

Factors to Consider When Choosing A College

The key to choosing a college is to choose the college that best fits YOU! Don't just consider colleges that your friends are going to, that your parents went to, or that you know by reputation. The next most important key is to start early so that you can evaluate all of your options. You should start exploring your options during your sophomore and junior year of high school, if not earlier.

When looking into colleges, you need to consider the following factors:

E Majors Offered

- * Make sure that the college offers the major that you need to meet your career goals
- * Make sure that the college offers opportunities for you to explore other interests
- * If you do not know what you want to major in, choose a college that offers study in your general area of interest
 - For example, if you are interested in math, choose a college that is known for its computer science, engineering, or physics programs

E Public vs. Private

- * Public colleges are supported by tax dollars, so if you are a resident of the state that the college is in, the tuition and fees will be lower
- * Private colleges often cost more, but they may have a large endowment and can offer more financial aid.

E Costs

- * In addition to tuition and fees, you also consider
 - room
 - board
 - textbooks
 - supplies
 - personal items
 - travel

E Size

- * Larger colleges may offer a wider variety of classes
- * Larger colleges may have larger classes (25 - 500 students)
- * Smaller colleges may have more specialized programs
- * Smaller colleges will have smaller classes (5 - 100 students)

E Student Body Make Up

- * Size of international population
- * Racial diversity
- * Ratio of males to females
- * Average age
- * Geographic diversity

E Location

- * Urban/Rural/Suburban
- * Climate
- * Distance from home
- * Distance from other locations (i.e. beach, mountains, large cities)

E Extracurricular Activities

- * Sports
- * Band
- * Student Activities
- * Fraternities/Sororities

Activity: Researching Higher Learning Institutions

A higher learning institution should be picked carefully based on the education quality, student activities, size, location, cost, and many other factors. You should not base your decision on one thing because you may encounter problems in the other areas. You have to find a college that is suitable for you, and this assignment will help you evaluate different colleges.

1. Choose two (2) top choices of college, university, or higher learning institution. Make sure these colleges offer a major that in which you are interested.
2. Fill out the following information sheets on each choice
3. Obtain an application for admissions from each choice (You can get some applications online)
4. Determine which school characteristics mean the most to you and compare the two schools based on these characteristics

Suggested Resources:

1. HLI Corner (Church Library)
The corner has several brochures from various colleges for you to take
2. Internet
 - A. College Foundation of North Carolina (www.cfnc.org)
 - B. Peterson's: identify colleges by location, major, tuition, sports, and more (www.petersons.com) (Go to Colleges and Universities)
 - C. College Board (www.collegeboard.org)
 - D. The Black Collegian Online (www.black-collegian.com)
 - E. College Net (www.collegenet.com)
 - F. Hobson's College View (www.collegeview.com)
 - G. Think College (www.ed.gov/thinkcollege)
 - H. College Is Possible (www.collegeispossible.com) (Go to "Choosing the Right College")
 - I. Go College (www.gocollege.com)
 - J. www.jayi.com
 - K. Us News (www.usnews.com/usnews/edu)
3. Books
 - A. Collegiate Magazines
 - B. College Guidebooks
4. School
 - A. Call, Mail, or email the admissions office of your school choice and ask them to send you information
 - B. Your Guidance Counselor at your school might have some information or can direct you on where to get information about your school choice
5. People
 - A. You can talk to someone who currently goes to or went to the school of your choice, and they may be able to direct you to some information

Higher Learning Institution Information Sheet

Name of Institution: _____

Location: _____

Majors offered which interest you: _____

Tuition (In-State & Out of State): _____

Admissions Requirements (GPA, SAT/ACT, Courses): _____

Extracurricular Activities (religious, social, athletic, academic, and African American organizations): _____

Population Makeup

Total # of Undergraduates: _____

Gender Percentages: _____

Racial Percentages: _____

Reasons for wanting to attend: _____

Additional Information: _____

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