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What Every Student Needs to Consider

Concerns During College Search



Fear of judgement

Fear of failure

Can I afford it?

Will I be happy?

Will I belong?

Will my family approve?

Who are you?



Who are you?



- What will make you truly happy?
- Which environment will allow you to take risks?
- Where could I develop as a person?
- What does success mean to you?
 - How will you fulfill your dream of success?

How will you get there?



- Your major
- Your experiences
- Your internships
- Study Abroad
- Are you a leader?
- Did you take risks?
- What kind of problem solver are you?

Searching for the Right School



NARROWING DOWN A LIST

WHAT QUESTIONS TO ASK

CHOOSING A MAJOR

What Are You Looking For?



- Size – Large or Small school?
- Setting – Urban, Suburban, Rural?
- Close to Home or Far Away?
- Specific Clubs or Activities
- Outcomes
 - What do people do after they graduate?

What do Admission Counselors do?



- Admission Counselors help prospective students make informed decisions about their college plans
- They may not be able to answer every question you have
 - However, a good counselor will be able to get back to you with the answer in the near future

What should I ask?



- *How's your _____ program?*
 - Too broad. Ask a series of specific questions.
- What kind of classes will I take?
- Are there internships available?
- What kind of facilities are available to me?
- What do people do after they graduate from your _____ program?

What should I ask?



- What research are faculty members involved in and what are the opportunities for undergraduates to participate in it?
- Students who are undecided should ask about what services and support are available to help them explore various majors

What should I ask?



- *What's your student to faculty ratio?*
 - A school can have a desirable student to faculty ratio but that may not indicate class size.
 - Class sizes may vary from a small number up to 300+
- What are the size of your classes?

What should I ask?



- *Is your campus safe?*
 - Too Broad
- Which measures do your university put in place to ensure a student's safety?
- Consider fire safety

What should I ask?



- *How much is your tuition?*
 - Sticker prices don't tell the full story
- How much is your tuition and what is the average Financial Aid Award?
 - Institutions have Net Price Calculators on their websites
 - Education is an INVESTMENT

What should I ask?



- What materials are needed for a complete application and what are the deadlines?
- How long should I expect to wait for an answer once I submit my complete application?
- Is housing guaranteed for four years?
- What percentage of freshman return for their second semester or sophomore year?
- If I struggle academically, financially or emotionally, what type of assistance is available to me?

What should I ask?



- Who teaches the classes?
- What type of advising will you get?
- How long will it take to graduate?
- If I'm not happy at your school will my credits transfer to an accredited college or university?

Why am I interested in my major?



- 50% – 70% of students change their majors at least once
- Most will change majors at least 3 times before they graduate
- Job market demands are constantly changing and what's hot today may not be hot tomorrow
 - Estimates from various sources state that 40% – 60% of the jobs of the future have yet to be created!

*University of LaVerne Career Services

Other Reasons Why Majors Change



- Realization of what major entails
- Exposure to other majors / Courses more interesting*
- Settled on doing what other people think they should do
- Exposure to potential career opportunities*

*Ball State University

Why am I interested in my major?



- Research your major
- Talk to people in the profession!
 - What did they have to do in order to obtain their current job?
 - Are there any special exams or licensing requirements?
 - What is their average workday like?
- Good resource
<https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/majors-careers>

Majors vs. Minors



Minors

- Allow you to follow a secondary interest
- Usually 18 credits or 6 classes
- Add depth to your education
- Allow the student to pursue a specific career path
 - Nursing degree with minor in Spanish can make you a more desirable to employers

Helpful Hints



- SPOILER ALERT -

College brochures do not show
students failing, crying or feeling
lonely

Preparing for the Application



TYPES OF APPLICATIONS

APPLICATION TIMELINES

TEST SCORES

TIPS FOR WRITING AN ESSAY

WHAT COLLEGES LOOK FOR IN A STUDENT

Applications



- Some universities :
 - Rolling Admissions (No Deadline)
 - Deadlines for applications
 - Accept Common Application
 - May or may not have a paper application
 - Allow you to apply *only* online
 - May have different pricing for online vs. paper application
 - Offer Early Decision or Early Action

Applications



- Some universities may ask if you had any discipline problems in the past at your school
- Questions regarding criminal history is common
- Colleges are checking essays for plagiarism

