once your account is matched on Xello Student, you will request all letters of recommendation through Xello Student.

- [Watch this video](#) for instructions on creating a Common App account and linking that account to Xello. **Common app and Xello matching video:**

https://help.xello.world/en-us/Content/Knowledge-Base/Xello-6-12/College-Planning/CA_Student-Integrate.htm

SSR is a Common App acronym that stands for Secondary School Report. Some colleges might refer to a “Counselor’s Report”, which is essentially the same report. This report is filled out by your Counselor, and includes information about you and about Pius XI. Your counselor will also submit this through Xello.

Coalition for College Access and Affordability

This relatively new organization/association of colleges offers a shared application feature, as other features for students such as college research, building a portfolio, accumulating recommendation letters, etc. Please see your counselor before completing this application.

Xello

A web-based platform used for

- Educational planning
- Career Exploration
- College research
- ❖ Managing college applications →

Seniors

Xello is used by Students, Counselors, and Teachers

- Students: to keep track of all college applications, deadlines, and electronically request letters of recommendation from teachers and transcripts from counselors. Xello can also be used to research schools and scholarships, as well as research your own strengths, interests, and potential career.
- Counselors: to know what schools you are applying to and how you are applying (Common App, Direct to the institution, Early Decision, Early Action, Regular Decision, etc.) so that supplemental materials (transcripts, school profile, letters of recommendation, Counselor Reports, etc.) can be sent electronically – correctly and efficiently.
- Teachers and School Leaders can access information students provide to write letters of recommendation and to send their letters to the requested schools.

Xello Tutorials go to: <https://xello.world/en/resources/?category=college-planning>

How do I log into Xello Student?

- Go to Xello Student:
https://login.xello.world/?_gl=1*j888x9*_gcl_au*NTEXMjQwNzU0LjE3NDg4NzUwNTQ.
Bookmark this page! The link can also be found on the Pius XI website under “Quick Links.”
Or under Pius Bookmarks on your school Chromebook
- Enter email and password
Email: Pius XI student email (firstname.lastname@piusxi.org)
Password: students have created these; if they have forgotten, click “forgot password” to reset

A Link to Xello Student is also under Pius XI Bookmarks in your Chrome browser.

Click to see drop-down, find **Xello Login**

Xello can change information to your preferred language:

<https://help.xello.world/en-us/Content/Knowledge-Base/KB/Students-Change-Language.htm?Highlight=change%20language>

To book an appointment with your counselor for further assistance, please click on the link below to receive a slot during an open period:

Mr. LaPree: <https://calendar.app.google/M2EpakZYYDsD2mP29>

Ms. Lovinus: <https://calendar.app.google/wMfSgNG7bwK7Qt5w9>

Mrs. Hartmann Ramirez:

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/appointments/schedules/AcZssZ2bbZ51rMawXf0CAN2CI505xWf3tYzJ96IFhR9zVBTgvtAPjQkKoWycyW3rf7HYRvA5j1SuJNdT>

Narrow your College Search

- Research (Xello and School websites)
- College Rep Visits
- Consider Campus Size and what is good for you
- Private vs Public
- Cost, look into Scholarship Opportunities
- Campus Tours

Your Xello Home Page

The screenshot shows the Xello home page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'xello' on the left and icons for 'Home', 'About Me', 'Explore', and 'Plans' on the right. Below the navigation bar, there's a section for 'Farming, food & natural resources' with a sub-section 'What do Animal Care and Service Workers do?'. This section includes a video player showing a woman interacting with a dog. To the right of the video, there's a 'To-do list' section with a progress indicator showing '16%' completed (3/19 completed). The to-do list includes tasks like 'Add personal email (optional)', 'Add 5 interests', 'Add 6 skills', 'Set 2 favorite clusters', and 'Add 1 life experience'. There's also a 'View all tasks' link and a 'Done' button.

Xello has resources for...

