

**Admissions Ambassador  
Training Manual  
Fall 2012**

## **Introduction**

We welcome all alumni and friends who are enthusiastic about Canisius College to become an Admissions Ambassador and get involved in the recruitment of undergraduate students. As an admissions ambassador, you will play a key role in the recruitment of a talented and diverse incoming freshman class. This training handbook will be your guide to successfully communicate with prospective students and their families.

## **Responsibilities**

As an admission ambassador, there are three recruitment activities that you may choose to participate in:

- college fairs
- high school liaison
- interviews for prospective students

By participating in any of these three activities, you will help promote Canisius College in areas outside of our local market and help with the outreach to students who may not be able to visit campus. Prospective students and their families will benefit greatly from your first hand knowledge and will be interested to hear about your Canisius College experiences. By meeting with prospective students and their families you will be an influential factor in their decision to learn more about Canisius College.

When meeting with prospective students and their families, it is important that you share with them your reasons for attending Canisius and your positive Canisius memories. Depending on where the student is in the admissions cycle (just starting to explore colleges or making their final decision) it may be beneficial to share your experiences visiting colleges and gathering information. Students are always interested in hearing about careers and the life after college; share what degree you received from Canisius and how it has helped you in the work force. Students and their families will appreciate any advice that you can give them.

## **The Admissions Cycle**

When you are representing Canisius, it is important to know where we are in the admissions cycle and what the message should be to prospective students and their families. Typically students apply to college in the fall months; therefore the main objective of recruitment activities (college fair, high school visit) during the late summer and fall is to get students to apply to Canisius College. When attending recruitment activities in the spring months, the objective is to get current seniors who have applied to Canisius to enroll, while also marketing the college to younger high school students. May 1<sup>st</sup> is the national decision deadline for when students must notify the colleges and universities they applied to and inform them of where they wish to enroll.

## **Understanding the Seasons of Admissions**

Understanding the admissions cycle will help you to understand which message to use when speaking with a prospective student. It will also help you understand how the admission cycle helps us identify which students are our top priorities. In admissions, the year is broken into three seasons: summer, fall and spring. During the three seasons we have different priorities, but are often working to complete multiple objectives.

The **summer** season is the time of year in which we have secured our incoming class, or are working to finish securing our incoming class. During the summer it is important to make the deposited incoming students feel connected to the college and help them maintain their excitement about attending Canisius. The summer time is when students tend to change their mind and may decide that they no longer wish to attend Canisius. The “summer melt” is the admissions term for students canceling their applications after deposit. It is important that we work to have as little summer melt as possible. Aside from securing our class and combating the summer melt, we are also beginning to work on bringing in the following year’s incoming class. Many of the campus visits in the summer are geared towards rising seniors (students going into their senior year in the fall) who are getting a jump start on their college search. It is important that we focus on these students and give them a great first impression of Canisius.

In the **fall**, the priority is the recruitment of students for the upcoming freshman class. During the fall it is important to encourage students to apply to Canisius. Starting at the end of September the Admission Counselors travel to specific territories to market Canisius College and encourage students to seek out more information and apply. Students are able to apply to Canisius using our online application, the Canisius College paper application and the Common Application. Aside from traveling to high schools and attending college fairs, the Office of Admission hosts events on campus for prospective students; the events allow prospective students to visit campus, meet faculty and learn if Canisius is the right fit for them.

### **Prospect Management**

When working with prospective students and their families it is important to remember that admissions ambassadors are there to guide students through the admission process. It is important to be genuine and interested in every student that you are in contact with; this also includes the student’s family. The Office of Admissions prides itself on doing everything possible for the student.

Prospect Management can be defined as “The guidance and direction through the admissions process of those students most likely or most desirable to apply and enroll.” (GDA Integrated Services)

### **Representing Canisius College**

You have decided to become a volunteer because you are enthusiastic about Canisius College and want to share your feelings with prospective students. It is important to remember that you represent Canisius College to the students and families you meet. While you may not know every detail about our academic offerings, students and families will be excited to see you exude enthusiasm about the college and your genuine desire to meet and speak with them. If you are ever unsure of a question or do not know the answer, please do not hesitate to refer a student to the Office of Admissions.