Frequent Pitfalls



- Be wary of second hand knowledge or gossip regarding a University
 - Often information is grossly inaccurate
 - Call the institution for verification
 - Beware of social media
- Don't rely too much on guidebooks and third party websites
 - Information may be out of date and/or inaccurate.
 - Too much reliance on test scores, alumni giving, reputation among peers

Frequent Pitfalls



- Visit the Institution!
 - Open Houses
 - Stay overnight
 - Take classes for a day
 - Tour the campus/ ask students questions
 - Preview Days
- Don't miss deadlines!
 - Not everyone has rolling admissions

Frequent Pitfalls



- **Have someone proofread your application!**
 - County or Country
 - Visa information is for international students and not your credit card info
 - Send the application materials to the correct school
 - ✦ Official Transcripts
 - ✦ Letters of Recommendation
 - ✦ Essay
 - ✦ Resume
 - ✦ Test Scores
 - Fill out supplemental forms if required
 - If you have a question call the admissions office

SAT or ACT?



- Both exams are standardized tests that can be administered to students seeking college admission
- Exams assist colleges in making admission decisions
- SAT went through a redesign, i.e. Writing Section is now optional

SAT or ACT?



- How to decide which test you should take
 - How do you currently perform on the topics covered in each exam?
 - Obtain practice booklets from the guidance office and see how you perform
 - Ask the colleges you are interested in applying which exams they will consider for admission
 - College administrators can view your SAT essay online

Essays



- Some schools may give you a series of topics
 - What are you going to bring to this college?
- Many schools will use the essay topics from the Common Application
- Don't write beyond your ability and misuse complex words
- Don't write casually
 - You are not texting your friends
 - Stay away from the word "like"

Ultimately, What do Colleges Look For?



Colleges consider the following in a prospective student:

- Difficulty (rigor) of curriculum
 - What type of classes does the student take?
 - What are their grades in academic courses compared to electives?
- Grade point average (GPA)
- Test scores (SAT/ACT)
- Class rank
- Extra curricular activities
 - Do activities relate to the major the student wishes to pursue?
- Letters of Recommendation
 - Emphasis on letters
- Interviews
- *What are the 2-3 things I should know about you?*

Timeline



TIMELINE

HELPFUL HINTS

Timeline



- Sophomore Year
 - Research Schools
 - ✦ Make a file of schools that interest you

Timeline



- Junior Year
 - Research your major!
 - Find out what you are good at:
 - ✦ What strengths do you have that can help you accomplish your goals?*
 - ✦ In what areas do you need to improve or explore in more depth to accomplish your goals
 - Visit Schools
 - Register for SAT's or ACT's
 - ✦ Some schools may not require these tests

Timeline



- **Senior Year – Fall**
 - Attend open houses
 - Attend a college fair
 - Apply to colleges
- **Visit Career Resource Room/ Guidance Office**
- **Discuss options with guidance staff**
 - Do not rely solely on the guidance staff to do everything for you

Timeline



- Senior Year – Spring
 - Continue hard work in classroom
 - Take a final look at colleges
 - ✦ Talk to professors, current students, etc.
 - File FAFSA beginning October 1st
 - ✦ Submit any information/ applications for independent scholarships
 - Review Financial Aid packages
 - ✦ Consider out of pocket (net) costs not the sticker price

Helpful Hints



- Get tutoring help before you need it
- Social Aspects
 - Get involved in campus activities! A good time won't come to find you. You have to find a good time.
 - Approach your roommate sooner than later
 - ✦ “If I do something that makes you uncomfortable let me know. If you do something that makes me feel uncomfortable I hope I can let you know.”

Helpful Hints



- Monitor privacy setting on social networking sites
 - Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat....
 - ✦ Other people could be looking at your profile besides your friends!
 - ✦ Do not post compromising photographs!
 - ✦ Nothing you do on the internet is anonymous
 - ✦ Don't be a troll
 - Universities have suspending students for trolling

Helpful Hints



1. Treat college like you're buying a really expensive car
 - Take it for a test drive
 - Compare offers
 - Not just financial but curriculum too!
 - Research which school is the best *FIT* for you
2. Be the best student you can be
 - Just because you got accepted doesn't mean you can coast