- Identify Strengths & Interests (see ABOUT ME Tab at top)

- Research Career Clusters (see [EXPLORE](#) Tab at top)
- Research Colleges and Universities that support those careers (see [EXPLORE](#) Tab at top)

Identify Colleges I'm Thinking About

Add colleges you may be interested in to your list. There is no commitment in this section.

Helps you organize your thoughts and research, lets your counseling team know what you are looking at, and if any colleges on this list schedule a visit with Pius XI virtually or in person, you will receive a notification email.

The screenshot shows the Xello website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Xello logo and four tabs: Home, About Me, Explore, and Plans. To the right of the navigation bar are icons for search, a heart, and a profile. Below the navigation bar, there is a section titled 'College Planning' with a sub-section 'College applications'. A prominent blue button labeled 'Connect' is next to the text 'Connect Common App to Xello'. Below this, there is a section titled 'Important dates' with a 'View all' button. Two date cards are displayed: one for 'DEC 1 2025 FAFSA open date College Year 2026-2027' and another for 'JUN 30 2026 FAFSA close date College Year 2026-2027'. An orange arrow points to the 'Explore' tab in the navigation bar.

To **+ Add Colleges to List** click on + New Application and complete the details. Xello will automatically fill in the college application due date; however, if it does not appear, it means you can set your own deadline to submit the college application. ** Tip: Please do your own research and confirm the application deadline through the main institution's webpage.

Application tracker + New application

The screenshot shows the Xello Application Tracker interface. At the top, there is a section titled 'Application tracker' with a '+ New application' button. Below this, there is a card titled 'Enrollment decision' with the text 'Add the college you're going to, and request your final transcript' and an 'Add decision' button. Below the card, there is a large empty box with a building icon and the text 'Hey Jasmin, track your external college applications here.' and a 'Create Your First Application' button. An orange arrow points to the '+ New application' button.

Fill in your application details in the fields below:




Application method

Admission type


Application deadline ⓘ

For each school, you will need to answer questions about the TYPE OF APPLICATION.
IMPORTANT! Counselors process applications differently based on your response


Example:

Application method

University of Wisconsin System 



Admission type

Regular decision 

Application deadline 

 11/01/2025

Once you have filled in your info, hit “Create” at the bottom right to lock it in. Don’t forget—you need to add every college you have applied to to your Xello account so counselors can send off all the transcripts, recommendations, and other materials on your behalf. If you have applied through the Common App, make sure your Common App is linked with Xello—this is the only way your counselor can send those required documents to your schools.


Application method

Common App 

Admission type

Regular decision 

Application deadline 

 mm/dd/yyyy

Do NOT request transcripts until the application is submitted.

If you indicate **Common App** for any of the application types, you must match XELLO with your Common App account.

Watch Instruction Video here:

https://help.xello.world/en-us/Content/Knowledge-Base/Xello-6-12/College-Planning/CA_Student-Integrate.htm

Letters of Recommendation (SEE APPENDIX A)

Some schools and most scholarships ask for letters of recommendation. Most colleges that ask for letters set a maximum of two or three. Please check the school websites before asking a third teacher to write a letter of recommendation.

College admissions counselors suggest that recommenders be teachers in core subjects. The person should know you well enough to tell a story or give an example of your leadership, maturity, or determination. This is more effective than a long list of complementary adjectives.

Choosing the Best Recommenders

Selecting the right person to write a letter for you is just as important as the letter itself. The best recommenders are people who can provide specific, meaningful examples of your skills and character. When choosing, consider these types of recommenders:

- **Teachers:** These are often the most effective recommenders, especially if you're applying to college. Choose a teacher from a subject where you excelled or where you had a strong working relationship. This could be a teacher who saw you grow throughout the semester, someone who helped you with a challenging project, or a teacher from an honors or AP course. Ideally, choose teachers from your junior or senior year who taught you in core subjects where you excelled or demonstrated significant growth.
 - ❖ Focus on relationships: Select teachers with whom you have a positive relationship and who have witnessed your active participation in class or projects.
 - ❖ Consider your intended major: If you have a potential major, a recommendation from a teacher in that field can be particularly impactful
- **Align recommenders with the college's requirements:** Check each college's specific instructions on the number and types of recommenders required.
- **Counselors or School Staff:** Your school counselor can provide valuable insight into your academic record, personal growth, and potential as a student. They often have a holistic view of your high school career and can speak to your character and involvement in the school community.

