

College, scholarship applications consume summer, senior year

BY EDINA WANG

It is that time of the year when seniors are preparing for standardized tests, planning and writing essays, filling out extracurricular activities and having recommendations written and mailed.

To fulfill these college entrance requirements, students have to allocate time to balance the sometimes long process of college applications with school work. Senior Noura Howell, who applied to seven colleges, said that this can cause a lot of stress.

"In senior year, you're taking harder classes, and applications take a lot of time," she said. "Teachers don't accommodate that at all. I'm not sure they should."

Balancing classes and applications is one of the main reasons PCC Hannah Martin believes students may procrastinate.

"We have so much stuff to do at school that we are going to be graded on already. Everything that isn't for a grade takes a backseat, including college apps," she said. "It doesn't help that filling them out isn't very fun. There's also that temptation to leave them all until Christmas Break since most are due in January."

But, not all students who procrastinate do so because of the amount of schoolwork.

"[It is] because I'm lazy," said PCC Austin Matthews, who is applying to four colleges.

Both Matthews and senior Rebekah Vestal, who finished the application to her top choice college in September, said that the process has not been very stressful.

Martin applied to seven colleges—four in-state and three out-of-state. Predicting that she would be busy enough during the school year, she started her applications early.

"I started over the summer because the seniors on my hall last year strongly suggested it," Martin said. "I barely had time for homework, sports and sleep last year, so I knew it would be a hassle to write college essays and do scholarship apps on top of that."

The part of the college application that took Martin the longest to finish was the essay.

"Everyone has a long one and at least a few short ones," she said. "Try to use the same modified essay over and over if possible. I sent the same long essay to all seven schools."

Martin advises juniors to try to finish the Common Application, which comes out in July or early August, over the summer.

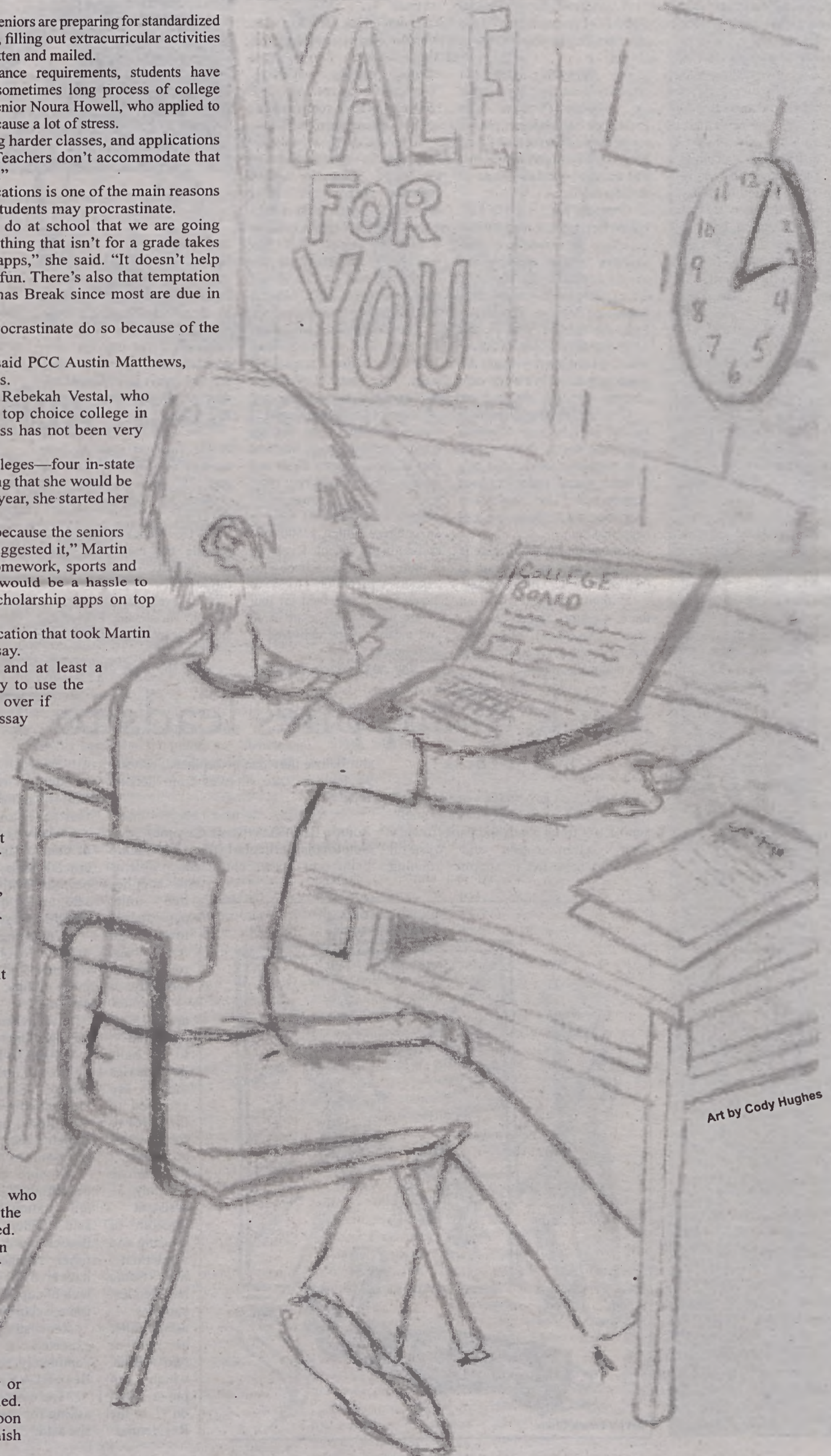
"Most colleges don't put out their application or their Common Application supplement until September, but some do. Check those out before school starts, if possible," she said.

Likewise, UNC-Chapel Hill encourages students to submit their applications well before the deadline in their "four steps to an easier application."

"This gives your counselor and your recommender more time to prepare their parts of your application; it also gives us more time to notify you of missing items and consider you for merit-based scholarships and the Honors Program," it said.

However, there are those who began their applications later in the fall and do not feel overwhelmed. Senior Nathaniel Wasson began his applications in late October and said that he was not pressed for time. Thanks to Fall Break, he has completed almost all of his applications.

For some students, college applications are nearly or completely finished and mailed. For others, Winter Break may soon become an appealing time to finish college applications.



Art by Cody Hughes