Insider’s Guide to the Admission Committee

ADMISSION CASE STUDY
PLYMOUTH SHORES UNIVERSITY
“INDAGATE FINGITE INVENITE”
Case Study Objectives...

- Understanding “Holistic Review”
- Plymouth Shores University – Profile
- Applicant Review and Discussion – Small Group
  - Dorri Johnson
  - Henry Watanabe
  - Marcela Castillo
- Committee Review and Discussion of all applicants – All Participants
- The Committee Vote – Admit, Waitlist, Deny

RACC – Regional Admission Counselors of California
Holistic Review – Some Factors

- Student’s and family’s demographic profile
- GPA – grades in the context at this student’s high school, grade trend and pattern, particular academic strengths
- Curriculum – Honors, AP, IB, dual enrollment
- Test Scores – SAT, ACT, Subject Tests
- Letters of Recommendation – Counselor, teachers, others
- Required Essays including supplemental essays and prompts
- Interview and Demonstrated interest
- Intended major
- Extracurricular activities – sports, clubs, internships, etc.
- Other factors and obstacles
“To educate students and cultivate their capacity for lifelong learning, to foster independent and original research, and to bring the benefits of discovery to the world with a commitment to social justice and service to others.”

- Founded in 1826 located in Sunberryport, MA
- Four-Year private, liberal arts research university with professional schools of Business, Medicine, and Engineering along with over 200 majors, minors, and programs in the liberal arts.
Plymouth Shores University – Profile

- 6,276 Undergraduates (53% Female and 47% Male)
- Students come from 50 states and 85 countries
- 28% Ethnic Diversity
- 82% Live on campus all four years
- 15:1 Student-to-Professor ratio
- NCAA Division I (Men and Women’s Lacrosse. Men and Women’s Track and Field) – all other sports are NCAA Division III
- *Indagate Fingite Invenite* - Explore, Dream, Discover

RACC – Regional Admission Counselors of California
Plymouth Shores University – Admission

- Applications
  - 19,300 Students Applied
  - 7,011 Students Admitted (36.3% Acceptance Rate)
  - Early Action and Regular Decision
  - PSU Does not offer Early Decision

- Admitted Student Profile
  - GPA Mid 50% Un-weighted: 3.49-3.92
  - SAT Composite Mid 50% (Superscore): 1380-1480
  - ACT Composite Mid 50%: 29-32
  - Interviews are available and encouraged

- PSU Admission Committee is Need Aware
# Candidate Review Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Profile</th>
<th>Academic Factors</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Resume</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>SAT/ACT/Subject tests</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>AP and Honors</td>
<td>Persistence</td>
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<td>Sex/Ethnicity</td>
<td>Core Courses</td>
<td>Summer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>School type and profile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counselor Rec</td>
<td>Grade trends</td>
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<td>Teacher Rec</td>
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<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Obstacles</td>
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RACC – Regional Admission Counselors of California
File Review – Points to Ponder

▪ How does the student’s academic profile compare to PSU’s admitted student profile?
▪ How will the student contribute to the PSU community?
▪ How does the student express a genuine interest to attend PSU?
▪ What are the student’s strengths and weaknesses?
File Review – Dorri Johnson

- Review Dorri’s application and make notes on the Candidate Review Form
- Discuss Dorri’s credentials in your small group
- Discuss Dorri’s credentials with the entire group
Dorri Johnson – Highlights

- White/Female, Dual Citz. Australia, Parents advanced degrees
- 3.79 GPA un-weighted (2.80, 3.30, 3.92 and 12⁻th – 3.50)
  5 Honors classes and 2 AP classes – *Demanding Curriculum*
  Diagnosed with ADD in 10⁻th – on medication and uses Learning Ctr.
  ACT 31*; SAT 1180 (English 650, Math 530) *extended time
- Communications & Journalism Major
- Blog (Designer), School Newspaper, Yearbook (Editor-in-Chief)
- Essay about Disney princesses and female empowerment
- Recs – Counselor doesn’t know her well, Strong teacher rec
- Campus Tour, HS Visit, local PSU Preview Day, college fair
- Supplement – met admission counselor, interview, solid “Why PSU”
File Review – Henry Watanabe

