

Transforming the College Application Process: Empowering Students Through Self-Awareness

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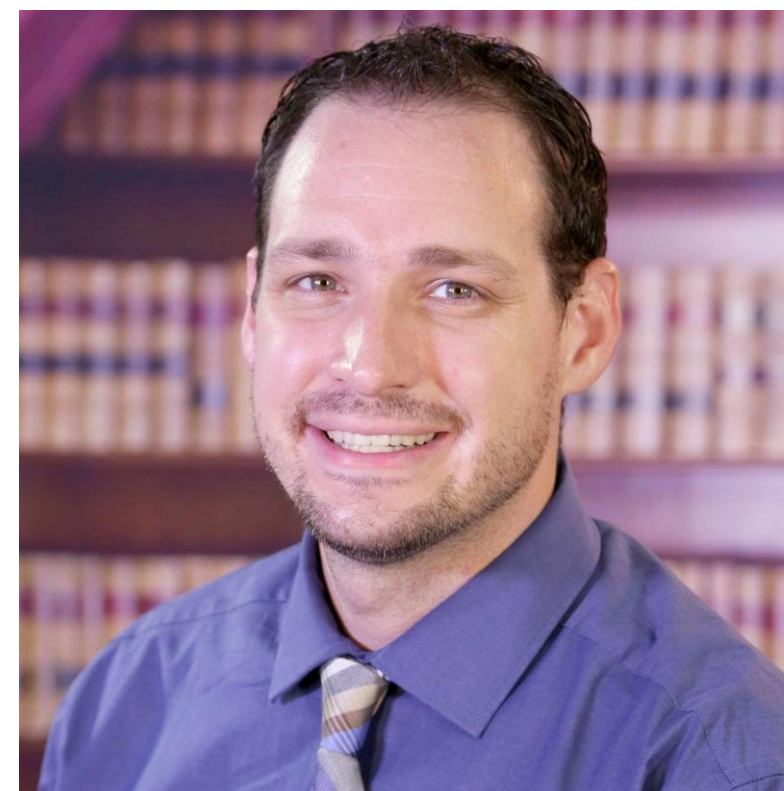
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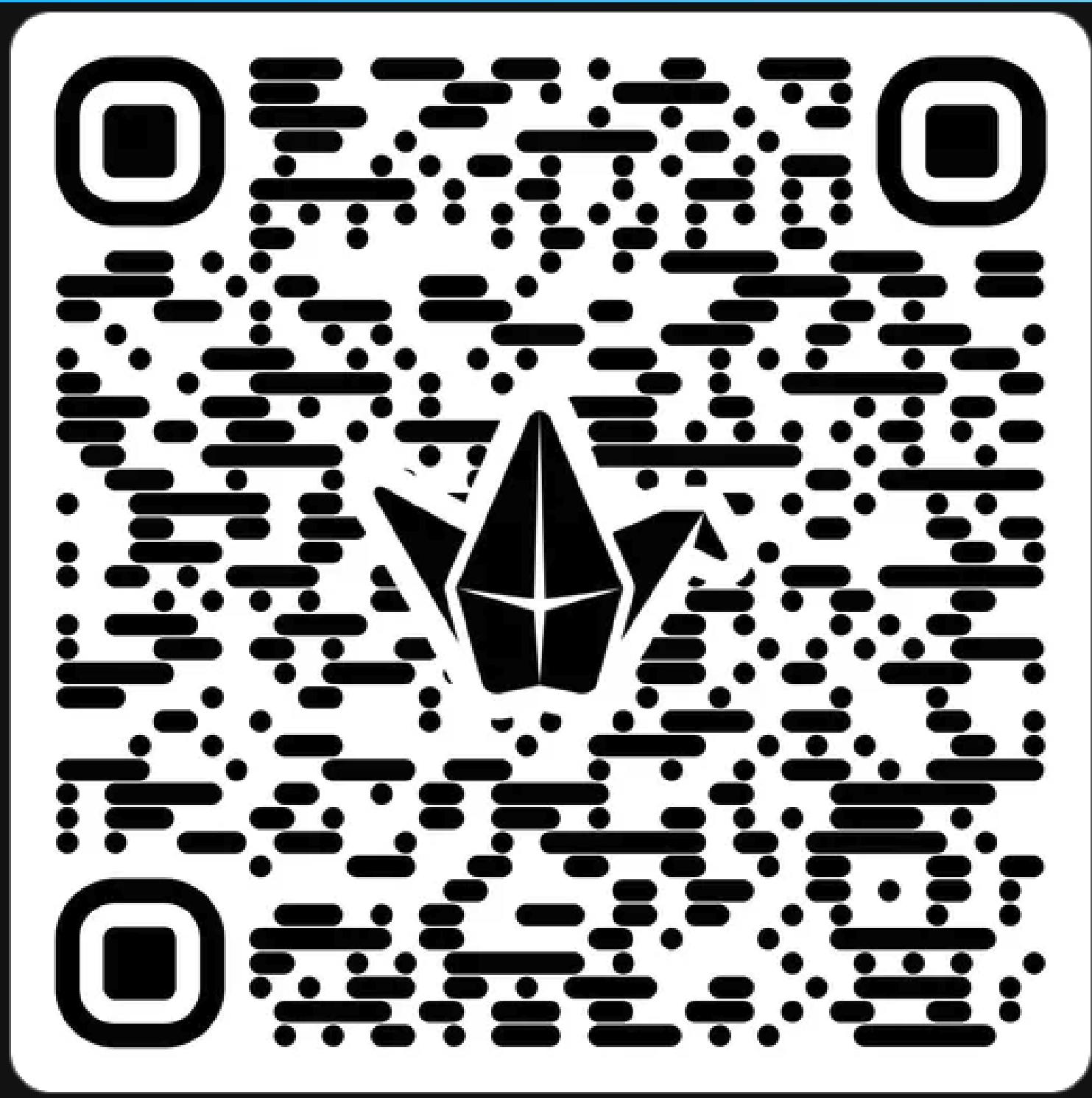
Session Objectives

