

Appendix 9: Neighborhood Clusters Grouping

(pertains to chapter 9, by Sarah Swofford)

Below are the College Board Neighborhood Cluster descriptions for all of the participants in this study. The College Board identifies its clusters by number (Cluster Number) and includes a short textual description of the neighborhoods in each cluster (Cluster Descriptions).

Clusters identified by the College Board as lower income or low income were placed in Group 1 (LI), clusters identified as lower-middle income or lower middle class were placed in Group 2 (LMI), and clusters identified as middle income, upper-middle income, and higher income, were placed in Groups 3 (MI), 4 (UMI), and 5 (HI), respectively.

Study participants, and their minor or nonminor status, have been included by cluster.

Group Number (Income Grouping)	Cluster Number	Cluster Description (from the College Board's website)¹	Study Participants in Cluster	Number of Minors	Number of Nonminors
1 (LI)	83	This traditional neighborhood is suburban and made up of predominantly blue-collar families with low incomes and home values. There are some parents in professional and managerial vocations, and most have at least some college. Students attend high schools with good curricula, get solid grades, and will get involved in AP and honors courses. With very average test scores and extremely modest aspirations, they do not look very far afield for colleges, generally seeking public and privates that are not particularly selective. Financial aid will be particularly important as they see themselves as high-need.	1	0	1
1 (LI)	79	This is a unique, urban, blue-collar neighborhood of low-income families with very high educational aspirations. It is modestly diverse, with parents who generally have had at least some college. Students attend schools with solid curricula, where they take advantage of the AP and honors offerings. They get good grades; have solidly above-average test scores and extremely high aspirations. They look at a modest number of selective privates and public flagships across the country. Financial aid, is sought by most and will play a big	7	3	4

¹ The Cluster Descriptions in this table are taken directly from the College Board's "[Neighborhood Cluster Descriptions](#)" document and quoted directly, without editing for style or syntax.

		role in their attendance.			
1 (LI)	74	This is a low-income, predominantly African American neighborhood where many families own homes of fairly low value. Parents hold blue-collar jobs and only a few have college degrees. Students attend public schools with undistinguished curricula where they tend to focus on activities as much as academics. They will get involved with AP honors coursework but score relatively low on standardized tests. They have moderate aspirations and consider public universities with some degree of selectivity, predominantly. Almost all will require financial aid to make college possible.	7	3	4
1 (LI)	56	Predominantly Hispanic and African-American, the residents of this neighborhood have extremely low incomes and rates of home ownership. They are primarily blue collar, most do not have college degrees, and many speak English as a second language. Most students attend public school with very average curricula and minimal AP and honors coursework; their admissions test scores are among the lowest. Most look to stay in state and apply to non-selective publics and small church-related colleges where financial aid will play an important role in their decisions and are likely to Pell eligible.	1	1	0
2 (LMI)	80	Lower middle class in terms of income and home ownership, this transitional urban or closein suburban neighborhood is somewhat diverse with African-American and some newer Asian families. While predominantly professional, parents fall across the vocational spectrum and have at least some college experience. Students attend predominantly public high schools offering traditional college prep curricula. Their participation in AP honors and their performance on admission tests is pretty average. They apply to some selective privates and non-selective publics where many will seek financial aid.	3	0	3
2 (LMI)	59	Residents of this neighborhood have lower middle class incomes and own homes which are of moderate value. A traditional blue-collar community, most parents have some experience with college but less than half have earned a baccalaureate. A large majority of students attend public high schools where they engage and excel in solid curricula which include a solid number of AP/honors courses. They have very high educational aspirations and score well above the average on admissions tests. Most are mobile, interested in financial aid, and likely to apply to nationally selective privates and public flagships.	20	3	17
3 (MI)	81	This neighborhood is quite diverse, highly mobile, middle income, and urban, with many households having children. Parents work across the vocational spectrum and most have some college experience. Students attend public high schools and pursue solid academic programs, which include some AP and honors work. They have modest aspirations and perform a bit below average on standardized tests. They tend to file a reasonable number of applications, to mostly in state publics and a few privates. Financial aid is important to most	1	0	1

