



INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

7 SECRETS TO A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE APPLICATION



It's easy to get nervous when filling out a college application—you have to answer questions, and hope that you “pass.” It can be a very stressful process to go through, but it doesn't have to be.

By keeping organized and staying determined, you can have a very successful application that will get you on the road to your future.

This ebook was created to give you secrets about what you can do to reduce stress, stay focused, and submit the absolute best application possible!



# GET STARTED



1

## MAKING TIME FOR THE APPLICATION IS KEY

College applications tend to get put on the back burner. Other daily demands push it away, and time can quickly run out. And because everyone wants their applications to be perfect, the idea of working on an application until it's just right can seem overwhelming. But, if the application is put off too long, you may feel rushed and then not submit an application that is truly representative of you as a student.

This is why it's so important to avoid procrastination by scheduling an appropriate time—free of distractions—to sit down and fill out your application. Get a glass of water, and find a quiet area where you can think clearly and relax. Take a deep breath, and simply begin.

## APPLY ONLINE

The Indiana Wesleyan University application is an online form that typically takes 10-15 minutes to complete. Once you create your username and password, you can log in, work on the application, save and return later. The Admissions Office does not process your application until you submit it in its final form.

The \$25 application fee will be waived for applications submitted before Dec. 1.

A pair of glasses with tortoiseshell frames is positioned in the upper left. Below and to the right of the glasses is a green bowl filled with popcorn. Several individual popcorn kernels are scattered across the white background, some near the glasses and others near the bowl.

# KNOW YOUR DEADLINES

## 2

### **KNOWING DEADLINES AND EARLY FAFSA IS CRUCIAL**

Just as crucial as making time for your application is knowing important deadlines and the importance of meeting them. Starting the application process as early as possible gives you the time to correct any issues quickly, which will help in securing scholarships and loans.

A helpful idea is to write all of the deadlines down and schedule them into a calendar, or create a simple chart.

Early FAFSA deadlines are also something to know inside and out.

The FAFSA, or the “Free Application for Federal Student Aid”, is how millions of students qualify for grants, scholarships, and loans to help pay for college each year. Students can submit the FAFSA as early as Oct. 1, allowing several new advantages:

- Students and families will be able to start the application process earlier.
- Students and families can use tax information that has already been filed with the IRS.
  - This means the answers to complicated tax questions can be easily pulled in from the government.
  - This makes FAFSA filing much easier and reduces the possibility of error.
- Filing earlier also means more time for students to explore and understand financial options.

Knowing deadlines and starting the application process early will reduce stress and give you peace of mind. When it comes to deadlines, know them—and follow them.

# SPOTLIGHT



## KATY SMITH

Associate Director of Admissions

### HOMETOWN

Greentown, IN

### COLLEGE

Indiana Wesleyan University

### DEGREE

Bachelor of Science in Public Relations

### GRAD YEAR

2009

### HOBBIES

Vacationing, reading, running, spending time with family and friends

### FAVORITE THING ABOUT IWU

The people! I love being a part of this community. It is truly unique – from faculty, to students, to staff. You just have to experience it to understand it!

### FAVORITE CAMPUS SPOT

McConn – I love coffee, and McConn is also one of the main hubs of campus. It's a great place to connect with people on campus!



## 3

### THE ADMISSIONS DEPARTMENT IS A HUGE RESOURCE

When going through the admissions process, many students find it beneficial to visit the admissions department at the campus of their choice. The admissions department can answer all of your questions and help you understand what the school is looking for on an application, what types of students they want, and whether the school is a good fit for you.

A few good questions to ask while on your visit:

- Should I send supporting materials with my application?
- What qualities do you most look for in students?
- Will there be an interview as well as the application?

You'll probably have lots of questions to add to this list. Don't be shy—this is your chance to get informed and honest answers to your questions! Admissions counselors appreciate when students are engaged, and they are there to help and serve you.

It's also a great idea to check out the entire campus while visiting the admissions department. Take a tour and get a feel for the school's community and atmosphere.



# 4

## BEING ORGANIZED CAN SAVE YOU

Being organized and careful with your college application can help greatly, since mistakes will cost you time and effort.

Review the application thoroughly before you begin to ensure you understand what is being asked. Then, give yourself plenty of time to consider your responses and collect any required documents so they are handy and ready for reference, all in the same place. Also have your essay completed before logging on (if the application is an online form).

When filling out the application, ensure that your responses are accurate, and make copies or take screenshots of everything you submit. It can be helpful to have someone else review your application before you submit it to ensure everything is completed properly.