Recommenders to Use with Caution

When selecting a recommender, it's important to know that some schools may have policies regarding who can write a letter on your behalf. To avoid any issues, you should generally avoid asking for letters from the following individuals:

- **Family Members:** A letter from a parent or other relative is almost always seen as biased and will likely be disregarded by admissions committees.
- **Clergy or Campus Ministers:** While a campus minister or clergy member may know you well, some universities and programs, especially those that are not faith-based, may not accept these letters. It's best to stick to academic or professional recommenders to avoid any uncertainty.
- **Theology Teachers:** Similar to clergy, letters from theology teachers may not be accepted by all schools. To be safe, focus on teachers in core subjects like math, science, English, or history.

When students request recommenders to submit letters on Xello Student, they can indicate to which schools they want specific letters to go to. Students will also make note of what recommender letters go to what school on the Xello student page.

School recommenders will also use Xello to upload the letters to your profile. Students should complete a LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION INFORMATION SURVEY Google Document to assist these writers of letters, so they know all of your involvements while in high school. It will assist them in writing these letters for you. After completing the Google document, please make a copy of your form to upload it to your "Attach File" when requesting a teacher on Xello.

Cancel Recommendation letter request

Note to referrer (Minimum 100 characters)

Type your note here...

0 / 5000

Need help?

A recommendation letter should tell a story about who you are as a person. When asking someone to write a letter for you, you should highlight any achievements you would like included. You should also make sure to personalize each request. Let your referrer know why you have chosen them. Here are some points to think about when writing a note to your referrer:

- Why are you contacting this specific referrer?
- What school are you hoping to attend?

Show more ▾

Attach file
Attach your resume or brag sheet in PDF format.

Attach PDF

Send

Transcripts

Schools will ask for your grade history in several ways.

- Some will ask the student to self-report grades and high school class history.
- Some will allow the student to upload an UNOFFICIAL transcript during the application process. If you need an unofficial transcript, email your counselor to get one to upload or to check your history for the self-report. Counseling would need guardian permission to do so.
- If your school is asking for an OFFICIAL transcript – meaning it is sent directly from our school to the college- you will request transcripts on Xello at the point you add that school to your list of applications. Most schools prefer an electronic transfer of transcripts done through Xello.
- Parent permission is needed in writing (can be emailed to the counselor) to release transcripts.

After you graduate, the college you decide to enroll in will need an official copy of your Final Transcript. This verifies all your senior year grades and your graduation date. In the spring, you will need to indicate on Xello what school you plan to attend. The final transcript will be sent to that school after graduation by June 30th.

Seniors will be asked to complete a Senior Survey in April. At that time, they will indicate which school they would like the final transcript to be sent to. The survey will also ask them to indicate their scholarship awards.

Changing Senior Year Classes

If you change or drop senior year classes after you have applied to schools, it is recommended **that you** report the change to the College Admissions of all the schools you have applied to. By dropping a class after you submit your applications, you are essentially changing your application. Colleges will compare your Final Transcript to the list of classes on your application. If they don't match, an offer of admission can be rescinded.

If you feel you need to change a core class, the student must contact the college ahead of time and get their approval or recommendation.

ACT/SAT

Both the ACT and SAT are accepted at all colleges. Some East Coast schools prefer the SAT.

The most economical way to have scores sent is to indicate colleges on the test registration site for either exam. You can name up to four schools for no extra charge. Otherwise, scores must be ordered individually at the websites below.

ACT: Go to www.actstudent.org, log in to your account, and find its college code, indicating where you want the scores sent. There is a per-test fee for this.