		and may be a deciding factor.			
3 (MI)	76	This neighborhood is well established, somewhat diverse, and solidly middle income. Most parents own their homes, have experience with higher education, and are well distributed across the vocational spectrum. Students attend public schools with good curricula where they perform well, often in AP and honors courses. With modest aspirations and mid-range test scores, they apply to a small number of moderately selective schools within their home state, with a tendency to favor large urban and flagship publics. Many see themselves as having financial need and will be applying for aid.	3	2	1
3 (MI)	68	A somewhat diverse neighborhood of older highly mobile households with modest incomes and relatively few children; many are likely to be retired, and those that own homes have good investments. The majority of residents are professionals, most have some college and a large proportion of those have graduate degrees. Students are most likely in public schools with strong curricula,; they are achievers who seek AP and honors courses, perform well on admission tests, and have modest educational aspirations. Willing to look beyond their home state, they apply to selective institutions, both public and private, where they will most likely be applying for financial aid.	6	3	3
3 (MI)	63	This is a solidly middle class neighborhood with little diversity where most households own their home. Residents have traditional values and are involved in a cross section of vocations, with most parents having some college but less than half a four-year degree. Students are most likely in public schools where they achieve good grades and pursue a modest level of AP/honors work. They score above average on admissions tests but have somewhat lower educational aspirations than many of their peers. They tend towards private colleges and public flagships with modest selectivity, and a majority will be seeking financial aid.	7	3	4
3 (MI)	62	This is an older, conservative, middle class neighborhood where many households may not have children. Vocationally diverse, a majority of parents have at least a baccalaureate. Students, most of whom attend public schools, have a decidedly academic orientation and avail themselves of AP and honors opportunities. They score very near the top on standardized tests and have very high educational goals. They are modestly focused with their applications and looking widely out of state generally at selective privates where financial aid will be a key factor for most.	11	5	6
4 (UMI)	69	This is a stable, upper middle class, heavily Catholic neighborhood of working class families, most of who own modest homes. Residents are involved all along the vocational spectrum and most have some college, although less than half have degrees. Students attend public high schools with standard college prep curricula. They involve themselves with AP and honors courses to some	2	1	1

		extent, score in the mid-range on admission tests, and have relatively low educational goals. They apply to a fair number of non-selective publics and moderately selective privates, some will look out of state, and most will seek financial aid.			
4 (UMI)	55	Residents of this neighborhood have solid above average incomes and own homes and are well valued. They are most often college graduates with few children in the home who are pursuing professional or managerial careers. There is generally little ethnic diversity and students attend religious or private schools as often as they do publics where they excel academically in curricula which include many AP/honors courses and score well on standardized tests. They have high aspirations, are confident in their college plans, and consider national selective and other moderately selective private institutions. Many will apply for financial aid.	4	2	2
5 (HI)	78	This neighborhood is at the top of the economic heap with top salaries and home values. There is little diversity among the highly educated, professional residents, and both students and parents value education. Some students choose private and religious schools but all attend schools with good academic programs. They take advantage of AP and honors coursework and perform near the top on admission tests. They submit a prolific number of applications to a variety of colleges, often private, across the country. Although some will apply, financial aid is not a high priority.	18	8	10
5 (HI)	70	Modestly affluent and highly-educated, this is a neighborhood of professionals where most families own relatively expensive homes. Almost all parents have some college with a majority holding graduate degrees. Students are most likely in public schools and consistently excel academically. They take full advantage of AP and honors coursework, at or near the top on standardized tests, and have exceedingly high educational goals. They are highly mobile and submit a reasonable number of applications to selective private across the country. A majority will be seeking some kind of financial assistance.	61	27	34
5 (HI)	61	The residents of this neighborhood include a number of affluent families with children who own homes near the top of the scale. Most frequently professionals and managers, the parents have almost all had some higher education; half having earned graduate degrees. The students most often attend public schools with standard curricula where they only modest engage in AP and honors coursework. With most aspiring beyond the baccalaureate, they apply to a large number of very selective privates and some highly selective publics both in and outside of their home state. where some will seek financial aid.	13	7	6
5 (HI)	60	This is an affluent neighborhood where many own homes almost at the top of the scale and families tend to have fewer children. Parents are generally	4	0	4

		professional and a majority hold graduate degrees. Most students attend either private or religious schools with standard curricula where they are exposed to some AP/honors level courses. They are at or near the top on standardized tests and have high educational goals. They apply to lots of colleges, generally highly selective and usually outside of their home state. Although some will look for financial aid, it's not a priority for most.			
5 (HI)	53	Residents of this neighborhood have relatively high incomes, generally own their homes, and many do not have children. Relatively diverse with substantial Asian and ESL component, most are professional with almost all having college experience, with a good proportion holding graduate degrees. Students generally attend public schools, involve themselves in AP/honors courses, and score well above average on standardized tests. They have moderately high aspirations and apply primarily to public institutions with a lower cost of attendance but may consider more selective institutions if awarded significant financial aid.	6	2	4
5 (HI)	51	Residents of this neighborhood have relatively high incomes, and almost always own their homes which are valued well above average. They are moderately diverse, hold professional and managerial jobs, and most have at least some college with many having graduate degrees. Students attend primarily public high schools, avail themselves of AP/honors coursework, and have above average scores on standardized tests. They prefer colleges in state, and, although interested in at least one public, will generally apply to a number of modestly selective privates where financial aid will be sought.	3	1	2