It is important that you act as a professional when representing Canisius College. Admission representatives around the country follow the same rules and guidelines. Please review the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) Statement of Principles of Good Practice. These standards are followed by all colleges and universities and should be taken seriously. In the event that the standards are not followed properly, it is possible that Canisius College will not be allowed to participate in NACAC related events. Please review the NACAC Principles of Good Practice for Alumni Representatives.

## College Fairs, High School Visits and Interviews

As mentioned before, admission ambassadors will attend college fairs, visit high schools and interview prospective students. College fairs typically occur in the fall and spring months and they are often very large with many colleges and universities represented. If there is a college fair in your home town, or surrounding area, Valerie Nugent, Assistant Director of Admissions, will contact you and ask if you are able to cover the fair. It is important that you respond as soon as possible so that we can register for the fair before the requested deadline. Once you have been registered for the fair, you will receive a confirmation and further instructions. Prior to the fair, you will receive a package of materials in the mail from Canisius College. The package will contain everything you will need to set up at the fair.

The box of materials will include:

- table banner
- display board
- fee waived applications
- inquiry cards
- pens
- academic major reference sheets
- overview brochures
- postage paid envelop for all unused materials

**College fairs** are a very important part of the recruitment process, because it helps to market the college and also provides the admission office with new prospective student inquiries. Typically you will only have a few moments with prospective students and their families. You will find that some students are very familiar with Canisius, while others are just beginning their college search. It is important that you are welcoming and genuine when speaking with students and their families. Please review the list below so that you are ready to attend a college fair.

What to expect and other college fair tips

- Make sure to review the confirmation you receive from the Office of Admissions. Often times directions and parking information will be noted.
- Arrive 30 minutes prior to the start and check in with the fair's organizers. They will direct you to your table. Depending on the set up, you may have to share a table with another school or you may have your own table. You are required to **stand** behind the table at all times.
- Please dress professionally.
- Be friendly and personable to prospective students and families. It is best not to use "hard sell" techniques and or compare Canisius to other colleges in a negative way.
- If you are unsure of how to answer a question- note the question on the student's inquiry card and contact Valerie in the Office of Admissions. Please do not feel you have to answer a question if you are not 100% sure what the answer is.
- We ask you not to inform a student whether they are accepted to the college or will receive financial aid.
- If asked, please advise students that interviews are recommended, but not required for admission.

- After the fair, please mail the unused materials, the banner and the evaluation back to the Canisius College Admissions Office.

**High school visits** are another important aspect of meeting prospective students and marketing Canisius College. If you live outside of New York State you may identify a school(s) in your community to build a relationship with. Many high schools welcome visits from alumni representatives and you aid in our development of a relationship between the school and Canisius. The Office of Admissions has also identified high schools in your geographical area where we have received applications and have admitted students. These high schools, in addition to any high schools you may have adopted, are the schools that you should consider to visit in the fall. When calling a high school, inform them that you are a representative from Canisius College and you would like to set up a high school visit.

What to expect and other high school visit tips

- Set up high school visits in 30 minute time frames and give yourself enough time to travel in-between visits.
- When setting up the visit, ask if the school has a specific format and if you will need to bring your display (banner and board) information.
- You should bring: inquiry cards, pens, fee waived applications, and overview brochures.
- Ask if there is a specific place you should park and what door you should use to enter the school.
- Arrive early to the high school to ensure you have enough time to park, check-in and locate the guidance department's office.
- When visiting a high school it is not unusual to only have a few students come and meet with you. Do not be alarmed if you have zero or very few students to speak with. Part of a high school visit is to develop a relationship between Canisius and the School Counselors.
- Always ask to speak to a school counselor and leave a packet of materials.
- Depending on the meeting space, you may speak with students individually or address them as a group.
- Ask all students to fill out an inquiry card and return it to you before they leave your session. If a student says that he/she as already filled out an inquiry card, ask them to fill out another so we can update their information.
- Upon the conclusion of the high school visit, please note how many students you met with and complete the evaluation given to you by the Office of Admissions.

**Interviews** are recommended by the Office of Admissions, but they are not required for admission. A student's admission decision will not be determined by the student having, or not having, an interview. If a student in your local area contacts the Office of Admissions for an interview, we will contact you and ask you to call the student and set up the interview. It is possible that you may meet a student at a college fair or high school visit and the student may ask you directly for an interview. Please contact Valerie Nugent in the Office of Admissions so that she can make a note of the student's request.