Be sure to ask an admissions counselor for tips on completing the application. They'll be happy to provide advice on how to avoid common pitfalls and how to submit the most effective application possible. Every school is a little different, and an admissions counselor can tell you where on the application to focus the most time and effort.

# APPLY TODAY

IWU has a rolling deadline, meaning the Admissions team makes acceptance decisions continually.

[www.indwes.edu/apply](http://www.indwes.edu/apply)  
866-468-6498



**TYPES OF PEOPLE IWU  
APPLICANTS USE AS  
REFERENCES**

**40%**

**GUIDANCE COUNSELOR**

**30%**

**TEACHER**

**20%**

**PASTOR/YOUTH LEADER**

**10%**

**COACH**

**5**

**REFERENCES MATTER**

References are people who know you personally in an educational, extracurricular, or professional way, and are willing to recommend you as a qualified student who is ready to pursue college.

Your references may be asked to write a letter of recommendation for you, and this can become a critical part of the application review process. This is why you should make sure that you decide on the right individuals to help show you off.

How do you decide on the right references? Think of teachers, coaches, mentors, pastors, or supervisors who have known you on a developmental level. Try to choose individuals who have seen you progress and grow in your

abilities, particularly in the area where you're interested in studying.

If you're not sure what you want to study, a reference who has known you in an extracurricular or professional way may be best: someone who may have seen examples of your spirit, talent, or leadership.

Whomever you choose, be sure to give them plenty of advanced notice so they have time to think through what they want to share about you in their letter of recommendation.



# 6

## YOUR ESSAY REFLECTS WHO YOU ARE

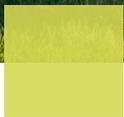
The essay portion of your college application is the best opportunity you have to stand out. It's the area where you introduce yourself to the school and get to shine. Here are some key components to your essay:

- Present your accomplishments. Do so honestly without embellishment.
- Explain why you believe you will be successful.
- Tell how you will benefit from the uniqueness of this particular school.
- Make the case that you are a great match for this institution.

And never underestimate the importance of the following:

- Have your essay ready before you sit down to apply. Having it already prepared will relieve some of the stress that comes with the application process. You can review the essay requirements ahead of time.
- Be accurate. Proofread and spell-check multiple times, and have others read it to ensure that it's coherent, informative, and magnetic.
- Be authentic in sharing who you are.

Remember: In your essay, you should be telling the college something that they can't find anywhere else in the application. You should show interest and passion, and be the unique individual that you are.



# 7

## PRAY AND SEEK GUIDANCE

As with every big decision in our lives, it's of the utmost importance to ask God for guidance and wisdom to help us. The application process can certainly be daunting, which is why focusing prayers to ask for direction is one of the most important things students can do.

It's also a great idea to seek advice from others. Check with friends and family who have been through the same process, and get their tips and suggestions.

Try not to become overwhelmed with the application process, although it can be easy to. If you're feeling stressed, relax, pray, and ask others what their application experience was like—and what they learned from it. This will provide you with ideas and insight for your own application.



*"If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."*  
- JAMES 1:5

*"Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths."*  
- PSALM 25:4

*"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and he will establish your plans."*  
- PROVERBS 16:3



THANK YOU



Thank you for taking the time to read the 7 Secrets of a Successful College Application. I pray that this resource will be an encouragement as you seek to understand what God has in store for this next part of your life. We are excited to see how he will use to you be a world changer for His Kingdom. May God bless your efforts!

**IAN SLATER**  
*Director of Enrollment Management  
Indiana Wesleyan University*

## OTHER THINGS TO KNOW

**BEING NERVOUS IS COMPLETELY NORMAL.** When applying, you may feel a bit anxious and uncertain, but don't allow fear to win. The nervousness simply means you are doing something exciting. Remember that God is watching out for you, and after a couple weeks, you'll be on a comfortable schedule and you'll know what is expected of you.

**YOU ARE MORE THAN JUST TEST SCORES.** Colleges will be looking at your whole character, not just who you are in the classroom. By taking advantage of the essay part of the application (and the interview that follows), you will be able to show a more total picture of who you are.

**THIS IS YOUR FUTURE.** Stay focused on what is important to you, and what you hope to get out of the college experience. You're in the driver's seat, so embrace this new chapter in your life as you seek where God is leading you.

We hope that this e-book has given you a head start on the college application process. Remember, start early and believe in yourself. You've got this!

INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

THE WORLD  
IS WAITING



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ADMISSIONS@INDWES.EDU | 866-468-6498

4201 SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET MARION, INDIANA 46953