

Counselor Newsletter: Welcome Back

WELCOME

Colleagues,

Hopefully you were able to enjoy a well-deserved summer break.

It's been a busy summer in the Office of Admissions and I'm excited to share some admissions updates we've been working on in this newsletter. But first...

...let me introduce myself

As I write this, I'm realizing that it's my 56th week serving as the director...a feat that seems surreal for a few reasons. Among them, is that I feel like I've come full circle. See, I'm a proud, two-time Bronco alumna and started my college counseling career at WMU 20 years ago. As a female, first-gen student from a small town, it never occurred to me that I would one day be writing to all of you as a "chief admissions officer" (a term that I don't particularly care for, but is the higher ed term none the less). It wasn't until a former director casually said "when you sit in this chair..." that I thought to myself "wait...is that something that could really be available to someone like me?"

Since then, I've worked at universities, public and private, with varying levels of selectivity in Michigan, Florida, New York, and Ohio. I've served students and worked with school counselors from across the country and have learned a thing or two along the way. My combined experience provides me with the lens that I now look through to guide the Office of Admissions at my alma mater, a place that I care about more than words can properly express.

You…and me…and us

One of the most important things I've learned is the importance of school counselor relationships. Many of my best insights are from secondary school colleagues and, as I lead my team, this is a philosophy that I stress. My hope is that you've started to sense that viewpoint in the interactions you've had over the past year—and it will continue to be more evident this year and beyond. I firmly believe you and we are partners and helping students find their best-fit institution is the primary goal. My team and I are educators first, WMU representatives second.

Moving forward

For me, the past year has largely been spent observing, asking questions, reaching out to campus and counseling colleagues, and, ultimately, building an understanding of how things fit together, what works well, and what needs to be addressed. Now, it's time for me to announce some changes...many that I think you'll be pleased to learn. The goal is to remove barriers, help students identify opportunities, and increase admission decisions. Specifics about these changes are located below. I hope you see how they will positively impact your students.

On behalf of the WMU admissions team, we look forward to working with you and serving your students. Best wishes as you begin your academic year!

With Bronco Pride,
Alicia Kornowa, ’95, ’07

ADMISSIONS UPDATES

Admissions Application and Deadlines

- **November 15 Early Action Deadline**—Students who would like to be considered for admission scholarships and receive priority consideration for the Lee Honors College should complete their application by November 15. Students who meet this deadline will receive an admission decision before winter break.
- **Application Content**—The application asks for more information than we have historically. This is so we can provide applicants with a quicker admission decision and help students more easily identify scholarship opportunities (see below).
- **"Deferred" Status**—Students who are nearly admissible will receive an initial admission decision of "deferred" and will be encouraged to submit additional information (i.e., senior grades, new test scores, personal statement). If the new information allows us to admit them immediately, we will. Otherwise, these students will receive a final admission decision in February.

Test Scores

- **Superscoring**—In the interest of providing students with the greatest number of opportunities, WMU will begin superscoring the ACT and SAT. If a student has taken either the ACT or SAT more than once, WMU will use their best section scores (regardless of test date) to maximize their total or composite score. The superscore will be used for admission, scholarships, and honors college invitation.
- **Self-reported ACT/SAT**—Students are anxious and we don't want to contribute to that stress unnecessarily. To minimize a student's wait, WMU will use ACT/SAT test scores self-reported on the application for admission, honors college invitation, and scholarships. Students who decide to enroll at WMU will be required to submit official ACT/SAT test scores prior to orientation.
- **Official Test Scores**—Scores will only be considered official if they are listed on an official high school transcript or are submitted directly from the testing agency.

Lee Honors College Eligibility

In an effort to minimize the impact that ACT/SAT scores have on a student's eligibility for the honors college, we are implementing a stair-step approach for invitation to the Lee Honors College. Students who meet one of the following tiers will automatically be invited to join the LHC community of scholars:

- 3.60 GPA and 26 ACT/1230 SAT
- 3.80 GPA and 25 ACT/1200 SAT
- 4.00+ GPA and 24 ACT/1160 SAT
Scholarship Opportunities and Process

- **New Scholarships**—Two additional scholarship awards have been added. All admissions scholarship opportunities are listed on the website.

1. **Brown & Gold Scholarship**—any student who is eligible for the Lee Honors College will receive this new award. Value: $5,000 ($1,250/year).
2. **Bronco Merit Plus Scholarship**—available for students who are recognized as a National Merit Finalist or a National Hispanic Scholar. Value: $15,000 ($3,750/year).

- **Scholarship Selection**—The admissions application will now serve as the primary source for key information used during the scholarship selection process. Students should take full advantage of the opportunity to provide information about their extracurricular activities, honors and awards, essay/personal statement, and life circumstances.

- **Scholarship Supplement**—In an effort to help students with additional scholarship opportunities, questions in the admission application will be used to connect students with other campus awards. Shortly after receiving the admissions application, students who are eligible for college/departmental awards will see a link to a Scholarship Supplement in their WMU Gold Gateway portal. Students may use that document to provide additional information, allowing them to easily apply for additional awards.

Help Your Former Students Avoid Registration Holds

While not a new procedure, did you know your former student(s) may still need to submit a final high school transcript to complete their file? This is in addition to the high school transcript submitted when they applied. The final high school transcript shows grades for all courses taken during their senior year and a graduation date.

If you think any of your former students need to submit a final college transcript, encourage them to visit [vmich.edu/apply/transcripts](vmich.edu/apply/transcripts) to find out how and where to send them.

It's our hope that these changes better serve your students and their families. If you would like further information about these changes, please contact your admissions representative.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year!