SAT: Go to www.collegeboard.com

Test Free/Test Optional

Many colleges have announced they have gone “Test Free” or “Test Optional” when it comes to requiring ACT/SAT scores. These terms can have different meanings at each campus. It is best to go to the Admissions page of the colleges you are applying to and read over the requirements. This should tell you if they still require an ACT/SAT score, or if a “Test Optional” application is available.

College Visits

In-person visits/ virtual Visits will have a representative from the College visit Pius XI Catholic High School during school hours. Meetings will be in room 214. Announcements will be made to remind students of the schools that are visiting via Schoology, Morning Announcements, and Newsletters. Students need to check their emails daily for updates.

If you are in school at the time of your virtual meeting, the counseling department can help you find a private place to do your meeting on your Chromebook during an open period.

Financial Aid/Scholarships

What is FAFSA?

This stands for Free **Application for Federal Student Aid.**

FAFSA does not send you money; it is a federal office that provides a uniform analysis of a family’s and student’s finances and generates a report (**Student Aid Report or SAR.**). This **report** gets sent to your colleges and indicates the **Estimated Family Contribution (EFC)** to a student’s college expenses. Colleges then put together a financial aid package based on the SAR.

Beginning October 1, 2025, families (parents and students) need to go online to www.fafsa.ed.gov to fill in financial information. Federal tax return information from the 2024 return will need to be used for the 2026-27 academic year. To continue federal aid while you are in school, the **FAFSA will need to complete every year you are in school.** Many scholarships (school and independent) also require a complete FAFSA to be considered for their scholarship.

Yes, it is free! But you need to be careful of certain websites that use the word “FAFSA,” but are really private companies trying to make some money off of you. The free real website is www.fafsa.ed.gov

The different types of Financial Aid fall under the categories of **Scholarships, Grants, Loans, and Work Study.**

Scholarships can be either merit-based (e.g., GPA, ACT/SAT score, Athletic performance, Leadership, etc) or need-based. This type of award does not have to be repaid.

Grants are need-based, with your eligibility determined by your FAFSA report. This money does not have to be repaid.

Loans are need-based, again with your eligibility for different types of loans determined by your FAFSA report. This money does have to be repaid.

Work-study eligibility is based on your FAFSA report and is a way of paying off your tuition by working at your college.

For school-sponsored merit scholarships, offers can come along with your acceptance letter. For need-based financial aid, offers typically don't come to you until February or March, after the FAFSA report is filed.

□ **Where do I go to find possible scholarships?**

Each college has its own set of in-house scholarships. You will need to search their financial aid web page to root these out. Scholarships are also listed on Xello. The Pius XI Counseling Department updates this list throughout the fall and spring. Students may also visit the counseling department for more scholarship information posted on the counseling wall.

Scholarships come in many forms and with a variety of criteria. In addition, websites such as fastweb.com, fastaid.com, or collegeboard.com list hundreds of scholarships. The challenge with these sites is screening all the ones listed to find the specific ones that apply to you. Web searches for specialty scholarships (e.g., ethnic scholarships, specific nationality scholarships, specific career/major scholarships, etc) can also produce unexpected results.

□ **What are my options when the financial aid offer does not provide enough aid for me to attend my first-choice school?**

If the scholarship and financial aid do not provide enough aid to make education affordable, the number one thing to do is contact the Financial Aid Office at your first choice school and discuss your need. Sometimes they have flexibility in what they have offered. Your other options center around different loan options.

Financial Aid Resources

The Pay for College Video Series from Sallie Mae, 8 Chapter Series, Chapter 5 has instructions of how to fill out the FAFSA

<https://www.payingforcollegeresource.com/paying-for-college-videos/>

Financial Aid in 7 Easy Steps from NACAC

<https://www.nacacnet.org/globalassets/documents/publications/financialaid7steps.pdf>

Federal Student Aid Application, information on Understanding Types of Aid and How to Apply

College Acceptance

I am accepted to multiple colleges. How do I decide which one to attend?

