



# THE COLLEGE SEARCH: Finding The Right Fit

College&CareerPathways2024



## College comparison chart

As you investigate colleges, use this worksheet to keep track of schools in which you're most interested and to compare them to your wish list of ideal characteristics. In the second column, list all 12 factors in order of importance to you — 1 for most important, 12 for least important.

Factors to consider	my factor rank (1–12)	my wish list of college characteristics	college name	college name	college name
Type (technical, two-year, college, university)					
Major/academic program					
Size of school					
Location (setting/ surroundings)					
Selectivity					
Academic atmosphere					
Student life/activities					
Diversity of student population					
Housing					
Facilities (library, theater, cafeteria, sports)					
Cost (college budget) and affordability					
Other					

# Types of Programs and Program Size

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- Length —
  - Certificate or training
  - 2-year
  - 4-year
  - 5 year combined
- University
- Specialized or general
- Physical campus, hybrid or fully online





# Majors/academic programs

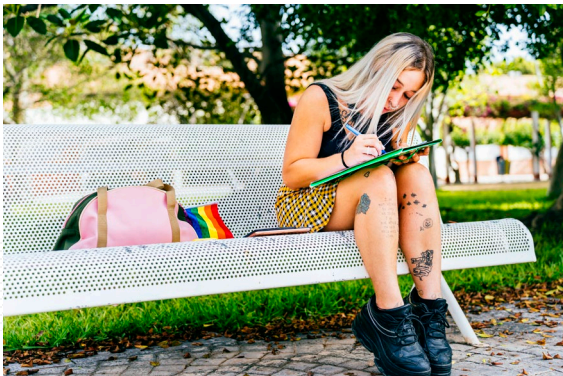
- What do I want to learn more about?
- What subjects interest me?
- What programs of study fit my learning style or academic goals?
- What do I hope to do and how does that connect to my educational plan?
- What if I have no idea?



# Campus atmosphere

- What type of “personality” does the campus have?
- What are the academic expectations?
- Coed, single gender? Religious? Military?
- What sorts of supports are available to students?

Suggestion: Check out Campus Tours ([campustours.com](http://campustours.com)) for virtual campus tours and videos about colleges across the US. If you can, visit programs you are interested in to see how you feel on campus.



# Selectivity

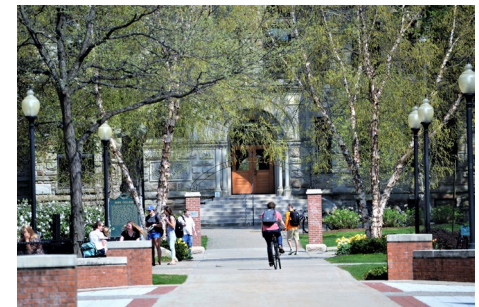
- What chance do I have of getting in? Are there special program requirements?
- What range of selectivity should I consider, especially for an academic scholarship or merit aid?
- What additional feedback have school counselors, teachers, coaches, etc had?





# Student life & diversity

- What housing and meal options are available?
- How diverse is the student body?
- What opportunities and activities are available?
- How do students spend their time?
- What do the students say?



# Housing and facilities

- Do most students live on campus or off?
- Is there on campus living requirement
- Are there multiple housing options including theme/club housing, 1st year programming options
- Are there places where students gather?
- Does the physical campus match what you are looking for? Green space, building design, campus layout, open use art and music spaces, athletic facilities, makers space
- What do current students have to say?





# Costs & affordability

- What is the sticker price vs. actual cost?
- What are average debt and repayment rates?
- Know your starting point:  
Student Aid Index - SAI  
<https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/>
- Know the college's starting point and average awards for students with a similar profile
- NEBHEs tuition program enables students to enroll in out of state colleges at a discounted rate
- As with selectivity, consider applying to financial safety, match, and reach schools.

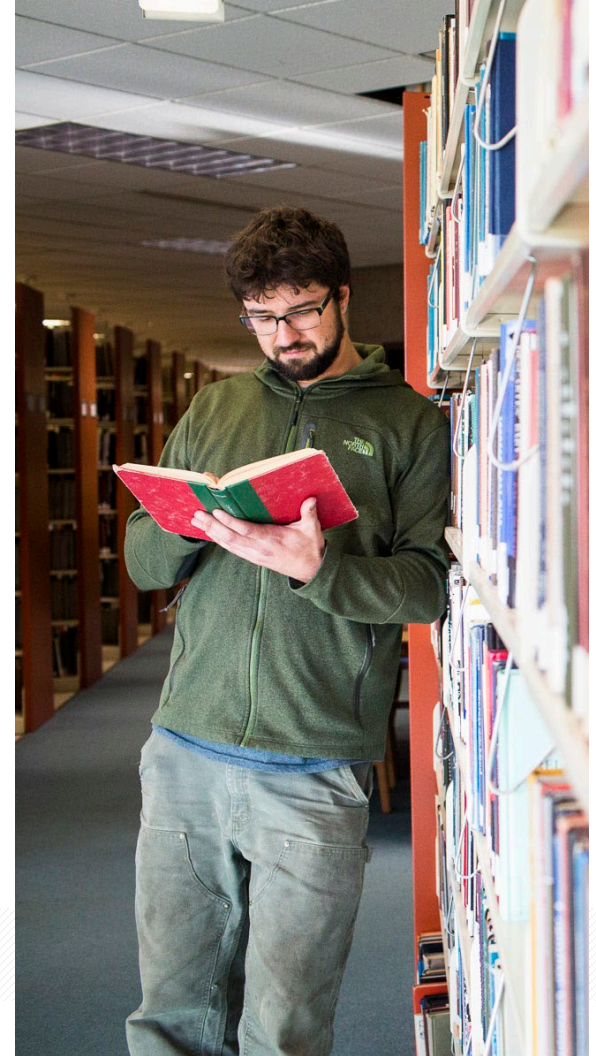
## College Hunch

A mobile app that lets you compare colleges' key stats, including net price.

# Outcomes information

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- How many first-year students return for their sophomore year?
- How many students graduate within 4 or 5 years?
- What are graduate school admission & job placement rates?



# Resources to use and refer to

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- College Search Engines
  - [Big Future](#)
  - [College Navigator](#)
- Costs & affordability
  - [College Scorecard](#)
  - [Consumer Financial Bureau Your Financial Path to Graduation](#)
- Campus Tours
- College Fairs
  - [NEACAC](#)
- School counselors





# Wisdom to take with you

- Be open to all options
- Know the cost before you commit
- Your preferences and goals may change as you explore options
- Know your strengths and weaknesses.
- Do your research!
- Gather a trusted group of academic and personal supports that you can consult when needed
- ***Be organized, follow through, explore and HAVE FUN!***



A group of young men are standing in front of a building with horizontal siding. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. The men are dressed in casual clothing like t-shirts and jeans. One man in the foreground is wearing a baseball cap and a light-colored t-shirt. Another man to his right is wearing a red shirt and sunglasses. The background shows the side of a building with horizontal siding and a window.

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