



Amanda Murrell

Director of College Counseling

“We miss having students sitting on the couch in our office and chatting. However, in terms of working individually with students, thanks to the wonders of technology, little has changed. My days are filled with Google Docs and Zoom meetings, but I can see the girls without masks when we meet, so that’s a plus for me! All our college visits also have been virtual this year, but we have been the beneficiary of some visits that we wouldn’t have had in the past because of travel limitations. We’ve had representatives from international schools schedule visits, as well as a greater number reaching out from schools in California.

The greatest challenge for me is that many of our seniors have not been able to visit a lot of college campuses. Virtual tours and conversations with college representatives are useful, but our students are accustomed to being able to travel to see campuses in person. The silver lining is that the girls seem to be willing to look at schools that wouldn’t have been on their radar otherwise. They are attending virtual open houses and other online programming and learning about colleges that appeal for all of the right reasons, whether it is the mission of the school or academic opportunities.

The new building is a wonderful gathering place for everything student-related. Having Student Life and College Counseling under the same roof makes great sense because our worlds overlap so much. I look forward to having the café open and enjoying some time with our students in a relaxed, collegial atmosphere.”

10 WAYS TO MAINTAIN *Calm* WHEN APPLYING TO COLLEGE DURING A PANDEMIC

- **The internet can be your friend.** Use online resources, such as tours and webinars, as much as possible.
- **Use who you know.** Reach out to family, friends, and Ashley Hall alumnae to talk about their specific college experiences.
- **Applying isn’t attending.** Apply to a broad range of schools. They might all appeal for different reasons, but that’s ok early in the decision-making period.
- **Only consider Early Decision if you really want a school.** Don’t let panic drive your choice. If you need to wait, wait. The right school will be there for you.
- **Remember that your parents want to help.** All suggestions and offers of help are made out of love and concern. Don’t forget that.
- **Show discretion.** You don’t need to share every detail of your application search with your friends.
- **Beware of unsolicited advice.** See above. Remember that not everyone you meet is an expert on a particular college or on getting into college.
- **Trust yourself.** You know what matters to you. Listen carefully to that voice when you are choosing the schools on your list and when you are applying.
- **Don’t obsess about college.** It can be hard not to, but the year moves quickly, and there are lots of high school things you will be doing for the last time. Remember that.
- **Reward yourself.** Reaching the senior year of high school and applying to college are big events, regardless of the college decisions you receive. You deserve recognition for everything you have already accomplished. Well done!