When scheduling a student interview please contact the student to set up a mutually agreeable time and location; popular locations include Starbucks, Panera Bread and other similar locations. Please

reach out to the student no more than three times. If the student does not return your phone call or email, contact the Office of Admissions so that the request can be canceled.

The interview should allow you to learn more about the student's talents and his/her ability to engage you in conversation. Typically interviews last 30 minutes. During the interview you should be friendly and engaging, but the interview should still feel formal. There are no set questions that you must ask in an interview. It is important that you emphasize the value of a Canisius College education and share your positive experiences. It is best not make negative comparisons to other colleges.

What to expect and other interview tips

- Inform the student about the strengths of a Canisius College education.
- Speak positively about Canisius College and the city of Buffalo.
- Do not focus on what other colleges the student is considering or applying to.
- Allow for students to ask questions at the end of the interview and ask if there are any other talents or skills they would like to tell you about.

After you have completed an interview, please email your notes to Valerie Nugent and the notes will be added to the student's file. Please be sure to write an honest evaluation of the student highlighting his or her talents and accomplishments.

### **About Canisius College**

You will meet a variety of people at college fairs; some will be familiar with Canisius, while others will not have heard about us. When speaking with students please share the following points with them:

- Canisius is a medium sized, four year, Liberal Arts College located in Buffalo, New York.
- Canisius was founded in 1870 by the Society of Jesus (more commonly referred to as the Jesuits).
- There are 28 Jesuit colleges in the country, all of which are located in an urban environment. The Jesuits believe in education of the whole person and have a strong foundation in service to others.
- All 28 Jesuit schools were established in urban areas so that they are immersed in the culture of the city and are able to assist those who are in need.
- The notions of "men and women for others" and "cura personalis" are constant at Canisius and are engrained in all aspects of a Canisius College education.
- Faculty members are excited to work with and engage students through internships, research and publishing opportunities.

The Canisius campus is located in the downtown Hamlin Park district of Buffalo. The location offers students easy access to Delaware Park, the downtown theatre district, countless restaurants and coffee shops, a variety of sports venues and internship opportunities. The campus is made up of 32 buildings spreads out over 77 acres. There are three different schools that make up Canisius College: the School of Education and Human Services, the Wehle School of Business and the College of Arts and Sciences. Canisius offers over 125 majors, minors and special programs.

## Jesuit Ideals

*Cura Personalis* is a Latin term that means “care for the individual”. The notion of *cura personalis* provides a great support network for Canisius College students; there is an incredible sense of community on campus. The faculty, staff and administration truly embrace *cura personalis* and are committed to guiding students through their four years at Canisius and beyond. Because the entire Canisius community embraces *cura personalis*, students receive a great deal of individual attention and respect from the faculty, staff and administration.

Service work and social justice is something that Canisius students are encouraged to get involved in. The notion of *Men and Women for Others* is something that students will hear a lot while on campus. Because of the College’s location, students are able to easily help those in the city of Buffalo and take on matters of social justice. A limited amount of courses have a service learning component. The Campus Ministry Office coordinates the extracurricular service trips; trips take place in Buffalo, as well as trips in other areas of the country and abroad.

## Admission Criteria

When you speak with students at a college fair or high school visit, you will probably be asked “what do you look for?”. When answering this question we tell students what the mean GPA (grade point average), SAT and ACT scores were for the last incoming class.

When speaking with students please inform them that:

- The average GPA is a 90.1
- The average SAT is 1097 (Math and Critical Reading sections only)
- The average ACT is 24

When sharing these numbers with students, make sure they are aware that Canisius **does not review the writing portion of the SAT** for admission. We will only review the math and critical reading sections for admission and scholarship consideration. We typically do not ask students what they received on their tests, or what their GPA is when there are other students and families present. Students are often protective of their scores and do not feel comfortable sharing them when other students are around.

When a student decides to apply to Canisius, there are five documents that a student must submit to make their application complete. The five documents are:

- Completed application (Canisius paper application, Canisius on-line application or Common Application)
- High School Transcript
- Official SAT and/or ACT scores
- Letters of Recommendation
- Essay

Students typically submit applications for admission in the fall months. Canisius College has rolling admission; however, we encourage students to submit their completed application on or before November 15<sup>th</sup>. If a student submits their application on or before this date they are guaranteed to receive their admission decision by December 15<sup>th</sup>. It is important to let students know that this is not a binding agreement. The agreement simply allows students to know their admission decision

early. Students still have until May 1<sup>st</sup> to make their final decision as to where to attend college. It is important to note that a student's housing preference is based on deposit date.

