

MENTEE GUIDE

Qimmah

Helping Arabs Get to the Top



Introduction

Welcome to Qimmah's Mentorship Program! Your role as a mentee in the program plays a significant part in the success of the mentoring relationship. In this document, you will find a basic guide/calendar to help you maximize your benefits from the mentorship program and some application tips.

Program Description and Overview

A mentorship style program in which a select number of prospective applicants are given one-on-one guidance with highly qualified Arab undergraduate volunteers who will assist them in their college application process.

Program Mission Statement

Qimmah aims to provide high quality college mentoring to help Arab students enter top American universities.

Before we proceed, we would like to highlight a couple of **important** matters:

- Your mentor is a student as well; he/she has exams and deadlines this upcoming semester. As soon as the semester begins, talk to your mentor and ask when his/her midterm/final season is. That way, both of you can ensure that all the heavy work is done during the 'non-busy season'.
- This guide can be used as a base but does not need to be followed strictly. It is meant to facilitate the mentorship process, so feel free to modify it to fit your needs.
- We will include references to the website, please use them as a tool throughout the year.
- We will send you the list of universities in which Qimmah mentors are enrolled (a week after you begin mentorship). If you are interested in a particular university and have specific questions, please talk to your mentor and have him/her connect you to another mentor for specific questions. Each mentor has contact information for the entire group of mentors for the academic year.
- It is critical for your and the organization's wellbeing to respond to all surveys sent by our board in a **timely manner**. It will allow us to address any problems that arise and ensure that everything is going smoothly.

Mentee **Responsibilities:**

- To follow-up with the mentor and ask relevant questions
- To communicate effectively and professionally with the mentor
- To choose suitable timing for communication with the mentor
- To be on time for any arranged meetings (online or offline)
- To be respectful of the mentor and others associated with the program
- To reply promptly to any emails from the program coordinators
- To notify the mentor or the program coordinators if you are unable to continue in the mentoring program

** Your relationship with your mentor should be built on professionalism. You're only expected to discuss topics and ask questions related to the application process.*

Timeline:

The Summer before Senior Year

● June

Take the time to study for all standardized tests if you haven't already. If you are applying to top schools, you will most likely need 2 to 3 SAT II subject tests in addition to the TOEFL exam and the SAT reasoning test and/or ACT. For the best books to use and subjective study guides, please visit the following link:

<http://bit.ly/1LFTtTb>

Speak to your mentor about which tests you choose to take and ask for their advice on them. The more you study over the summer, the more time you will have to focus on your extracurricular activities and academics in the fall.

Register for standardized exams early. Make sure that you do not miss important dates and deadlines. The earlier you register, the better. Some test centers fill up and you won't find one in a convenient location.

In general, for the Common App, there will be a main personal essay that you will use for most/all colleges. Then, there are the supplements. While the supplements may seem short, they add up! Also, both the personal essay and supplements need to be well written. Students sometimes underestimate the importance of shorter essays and end up writing something last minute to make it before the deadline. This can have detrimental effects on your application; make sure you put 100% effort into both the main essay and supplements.

● August

Tips for Effective Communication:

- Make sure the method of communication used with the mentor is one that is frequently checked
- Be clear while communicating
- Ask questions if anything is unclear

Things you can discuss with your Mentor:

While the application process is rigorous, there are certain aspects that the mentor can guide you through:

- US application process
- Personal statement proofreading and revision
- Standardized tests preparation
- Post-application information

Timeline:

Senior Year - First Semester

September

Determine a tentative college list. Please visit the link for helpful tips: <http://bit.ly/1DyQbdS>

If you took standardized tests last year, you will have a clearer idea of which schools you want to apply to based on your test scores. Remember, test scores do not alone determine which school will accept you. So, even if your score isn't as high as the average test taker, you can still apply. Please checkout the statistics here: <http://bit.ly/1OAgIDG>

Teacher recommendations and school report: The earlier you tell your teachers you need a recommendation letter, the better. Your teacher has many other duties and other students to take care of. Knowing that you need a recommendation letter ahead of time will give your teacher the time to write a good letter or tell you that he/she won't be able to. That way, you will have time to select another teacher if needed. Please read the article for advice regarding this matter: <http://bit.ly/1LFTQgu>

October

Start revising the personal essay and supplement drafts. Have your mentor read and edit them. Talk to your mentor if you are having trouble brainstorming for some essays. If you have a teacher you trust at your school, please show them your essays as well. Qimmah is meant to supplement the resources at your school, not replace them.