Welcome to the “Reality Check”, the final step in the process. Assuming you have visited each of the campuses you are considering, the final decision should look at academic, financial, and personal factors. The decision needs to involve your parents.

Is it worthwhile to put down deposits at multiple universities? Are those deposits refundable?

Most housing deposits are refundable if you don’t enroll at a college. Admissions deposits can be refundable, but you need to verify this and check if there is a deadline date for refunds.

Do the schools to which I am accepted require mid-year transcripts?

Some do, most don’t. Certain schools, like UW-Madison, require you to “self-report” your mid-year grades online. You must comply with this if requested, or your application will be in jeopardy.

When do I have to make a final decision on which college I will attend? Are there advantages to accepting admission right away?

By mutual agreement, no college can require a decision from you before May 1st. However, sometimes scholarship offers have an earlier deadline. On a personal level, making a decision early on allows you to de-stress, begin planning your first year, lock in your preferred housing, and spend more time searching for scholarships.

Also, when you finally make your decision, it is good protocol to contact/email your other colleges, thanking them for their admission invitation, but informing them you are enrolling elsewhere. This frees up your spot for another applicant.

APPENDIX A

Requesting Letters of Recommendation

1. Thoughtfully consider who you will ask to write a letter of recommendation. Many colleges require one letter; highly selective colleges may require more. Do not ask for more letters of recommendation than you need. Talk to your counselor for help in deciding who to ask.
2. Complete the “Letter of Recommendation Information Survey” Google Doc. After completion, students must attach a copy to the teacher's recommendation for them to have access.
3. After the survey is complete, visit the teacher (s) you would like to write a letter for and **ASK THEM IN PERSON.**
4. **Know your deadlines and Plan ahead.** Give your recommenders at least 3 weeks to complete and submit a letter. Always thank them for taking the time to do this for you!

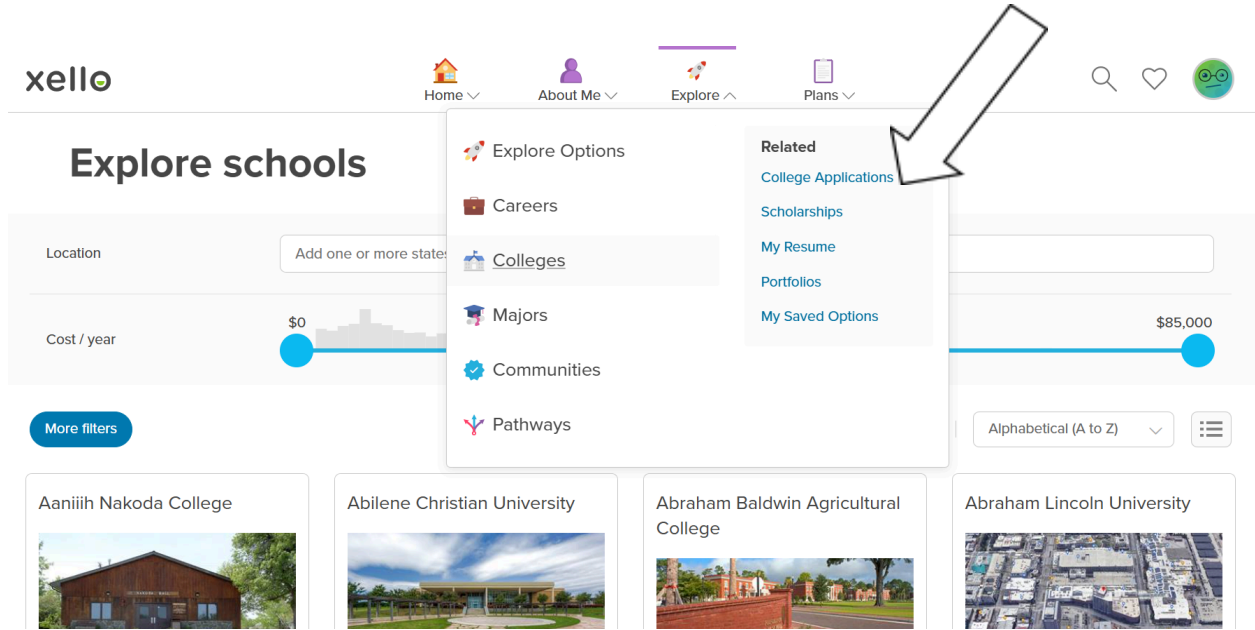
How to Request a Letter of Recommendation in Xello:

- **MAKE a copy first!** Use the following Google Doc Link to provide information for your recommenders. Please read the Directions at the top of the page carefully:
 - <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rwe-L109gc-Hb-hyqPsjRRMtqraISUVPVxDImIB75O8/edit?tab=t.0>
- **Log in** to Xello with your school email and password.
- From your **Dashboard**, click on **Plans** → **College Planning**.
- Select **College Applications**.
- Click on the specific **college application** you're working on.
- Under the **Application Checklist** section, click **Request Recommendation**.
- Choose the **teacher** you want to ask from the dropdown list.
- Add a **personal note** as to why you chose the recommender to write this letter.
- Download the Google Doc Letter of Recommendation form as a PDF and attach the file using the “Attach File” button.
- **Always thank them!**
- Click **Send Request**.

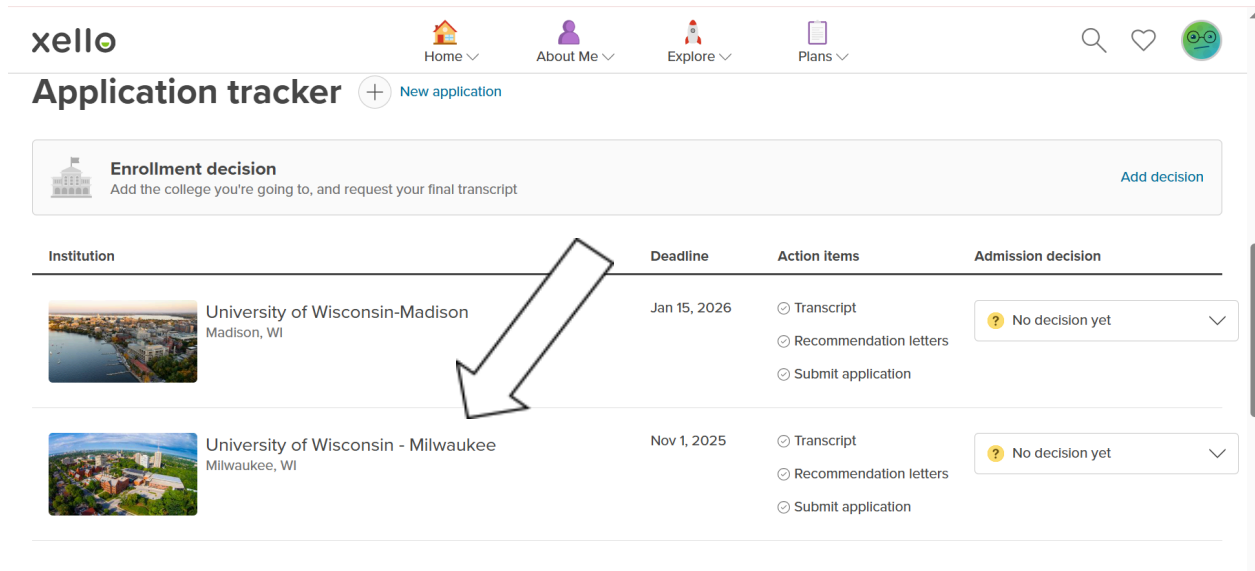
5. You will know the teacher has uploaded a letter for you on Xello Student when the “Status” changes from “requested” to “in progress.”
6. **Express gratitude to your recommenders! A brief thank-you note is always best practice!**

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION- XELLO REQUESTS

1. Navigate to the “Explore” tab at the top and select “College Applications”



2. Select the school you are requesting a letter of recommendation to:






3. Scroll down to “Application Checklist” and Select “Request”:


xello

Home ▾ About Me ▾ Explore ▾ Plans ▾

🔍 ❤️ 🌐


Application checklist + Add task 🔔 Need help?