- Review Henry’s application and make notes on the Candidate Review Form
- Discuss Henry’s credentials in your small group
- Discuss Henry’s credentials with the entire group

- Who gets your “admit” vote – Henry or Dorri?
Henry Watanabe – Highlights

- Asian/Male, Japanese spoken at home, Parents advanced degrees
- 3.36 GPA un-weighted (3.00, 3.09, 3.71 and 12th – 3.80)
  5 Honors, 4 APs, Dual Enrollment – Very Demanding Curriculum
  Disciplinary Action (plagiarism) in 9th grade
- SAT 1410 (Engl 610, Math 800) – Subject Tests Math 1 & Math 2 800
- Computer Engineering Major
- The Computer Club (President), Robotics Club, Internship – IT Dept.
- Essay – developed speech recognition app to help grandmother
- Recs – Counselor explained DISP. Strong Teacher Rec
- Campus Tour, college fair, interview
- Supplement – Impressive interview, explains DISP, solid “Why PSU”
Review Marcela’s application and make notes on the Candidate Review Form
Discuss Marcela’s credentials in your small group
Discuss Marcela’s credentials with the entire group

Now who gets your Admit vote? Is it Marcela?
Marcela Castillo – Highlights

- Hispanic/Female, Spanish spoken at home, Parents divorced
- 3.05 GPA un-weighted (3.33, 2.42, 3.08 and 12th – 3.67)
  3 Honors, 5 Aps (4 in senior year) – Demanding Curriculum
  Aunt died which affected Marcela’s 10th grade – rebounded in 11th
  ACT 29 and SAT 1440 (English 750, Math 690)
- Public Health Policy/Pre-Law Major
- San Diego Division Runner of the Year, Com. Service, Internship
- Essay – inspired by her aunt’s battle with cancer
- Recs – Counselor says Marcela’s GPA not indicative. Strong T-Rec
- Campus Tour, local PSU Preview Program, high school visit
- Supplement – Strong interest by Track coach, confusing “Why PSU”

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Committee Group Discussion

How do you decide?

- Highest GPA in the strongest curriculum?
- Best test scores?
- Demonstrated the most interest?
- Best extracurricular activities?
- Most examples of leadership?
- Best essay and “Why PSU?” supplement?
- Best letters of recommendation?
- Not as bad as the others?
- Best fit for Plymouth Shores University?
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>City, State</th>
<th>Ethnicity/Gender</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>AP Courses</th>
<th>Honors</th>
<th>SAT Score</th>
<th>Test Subject Scores</th>
<th>Future Plans</th>
<th>Extracurricular Activities</th>
<th>Essay Topic</th>
<th>Contact with PSU</th>
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<td>5 AP and 3 Honors</td>
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<td>Public Health &amp; P-Law</td>
<td>Apply for FinAid</td>
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Committee Group Discussion

- Is it better to get a “B” in an AP/Honors class or an “A” in a regular class?
- Are test scores more important than grades?
- Can a strong essay make up for weak academics? Can a weak essay overshadow solid academics?
- Hooks – what they are, how to leverage them?
- Demonstrated interest – when can it help?
- How can “fit” be conveyed?
- Is an applicant who has not faced adversity at a disadvantage?
- What types of disciplinary actions are forgiveable?
Everyone gets one vote
Cast your vote to Admit – Dorri, Henry, or Marcela

Everyone gets one vote
Cast your vote to Deny

This means that the student who was not offered admission and was not denied admission is on the Waitlist.
Time to Reflect

- As you reviewed and discussed the applicants, what were some specific factors that tipped the scale in your admission decision – positively or negatively?
- Were there factors that you initially felt were important but ended up not being crucial in your final vote?
- Did your votes match the decision of the Committee?
- How did you feel about voting to deny a student?
- What lessons did you learn about the admission process?
- Compare your final admission decisions with those of your own student or your parents.
- Students – what will be your “tag” in the admission process?
THANK YOU!

PRESENTED BY
YOUR FRIENDLY
NEIGHBORHOOD
ADMISSION COUNSELORS

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