

College Planning Worksheet

FACTOR	DESCRIPTION
Size	<p>The size of each college campus determines the student to faculty ratio, the number of peers that a student interacts with, how many students are allowed to take courses in each department, and even how many roommates or suite mates they may have. If a student attends a small liberal arts school with an undergraduate population of 2,000 students, they may become familiar with most of the students in their class. If they attend a larger school, with an undergraduate population of say 30,000, they will likely get to know students in their major or in their clubs, but see many unfamiliar faces around campus.</p>
Location	<p>Location is a significant factor many students (and parents) take into consideration when choosing their future home for the next four years - is sunny Southern California a student's ideal environment or do they prefer the Northeast's snowy winters? Which culture would they thrive in? Would a student rather attend a school that is far from home or close to home? Are they interested in attending a school in an urban, rural or suburban community?</p>
Rigor	<p>Each campus offers different levels of academic rigor - the academic environment at an Ivy League is different from a small liberal arts college, for instance. What does your student's academic and social life look like in order to be balanced, and what kind of learning environment would best support that? Rigor can be very subjective, so it's important that both you and your student understand the types of environments that are present at the school and how rigor can be present both in and out of the classroom.</p>
Cost	<p>It's no secret that the cost of a college education is certainly an investment - which schools and universities offer aid or financial assistance programs that would best accommodate you throughout college and post-graduation? Do some schools offer better cost options than others?</p>

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Social Environment	<p>College is a great opportunity for students to engage with a diverse community - what is the student looking for in their student life? Some schools have a huge school spirit and athletic culture (think Duke, University of Alabama) whereas others offer smaller, quieter liberal arts environments. A student may dream of joining a sorority or fraternity, or of taking advantage of opportunities to engage in social life outside of campus.</p>
Academic Programs	<p>Some colleges ask students what they see themselves studying when they arrive on campus. How important is it for a student to study their first or second choice of major in college? And how would that affect what school they ultimately choose? Some schools offer specialized programs (like Brown's PLME) that are best suited for students who already have an idea of what they would like to pursue in the future, while others allow students to test the waters before declaring their majors as juniors. If a student has already discovered their academic passion, they may want to create a list based on the schools that offer the top programs in the country for their intended course of study.</p>
Athletics	<p>Whether your student likes to play sports for fun or is looking to be recruited for a team in college, it's important to look into student-athletic life. What is the difference between a D1 and D3 school? If the student doesn't want to be recruited, would they still be afforded the opportunity to play their sport as a walk on or on a club team? How significant of a role will athletics play in the student's life?</p>
Research Opportunities	<p>If your student dreams of participating in groundbreaking research in a specific topic, they may be more inclined to choose a school based on the types of research offered, how much annual funding the school receives and which faculty and mentors teach at the school. What kinds of research opportunities are present in the schools the student is interested in, and how important would the student's research experience play in their student life?</p>
Study Abroad	<p>Some students dream of going to college and participating in a study abroad program. Does the school you are considering offer a program in the student's country of choice? Can the student complete classes required by their major while attending this program? Can the student choose to study abroad during the summer or over a winter term? What schools or programs offer the best-fit study abroad programs for what the student wishes to study in college?</p>