- Define self-awareness in the context of college planning.
- Explore practical tools for fostering student agency.
- Share and reflect on current practices with peers.



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Let's Take A Poll



1. In one word or phrase, who/what exactly is a “college counselor”?

1. In one word or phrase, what exactly is the “value” of going through the college application process?



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“The Why Behind This Work”

“When students understand who they are first, they apply with clarity and purpose.”

- Real-World Readiness
- Skill Development for Life
- The Process is the Point
- Self-Awareness Builds Agency
- Application Writing
- From Gatekeepers to Guides

Empowered Students, Informed Choices: Learning to filter noise, research meaningfully, and decide confidently.

We can get students here by how WE talk and coach them through the process-bring them back to this.



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Coaching Questions



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Coaching questions invite students to reflect on their values, strengths, and goals—helping them take ownership of their journey with self-awareness

- How do you want your college application to reflect who you are?
- What do you picture when you think about a college that “fits” you?
- What activities or classes make you feel most “in your element”? Why do you think that is?
- What are some things people often come to you for help with?
- What’s one thing you’re hoping to gain from college — outside of academics?
- What are 2–3 things that are really important to you in life right now?
- If you could design your ideal college day, what would be included?
- What’s one goal you have for this year that’s just for you?
- What are some steps you could take to learn more about your options — and which one sounds most doable right now?

💡 Tip: Ask students to pick 2–3 to journal or talk through in a 1:1 — let them lead.

Tools for Self-Assessment



- **Aptitude Tests** - [Unifrog](#) is one example that offers built in tests, Bridge U, etc.
- **Personality Test** [16 Personalities](#) - [Disc Assessment and Teens](#)
- **Career Tests** [Career Aptitude Test](#), [Personality/Career Test - Truity](#), [Coursera Career Quiz](#)
- **Values Exploration:** College Essay Guy [Values Exercise](#), [Corsava](#)- value sort
- **Advisory Lessons** (whole school approach)
- Determine non-negotiables for happiness and longevity
- **University Uses:** IE and the Kira Assessment



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Experiential Learning Opportunities

- Real-World Exposure
 - College visits (local & international) — beyond brand names
 - Career panels, job shadowing, internships
- Themed Learning Weeks
 - Internship Week, Spring Forward Week, Careers Week, Week Without Walls
 - Hands-on, immersive experiences that spark self-awareness
- Entrepreneurial Projects
 - Student-led initiatives (e.g., Con Hums, Think and Make, Changemakers)
 - Creativity, problem-solving, ownership
- Taster Sessions & Workshops
 - Try-before-you-commit subject and career exploration
 - Expands awareness of post-secondary options

Why it matters: Experience builds agency, clarity, and confidence.

Agency - Students in the Driver's Seat

- Tools That Empower
 - [Match, powered by Concourse](#): opens new pathways — students speak directly to universities, advocate for scholarships & support.
 - Helps reframe the process around student voice and fit with universities making offers to students and showcasing opportunities to students who otherwise would not know of them.
- Workshops That Build Agency:
 - Value identification & self-assessment
 - Understanding “best fit” beyond rankings
 - Success stories of grads who took bold, personal paths
 - Sessions on the role of community college, alternate pathways and great transfer stories



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Soft-Skills Development

- **Skill Development Process**

- Manage emails - Staying organized
- Application details - Attention to detail
- Set up portals - multitasking, organization, and record keeping
- Communicate with admissions representatives - Student etiquette and tone lessons

- **Interview Prep and Career Week**

- Coaching students on being reflective and practicing public speaking in advance
- [Going over sample questions and understanding a student's "why" reasoning](#)
- Student business cards during university fair - coaching students on networking practices

- **University Perspective**

- Interviews, Kira Assessment, and University Feedback



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Student Voice: In Their Own Words

“I discovered that the college application season was a process of self discovery and reflection which ultimately helped relieve the pressure and made me write better essays.”

“It transforms the college process from a stressful and overwhelming period into a time of self-discovery and reflection. The conversations helped me identify exactly what I was looking for in a school and how to find my best fit, rather than change myself or my profile to cater to the university.”

“The interview prep process taught me how to be a better public speaker, to be more confident, and just overall how to better present myself which will help when I have future job interviews and other presentations in my future.”

“I learned how to be better organized and not procrastinate and to overall be happy in my decision making processes.”



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Thank you for coming!

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