WORKSHOP 2: Researching and Selecting Your Top 5

By Shelley Lemons, District Director - Transfer Programs & Services
WHAT I WILL LEARN

Today's workshop will assist you in the following ways as you plan for your next steps:

• Learn about online resources to help you research colleges and universities
• Learn methods of researching colleges and universities (non-online)
• Understand the term “best fit college”
• How to narrow down your choices
SO MANY CHOICES...

There are a lot of colleges and Universities out there...

How Will You Know Which Is Best For You?

If you have yet to decide on a career and your major, follow the steps in this series to help you make a decision with confidence.
STEP 1: WHAT DO I WANT FROM MY COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY?

Respond to the following questions:

- How far from home am I willing to go?
- Am I willing to commute/live on campus?
- Do I prefer a small (less than 2000 students) or large (more than 15,000 students) college/university?
- What type of extracurricular activities do I enjoy?
- How do I see myself contributing to my college campus?
- What tuition can I afford based on my expected salary after graduation?

Write down what you discovered in a journal or share with a trusted friend, family member or your College Advisor.
Now That You Know What You Want Out of Your College Experience...

LET’S RESEARCH!
STEP 2: USE ONLINE RESOURCES

Use resources like www.collegeboard.org to research colleges or universities of interest:

Filter your choices based on your responses from step 1
RESEARCHING - USING COLLEGE BOARD

- College Board results are alphabetical. View them while considering the following:
  - View at least 2-3 colleges/universities that are away from home (out of state)
  - View at least 2-3 colleges/universities where you know you can get acceptances
  - View at least 2-3 colleges/universities where you have a good chance of getting accepted
  - View at least 2-3 colleges/universities that are a “high reach”/harder to get acceptances

Compare your findings using the College Comparison Form. Click HERE to download now!
• In the example on the next slide, the results are from a very specific search criteria (see the next slide)
  • Public/private institution
  • In Illinois, Indiana or Georgia
  • That has application fee waivers and tuition no higher than $45,000
  • At least 60% of financial needs met for students
  • That offers a major in Political Science
  • Offers dance, choral and Greek life for extracurricular activities
  • Offers a study abroad program and Work Study
  • Accepts transfer credit and GED in lieu of the High School diploma
  • At least 20% of the school population are minority students
• Such a specific query pulls very few institutions into the results.
• Consider the most important areas to you and search using that criteria. Changing some of the “Must Haves” to “Wants” changed the results from just 15 colleges to 40!
RESEARCHING: RESULTS EXAMPLE

• When You Click on the College logo, it takes you to an information page about the institution.
  • Note the following:
    • Graduation rate (the higher the better)
    • Accreditation (it should always be identified as regionally accredited)
    • % of financial need met
RESEARCHING: RESULTS EXAMPLE

- Click on the area for Transfer Students and ask the following:
  - What is the minimum & maximum credit hours accepted?
  - What is the acceptance rate of transfer students to the institution?
  - For which semesters do they accept applications?
  - What special services are offered to transfer students?
  - What is required of a transfer student application?
• Look at the important deadlines for the application period.
  • By when do you need to apply?
  • By when do you need to complete your financial aid information?
  • By when will you receive an acceptance?
  • By when should you inform the institution of your decision?
• Click here to
• Download your personal college comparison sheet
STEP 3: OTHER RESEARCH METHODS

• **College Visits** - Visiting your college/university of interest is a great way to be confident that the culture is a good fit for you. CCC Transfer Directors take students on college tours each semester. You can also schedule an individual tour for yourself at the colleges website or use [https://www.campusreel.org/](https://www.campusreel.org/) for a virtual tour if you can’t be there in person.

• **Talk to CCC Alumni** – Talking to the students who are currently at your dream school is a great way to gain an understanding of the institution from the student perspective. You can also schedule time to speak to representatives from Student Government or heads of clubs at the campus, if there are no alumni present.

• **Speak Regularly to College Reps** – Staying in touch with the College Representative from your dream school helps you to get a good idea of how the institution serves its students (and it’s a big help when applying to the institution).

• **Learn About the Professors** – Using your own discretion, you can find out how students feel about their professors at [https://www.ratemyprofessors.com/](https://www.ratemyprofessors.com/)
A best fit college your university will take you on the path to achieving your career goals. But first you need to graduate! Be sure to consider the following areas of services at the institution:

- Graduation rate – An institution with a strong graduation rate tends to invest strongly in their students to assist them in completion of the degree
- Career Services – Do students studying your major at this institution get employed in their career upon graduation?
- Alumni Services – How strong is the alumni network for the institution? What work is done to support alumni towards continued success?
- Tutoring Services – what services are available to students who need further academic support?
MAKING THE CUT

Now that you’ve done your research it’s time to decide which of the institutions is the best fit for you:

- Talk to a trusted friend/colleague
- Talk to your College Advisor
- Talk to your Transfer Director
- But most importantly... TRUST YOURSELF!!!
The next workshop will discuss the CCC partnerships that help you to succeed as you progress towards graduation and create a smooth transition to your dream school.