

College Fit Worksheet

Your Criteria for Finding the Right College

CONSIDER THE SIZE OF THE UNIVERSITY:

College can range from hundreds of students to tens of thousands of students, so this is an important variable. To think about where you would thrive, take a moment to consider the following questions and what they represent.

Do you want most professors to take mandatory attendance to keep you accountable for attending class? Y / N

Would you like professors to know your name most of the time? Y / N

Do you thrive in small groups for discussion or projects? Y / N

Do you feel more comfortable when you aren't lost in a crowd? Y / N

Do you more easily make friends in smaller groups of people? Y / N

If the answers to these questions are yes, you should consider looking at some smaller colleges (less than 5,000 students) to add to your list.

Do you work well independently to follow a schedule and turn in work on time? Y / N

Do you like the freedom to attend class when you feel it is important and not all the time? Y / N

Do you make friends without problem in large groups of people? Y / N

Will you attend office hours or ask for help if you have difficulty in classes or personally? Y / N

If the answer to these questions is yes, you should have a few larger institutions on your college list (more than 5,000 students).

NEXT, CONSIDER THE LOCATION:

Wonderful colleges exist all over the United States, but you may have reasons to choose colleges near a certain location. When thinking about location, consider the following:

Do you want to be able to drive home from your college (or have others drive to you)? Or are you just as comfortable/able to fly? Fly / Drive

Are there interests you have that involve a particular type of resources that would affect your location choice? For example, if you are interested in hiking, would you like to be near mountains? If you are interested in community service, would you like to be near a city that offers a lot of service opportunities?

List your interests that require certain locations:

Are you looking for an adventure and want to try out a new geographic culture (the Pacific Northwest is very different from the Southeast, for example), or would you transition more easily if you stayed in your same geographic region where it felt culturally similar?

Finally, do you thrive in cold weather or sunshine? Do you enjoy having all four seasons? Is weather fairly irrelevant to your search?

After you have thought about these questions, try to identify one or two geographic areas spanning that fit what you think will help you thrive as you transition to college, and use those to begin your college search.

THIRD, CONSIDER ACADEMIC OFFERINGS:

As you research colleges, you want to look for a place that offers you the major(s) that you are interested, as well as internship, study abroad, and other academic programs that you might need. You might have a major that you are certain of at this point, or you might have no idea. Here are a few guiding questions to help you think about what kind of academic offerings you might need.

Are you a strong math/science student who likes applying math or science in the real world? If so, you might consider engineering as a major. Y / N

Do you like several subjects and aren't sure which one you might choose in college? If so, look for a college where you can take many different subjects and will have good advising as you look for your major.

Are you interested in taking a professional path that leads more directly to a career? If so, you might consider looking into nursing, physical therapy, business, education, or other similar fields. All of these types of specific programs lead to a certification that allows you to get this certain job as soon as you finish your degree. What professional path would you choose?

Do you think you might like the subjects offered in college but haven't had exposure to them yet? If so, you might explore majors in psychology, economics, sociology, linguistics, computer science, or other fields.

FOURTH, LOOK AT STUDENT CULTURE AND ACTIVITIES:

Every campus has a slightly different personality, and you will want to be sure that the personality of that campus fits your needs so that you can make friends and thrive there.

Do you want to be in a fraternity or sorority? Y / N

Do you want a particular athletic experience – DI, DII, DIII Y / N

Do you want a campus where many students live all four years? Y / N

Do you want a school with a special mission, such as a religious affiliation, historically black university, or single-gender education? Y / N

Do you want a campus with a great deal of diversity or a certain kind of diversity? (racial, socioeconomic, international population, range of majors, etc.) Y / N