November

Follow up with your recommenders if they don't submit their letter by the end of the month. Make sure the school report has been translated. If you have trouble doing so, please read the following link for more guidance: <http://bit.ly/1LFTQgu>

December/ January

Finalize everything and send in your applications. Please don't send them on the last day before the deadline because sometimes the online system crashes due to overload. Please submit your application one week (the latest) before the actual deadline. Once your application is submitted, the waiting period begins. During this time, you need to ensure that all the applications you sent are complete. You also need to maintain good grades because you will need to send them to colleges via your school report.

Timeline:

Senior Year - Second Semester

This is when you start hearing back from colleges.

Q: Should I stay on the waitlist?

Whether you decide that you want to stay on the waitlist or not, you have to reply to the university by a certain deadline. You may consider staying on the waitlist if you're interested in the university. Keep in mind that sometimes there are conditions to being wait-listed, so make sure you read the conditions before deciding.

Q: Out of the all schools that have accepted me, which one should I attend?

This is a very good time to look at the list of Qimmah mentors and ask your mentor to connect you with the appropriate person based on the university they are enrolled in. For example, if you are interested in MIT, you can speak to a mentor who goes to MIT. You can gain a lot more insight from someone enrolled in a university you are considering than you will by reading the brochure the university sends you. Please visit the following link for more guidance on selecting a college to enroll in:

<http://bit.ly/1DyQbdS>

March/ April

Q: What if I'm waitlisted?

Being waitlisted means that you have met the requirements of the university; however, the university has already made offers for its available spaces to applicants who are more qualified. You may be offered a place if a spot becomes available later on.

So I've decided to accept my place on the waitlist.

Since being on the waitlist yields a lot of uncertainty, you have to accept an offer of admission elsewhere in case you do not enroll in the university where you were waitlisted. Choose the best college you have an offer from and pay the deposit. You'll lose the deposit if the college that wait-listed you offers you a place in their incoming class and you accept it.

Timeline:

End of senior year.

This is when you make the decision.

I've made my decision

After you discuss your offers with the appropriate people and decide upon a specific school, you're ready to accept the offer. Usually, May 1st is the latest deadline for accepting an offer. To accept the offer, you have to pay a deposit. Afterwards, the university will start emailing you regarding visits to the college and other important information like housing, visa, etc.

June

Housing/Medical tests/ visa applications are all required from you during this month. Make sure you fill all the necessary paperwork before the start of the academic year. Paying your enrollment deposit isn't the final task; you still need to arrange other important documents before you become fully registered. In addition, the earlier you start on your VISA application, the better.

Q: What if I don't get into a university that interests me?

If this happens, you can consider taking a gap year, attending a post-graduate program, or transferring after your first year of college.

Please visit the following link to learn more about alternative options: <http://bit.ly/1g8gQcH>

Your contribution is *important* to us.

We would like to encourage you to contribute in the following ways:

- I. **Become a Mentor next year!** We hope you had a good mentorship experience and we hope that you can give back to the organization by becoming a mentor next year!

- II. **Submit your personal college essay as an essay sample for students to read on the website.** In order to do so, please submit the following survey here: <http://goo.gl/forms/4UCMTVkAPH>. The essay will be an anonymous submission. Please look at the samples we have so far by visiting the following link: <http://www.qimmah.org/#!/personal-guides/c1xur>

- III. **Submit entries to the Journal Program after you hear back from colleges.** The Journal entries program will compile essays and testimonies written by Qimmah's mentors and mentees. The pieces could be written about, but not limited to, any of the following topics: How to prepare for standardized tests, how to write a good personal essay, where to purchase and which books to purchase for SAT prep, when to begin SAT prep... In order to sign up for a submission, please fill out the following survey <http://goo.gl/forms/LXDyhOYV4b>.

If you encounter any problems with your mentorship experience, please do not hesitate to email us at: mentorship@qimmah.org and contact your mentorship coordinator.

We wish you best of luck in the application process!

Best regards,

Qimmah's Executive Board

Design by Moneerah Al Saud



VISIT OUR WEBSITE QIMMAH.ORG