### **Merit Based Scholarships**

All applicants will be reviewed for a merit based scholarship. Students will be reviewed for this scholarship when they are reviewed for admission. Merit scholarships are awarded based on the strength of a student's SAT or ACT scores and their GPA at the conclusion of their junior year in high school. The Office of Admissions will also award five full tuition scholarships to incoming students this fall.

### **Financial Aid**

When speaking with students, urge them to complete the free application for federal student aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA form can be filled out on-line at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). To fill out the FAFSA form, families will have to report their tax information for the previous year. Students and their families can begin filling out the FAFSA form on January 1<sup>st</sup>. In the event that the student's parents have not completed their income taxes, they are able to do an estimated FAFSA form. When their taxes are completed they must simply contact the Financial Aid Office so that their FAFSA information can be updated. If a student does not fill out the FAFSA form the Financial Aid Office will not be able to create a financial aid package for them.

When the Financial Aid Office reviews a student's FAFSA form they will determine what the student qualifies for. More than 98% of the class of 2015 received some type of financial aid.

A financial aid package can include:

- Grants and Scholarships
- Student Educational Loans
- Work Programs (Work Study)
- New York State students may receive funding from the New York State Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)
- Pell Grant

Canisius College is complying with federal regulation that required an institution to include a Net Price Calculator (NPC) on its website. The NPC will be live on the Canisius web site by the end of October 2011. The NPC will assist students and families in calculating the cost of higher education at the institution they are considering.

## Fast Facts and Admission Terminology

Student Faculty Ratio	11:1
Average Class Size	17
Division I Athletics	17 Programs; 9 Women's varsity teams, 8 Men's varsity teams
Clubs and Activities	More than 100

### Women's Division I Teams:

- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Softball
- Swimming and Diving
- Synchronized Swimming
- Rowing
- Volleyball

### Men's Division I Teams

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Golf
- Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Soccer
- Swimming and Diving

**ACT (American College Test):** There are four sections: math, English, reading, and science. Canisius looks at the composite score, which is an average of each section's scores. A perfect ACT scores is a 36. When applying for admission, students must submit standardized test scores. The ACT satisfies the standardized test requirement for admission.

**Admit:** A student who has been accepted to Canisius College.

**Advanced Placement (AP):** Many high school students take courses for college credit. At the conclusion for the course, students must take an exam. If a student receives a 3, 4, or 5 on the exam Canisius will count the class for credit. If a student receives a 1 or 2 on the exam the course will not count for college credit. Students may also take **International Baccalaureate (IB)** classes for college credit.

**Applicant:** A student who has submitted an application for admission.

**Financial Aid:**

**Merit-based Scholarships:** Students are automatically reviewed for a merit-based scholarship when they apply to Canisius. When reviewing applicants for scholarships the Office of Admission is only able to consider a student's SAT score (math and critical reading sections only), and/or ACT score and the student's cumulative GPA after 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**Need-based Aid:** A student's parents must fill out the FAFSA form (fafsa.gov) and submit the form to the Financial Aid Office. The Financial Aid Office will review the FAFSA and determine what the family qualifies for. A student's financial aid package can consist of: grants, loans, the work-study program, and additional scholarships.

**Inquiry:** A student in our database who has not yet applied but has requested information from Canisius.

**Pell Grant:** Found in a student's financial aid package (if the student qualifies. If awarded, the students do not have to pay the money back. The maximum amount is \$5,500. The amount a student receives depends on what he/she qualifies for.

**Prospect:** A student engaged in the college search process.

**Rising Senior:** A prospective student who is completed junior year and is getting ready for senior year.

**Tuition Assistance Program or TAP (New York State Only):** Found in a student's financial aid package if he/she qualifies. TAP is given to New York State residents who are attending approved schools in New York State. The annual TAP award can be up to \$5,000.

**Thank you for your time and efforts!**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Valerie Nugent, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions. [nugentv@canisius.edu](mailto:nugentv@canisius.edu)