

College Admissions 101

- **FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE: THE MOST IMPORTANT FIRST STEP**

There are thousands of colleges in the United States. Today, the principal determinant of where a student attends, generally, is where the student wants to attend. This is often called the right school or finding your fit.

As obvious as it sounds, the most important step in identifying a college is first identifying what you are looking for. Before you start to make decisions, take time to understand what you want and need in a college. Don't worry about determining a major quite yet. Seek out institutions that offer multiple academic opportunities of interest to you. It is important to remember that nearly 35 percent of students change their major at least once during their college career. Find an institution with programs broad enough to meet several of your different academic needs.

Define your preferences in each category and then rank each category in order of importance to you. This will help you focus your college search!

	RANK (1-10)		OR	
SIZE		Small	~	Large
ENROLLMENT		Single sex	~	Co-educational
ACADEMICS		Liberal Arts	~	Technical/Vocational
SETTING		City	~	Suburb or country
DISTANCE		Less than 3 hours	~	More than 3 hours
STUDENT LIFE		Residential	~	Commuter
EMPHASIS		Graduate research	~	Undergraduate teaching
LIFESTYLE		Study, study, study	~	Range of activities
CAMPUS CULTURE		Aggressive	~	Cooperative
CLASSES		Large lectures	~	Small, interactive

WHERE TO LOOK

So now you have some idea what you are looking for, but where and how do you find it? There are many places to look. In fact, there are so many, it can seem intimidating. Among the available resources are:

- College Guides – these are like the grand phone books with brief descriptions of each college listed.
- Web-based College Guides – Like the printed guides but available on-line.
Try: www.petersons.com www.collegeedge.com www.collegeboard.com
www.highschoolhub.org www.princetonreview.com