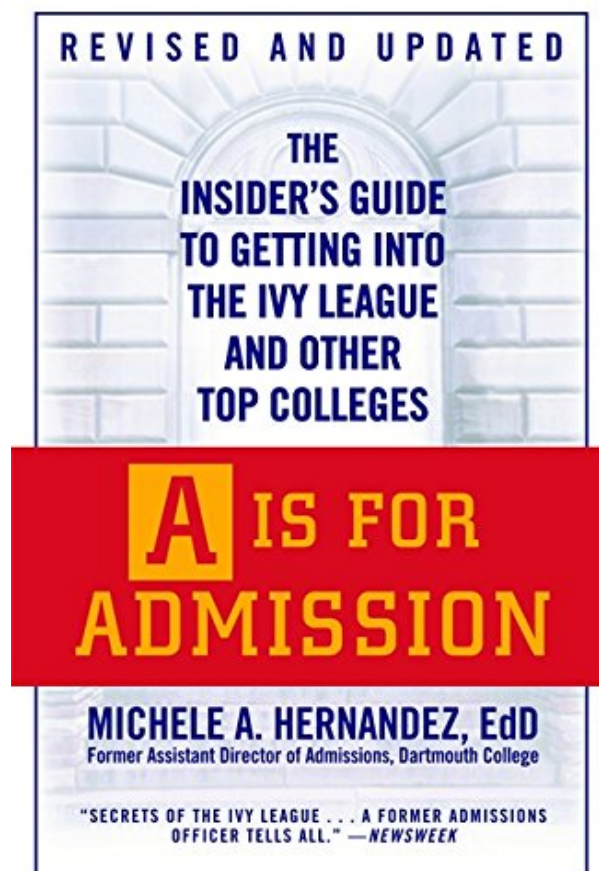


**A IS FOR ADMISSION: THE INSIDER'S  
GUIDE TO GETTING INTO THE IVY  
LEAGUE AND OTHER TOP COLLEGES BY  
MICHELE A. HERNÁNDEZ**



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REVISED AND UPDATED

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**A** IS FOR  
ADMISSION

**MICHELE A. HERNANDEZ, EdD**  
Former Assistant Director of Admissions, Dartmouth College

"SECRETS OF THE IVY LEAGUE . . . A FORMER ADMISSIONS  
OFFICER TELLS ALL." —*NEWSWEEK*

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"Who gets in and why". -- Chronicle of Higher Education

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Michele A. Hernandez graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Dartmouth College in 1989. She served as an assistant director of admissions at Dartmouth College from 1992 to 1997. Currently, she is the president of Hernandez College Consulting LLC, one of the nation's leading firms on helping students gain admission into top colleges.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

32 of 33 people found the following review helpful.

More of a Litmus Test, but Still a Great Guide/Manual

By Baze

Hernandez doesn't coddle up to the reader. She doesn't give false hope, or outline strategies that may have worked for someone whose extreme luck got them on the waiting list for Princeton. No, she gives the cold reality, and explains to the reader quite descriptively the process in which a thousand students are selected from tens of thousands.

The reason I say that it's more of a litmus test is that most readers go into this book thinking that ANYONE could follow the pages step by step, checking off each word of advice, and then finding a big, thick envelope waiting for them in their mailboxes with a thrilling offer of admission. They quickly learn, however, that not everyone is Ivy League material, at least at the age of 17-18. No one likes to hear that their child or they themselves are limited, but believe me, having gone through the college admission process, it's instrumental for one to have a clear understanding of what is doable and what isn't. Hernandez does an excellent job of describing what sort of student one is (or one has the capability of), and then shows that the obvious Ivy League-level kids stand a great chance of getting in, as is. She then describes little tricks and strategies for these kids to prepare their applications accordingly, what not to say in an interview, being one's self in the personal essay, and so forth. In other words, she shows the student how NOT to mess up their application.

For those who aren't necessarily Ivy League bound but still very intelligent and hard working, the author gives advice on how to maximize such a person's profile and luck so that the chance of getting noticed by an Ivy League admissions officer increases significantly, though not necessarily immensely.

Most importantly, the author shows that intelligence does not necessarily mean that one is suited for the Ivy league schools; one can be very smart but still go unnoticed to the admissions officers, and one can be very noticeable to the admissions officers but still fail academically. She explains in the book, and I would have to agree with her, that the term "Ivy league" carries a very strong image (and in some cases, stigma) that needs to be taken with a large grain of salt.

If you believe your child (or yourself, depending on who's reading the book) is Ivy league material, then this book will show you how to not mess up your chances of a Harvard admission. However, if you are unsure of how well your child can do, taking advice from such a well respected and resourceful author can help push your chances up, or at least maximize the effectiveness of the college application- which will come in handy when applying to ALL colleges.

I never really thought I was Harvard material, to be honest, but after reading this book, I was able to tailor my college application to land an admission and nearly a full ride to one of the nation's most rigorous and prestigious liberal arts colleges, Grinnell College. "A" is for admission, but I'd give an "A" for the quality of this book.

25 of 26 people found the following review helpful.

Wish I'd read this 3 years ago

By Yolanda

My daughter and I had just attended our first college info session the weekend before purchasing this book. I could hear so much of what the admissions officer said echoed in this book but it wasn't until reading the book that I really understood what the admissions officer was saying. The book was like a rollercoaster ride - okay we're covered there; oops, we might be in trouble here; omg we definitely missed the boat on that one! Since reading the book we've attended 5 other college info sessions. 3 were private ivy colleges and 2 were "ivy type" public colleges. The most consistent messages - matching what was stated in the book - was that even more than the high scores on the SAT and ACT, the schools were looking for potential students who

would bring something special to the table - a special inner drive that is such a part of their makeup that anyone describing them would likely touch on it. The admissions officers also touched on their quest for diversity in the student body although none actually admitted to flagging or coding the student files. I can see from many of the communications that we are receiving from these schools (among others) that they are indeed targeting specific audiences in their diversity recruiting efforts. With regards to how the applications are reviewed by assigned officers first and then either accepted right off the bat or put forward to a committee for further evaluation and consideration - most of the schools did acknowledge that process. Most of them did actually review physical files. Interestingly enough, UC Berkeley strives to be fully electronic. They do not want paper of any type.

Anyway, this book was a fast read and definitely helped me to decipher what the admissions officers were really saying and helped in determining how my daughter needs to present herself in Essays and such. Too late for the extra-curricular boost but she's exhibited the love of learning that they look for in the transcripts. This book is a must read - preferably while your student is in 9th grade - but still provides some last chance advice if you're just stepping into the reality of college admissions as a rising senior.

10 of 10 people found the following review helpful.

A Good Place to Start

By J. D.

I checked online through several college sites to find a book that gives a concise, informative review of the admissions process. This is the title that kept coming up. "A is for Admission" has the details that flesh out the generalized articles in annual editions of U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges". Now the system actually makes sense to me, and the book is an easy read. My son just signed up for 9th grade and I wondered if I was starting too early, but after reading the book I believe middle school is the best time to start. The way I see it--our kids tell us their goals and we give them the support they need to reach those goals. This book helped me as a parent to better understand how to support my son. I would love to see a book of this quality that described the admission procedures at California's top universities and colleges.

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