

# Senior Profile Planning Page

**Important! Read before you start.**

**What is a teacher recommendation?**

Often you will be required to submit two recommendations as part of the application process for honors colleges, honors programs, scholarships, and out-of-state schools. They need to be written by adults who know you well and who can attest to your character and/or academic abilities.

**Why should I complete the Senior Profile?**

There is considerable competition for scholarship money and highly selective programs for which you will soon be applying. Most of the other applicants will closely resemble you on paper in terms of GPA, ACT score, coursework, and extracurricular involvement. Often it can be your written essay and teacher recommendations that allow you to stand out from the competition. These Profile questions will likely be difficult and time consuming to answer, however, your answers will allow your teachers to write a much more personal recommendation. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that ALL college-bound seniors complete the Senior Profile. It is also recommended that you have it completed early in the fall semester before your time is consumed with schoolwork and filling out college applications.

**What should I keep in mind while filling out this Profile?**

Colleges will look at your ACT score, your GPA, the classes you took, and your extracurricular involvement, however, they are also looking for evidence of creativity, energy, curiosity, and commitment. What makes you stand out? How are you different and more deserving of college admission, honors program admission, or of a scholarship for which you are applying? What can you show them now that will convince them that your future success as an alumnus will be good advertisement for their school?

Setting modesty aside, what are those aspects of yourself and your achievements that make you different? Make sure you let us know as much as possible about you and do not forget that your teachers often don't know about the activities you do outside the classroom that make you a well-rounded individual. You do not have to answer every question and please don't make up an answer just to provide one. Keep in mind that the quality of your answers will help your teachers write a better recommendation.

**What else should I do?**

Never assume that your teachers know important personal information about you. It is safer to assume that your teachers know only the information you share with them. For this reason, it is important that you find opportunities early and often for each of your teachers to learn first-hand of your character and academic abilities. Never underestimate the value of having a personal acquaintance with your teachers.

**IMPORTANT:** As soon as you become aware that you need a teacher recommendation, it is your responsibility to request it personally from your teacher. Make sure to give that teacher as much time as possible (minimum of two weeks notice) to write it before it is due. Be sure to tell them the specific nature of the college, scholarship, or program requiring the recommendation.

**First Name:**

**Last Name:**

**Contact e-mail address:**

**Highest Cumulative ACT Score:**

**College(s) being considered:**

**College major(s) being considered:**

**Career(s) being considered:**

## Extracurricular Involvement

Colleges create special programs and give scholarships to foster the development of promising young people into exceptional adults. The best predictor they have of your potential success in their programs are your past accomplishments which demonstrate that you are well-rounded and not just a good student. Part of doing this involves telling them specifically how your committed involvement contributed to the success of an endeavor outside the classroom. A long list of your club memberships will not impress them.

- List up to three extracurricular activities that you have been actively committed to during your high school career. *These could involve school clubs, sports, music, or church and community activities in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grades. Give the grades or years you participated, positions or offices held, and any significant facts about the activity or your involvement in it.*
- Discuss the details of an occasion or event when your committed involvement or leadership had a significant impact on your fellow members or on the organization itself. *It is not the fact that you joined a club/group/organization or even that you were elected as an officer that matters. Instead, it is what you contributed that counts. Not every elected officer is a leader, and not every leader is elected as an officer.*
- Discuss the details of a community service experience in which your committed involvement had a significant impact on those you were serving. *True community service involves a sacrifice on your part for the sake of someone else with no expectation of something in return. Following a crowd of your friends to collect canned food for an hour does not demonstrate committed involvement or self-sacrifice. Describe a beneficial action you performed for others that involved your personal sacrifice and its impact on those you served.*

## Aspects of Character

These are often difficult questions for us to answer because of our own modesty and the difficulty we have in remembering those specific occasions when we exhibited character. Do not try and rack your brain for that one time when your character was so exceptional that you were called a hero and you made the national news. Think of everyday examples. Often brainstorming a random list of your different experiences and activities in high school with a parent or long-time friend will help you identify ordinary situations in which you demonstrated extraordinary character.

- Independent. By citing an example, describe how you have worked well independently or have been self-directed to accomplish a goal. *Projects or activities you have done for school are good, but sometimes good examples can also come from activities you have done with your church, community organization, or at home. Perhaps your personal initiative was best illustrated while accomplishing a community service goal.*
- Team Player. By using an example, describe how you have been a cooperative and contributing member of a group. *Certain special programs that are offered within colleges are structured around living and working in a group. Sometimes good students will take on the whole group's work to get it done 'right' all by themselves. Colleges want to be careful not to include this type of student in programs that rely on cooperation. Help your recommenders show that you're not one of them.*
- Accepting of Others. Give an example of your ability to work with others who do not look or think like you. *Colleges purposely build diversity into the special programs they offer in order to broaden the groups' experience while working together. Help your recommenders show that your time at Gulfport High has prepared you well for working with others from different socioeconomic backgrounds.*

- Curiosity. By citing an example, provide evidence of your intellectual curiosity. *Making good grades in challenging classes merely demonstrates that you are smart and can follow directions. Help your recommenders describe an aspect of you as a student that your GPA and transcript cannot. For instance, do you ever look for additional information on your own about something that has come up in class or stayed after class to discuss your interest with your teacher?*
- Creativity. By using an example, provide evidence of your creativity. *Being able to play an instrument or understand a complex idea means your 'talented', but not necessarily 'creative'. When have you used your right brain to actually 'create' a new idea, song, work of art, story, et cetera?*
- Resilient. By using an example, describe how you have adapted to a personal shortcoming or limiting situation or major setback in your life and managed to achieve a goal despite that limitation. *When have you experienced failure when life did not work out the way you had it planned? Explain how you were flexible in your ability to recover from failure and try again.*

- ## Other Information

## Senior Profile