

Choosing A College or University

Choosing a college can be a difficult and stressful decision. Examine your interests, talents, wants and needs in great detail. Look at each of the following categories and begin to examine the colleges or universities that you are considering. You can find the answers to these questions by visiting the institution's website, contacting the admissions office or by requesting information through the mail.

Location/Environment:

- How far away do you want to go? (A day's drive, a couple of hours, a plane ride away?)
- Do you want to go to a college in a large urban city, a small rural area or somewhere in between?
- Do you want to stay in state or out-of-state?
- Is the campus a safe one? (Does the university consider safety important?)
- Do you want to attend a private or public institution?
- Do you want to attend a religiously affiliated university or a military academy, etc?

Size of College:

- Do you prefer a large or small school setting?
- A large school has approximately 20,000 plus students.
- A medium school has between 5,000-20,000 students
- A small school has fewer than 5,000 students.

Student Services:

- What kind of extracurricular activities are offered? (Often, larger schools will have a larger variety of activities)
- What kinds of facilities, both academic and recreational, are offered?
- What kind of disability services are offered?
- Do you want to attend an all-male school or co-ed?
- What is the minority representation?
- How strong is the athletic department? Is it a NCAA division I, II, or III?

Admissions:

- What schools will admit you based on your G.P.A. and standardized test scores? (Admission requirements vary from one school to another)

- How selective do you want the University to be?
- Can you get a scholarship based on your academic record?

Academics:

- Which schools offer the major you are considering?
- What class size is comfortable for you?
- What is the student to teacher ratio?
- How prestigious is the program you are considering?
- What kind of computer labs are available for you?
- Are internships available?
- Are independent study programs offered?

College Expenses:

- How expensive of a school can you afford to attend?
(Remember to consider tuition, room & board, transportation, books, and miscellaneous fees) See the financial aid portion for more information.

By this point, you should have your list narrowed down to no more than five colleges that you are seriously considering. Two of those five should be ones that you aspire to get accepted to, the next two should be ones that you would like to attend and the fifth choice should be one where you are guaranteed acceptance.