

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Of the 3,000-plus universities, colleges, and technical schools in the United States, how does a senior decide which one to attend after graduation? What factors should one consider in making this decision? The following factors are all important and worth considering:

1. Location
2. Size
3. Academic environment
4. Majors available
5. Facilities – academic, cultural, recreational, housing
6. Extracurricular activities
7. Atmosphere – kind of people
8. Cost and financial aid available
9. Academic, career, personal counseling programs
10. YOU

A senior's goal is to find a school where he or she will be both comfortable and challenged.

COMFORT – Factors which have the most direct influence on one's comfort or lack of it, in a college are:

1. How large or small should it be?
2. How competitive an academic environment should it be?
3. What kinds of people attend the institution?

CHALLENGE

1. Take a "self academic audit:"
 - a. What kinds of courses did you take in high school?
 - b. What kinds of grades did you achieve?
 - c. How did you score on standardized tests?
 - d. Have you been a serious student?
2. Consider most seriously those institutions which have substantial numbers of students with academic backgrounds similar to your own.

How does a student find out about various colleges and learn the answers to his/her many questions?

1. Read in the Guidance Office or public library publications such as:
 - a. The College Board's College Handbook
 - b. Peterson's Competitive Colleges
 - c. Fiske's Selective Guide to Colleges
 - d. Case & Birnbaum's Comparative Guide to American Colleges
 - e. Barron's Profiles of American Colleges
 - f. Catalogs and pamphlets from individual schools
2. Talk with Mechanicsburg counselor
3. Use the College Board's web-based career, college and major exploration tool- "My Road."
4. Use internet websites – see separate handout
5. Talk with recent graduates or students presently attending the schools that interest you.
6. Consult with admissions representatives who visit Mechanicsburg
7. Attend a college fair.
8. Visit the campuses of colleges you are considering.