 Transcript	Due date: Nov 1, 2025	<input type="button" value="Request"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
 Recommendation letters Optional: 1	Due date: Nov 1, 2025	<input type="button" value="Request"/> <input type="button" value="Options ▾"/>
 Submit application	Due date: Nov 1, 2025	<input type="button" value="Options ▾"/>



4. Start typing teacher's name (select their name as it appears):

Request details

 University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee Milwaukee, WI	Nov 1, 2025 Due date
--	-------------------------

Select referrer

OR

1 educator found

SUZANNE LOVINUS

5. Download the Google Doc “Letters of Recommendation Survey” as a PDF and attach it using the “Attach File”.
6. Write “Why” you chose the recommender in the “Note to Referrer”.

Request details



University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Milwaukee, WI

Nov 1, 2025
Due date

Note to referrer

(Minimum 100 characters)

Type your note here...

0 / 5000

Attach file

Attach your resume or brag sheet in PDF format.

Attach PDF

7. **Click Send!**

APPENDIX B

Xello Student Resources

Match Xello and Common App video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N45gOPQy0dE>

Researching and Adding colleges to Colleges I am Interested in in Xello:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LKbtNoELNdI>

Request Transcripts in Xello:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1zDqdg9x5U>

Letters of Recommendation in Xello:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvkf8m7JjLc>

APPENDIX C

Senior College Application Checklist

___ Make an appointment with your counselor.

___ All students need a Xello account.

___ Update Xello account with Colleges you are interested in.

___ Decide how you are going to apply to your schools. Will you use the Common Application or will you apply directly using the school's application? Sometimes applying directly to the institution is easier and faster than completing the Common App. See your counselor for insight as to the best way to proceed.

___ If you are using the Common App, you must link it to Xello. Directions for how to do this are on Xello. If you neglect to complete this step, letters of recommendation, transcripts, and other important documents cannot be sent. **Note: Students must complete the FERPA portion of the Common Application to link it to Xello.**

___ Letters of Recommendation (LOR) are managed through Xello. You should complete the "Letter of Recommendation Information Survey" to attach it to your Xello account. See page 15 in the senior handbook.

___ Before you request any letters of recommendations, check to see if a letter is even required to be submitted on your behalf. Some schools will not even accept letters of recommendation. Only request the number of letters needed, as schools do not look favorably on submitting more than required.

___ Ask your recommender in person first, to see if s/he is able to write a letter on your behalf before you complete the request online via Xello. Give teachers a three-week notice.

___ You will be requesting transcripts to be sent via Xello. Counselors need parental/guardian permission to release your transcripts. Transcripts will be sent out with the initial application, when requested at mid-year, and your final transcript. It is your responsibility to update Xello and communicate with your counselor when you need a transcript sent. It takes several days for this request to be processed. Plan accordingly.

___ ACT/SAT test scores. When you register for your tests, you can send up to four scores for free. Take advantage of this opportunity. If you indicate which schools you wish to have your scores sent to at the time of testing, the school already has your scores. If not, you must go back into your ACT/SAT account and have the scores sent to each school that you apply to. There is a fee involved. Be prepared to pay for this.

_____ Fee waivers for applications are available for select students who are experiencing financial hardships. Book an appointment with your counselor if you believe you may qualify for a waiver.

_____ Make sure you and your parents/guardian complete the FAFSA. See page 12

_____ Update your Xello account with application results throughout the year in the “Admission Decision” dropdown under selected college.

_____ Make sure to indicate which college you have selected to attend on your Xello account.

_____ Write your recommender(s) a thank you note.

_____ Inform your counselor of the outcome of your applications.

_____ Keep a record of all scholarships received (the name of scholarship and total money awarded).

_____ Complete the Senior Survey from Pius XI in April!