

Deciding on which college to attend is one of the most important and difficult decisions that face college bound high school seniors. The following questions will help you to narrow down your choices.

- **Does the college offer the degree or major of your choice?** Is the school's program a strong one? How many students are studying your major and how many professors are associated with your course of study? What are the requirements for graduation?
- **Do you want to attend a public or private college?** Ohio public colleges will offer the lowest tuition, while out-of-state public colleges will charge higher tuition for non-residents. Private colleges will charge the same tuition for in-state and out-of-state residents, but tuition tends to be higher than most public colleges.
- **What type of college are you interested in?** College or university which leads to a four-year degree; Community and technical college, which leads to a two-year degree that often parallels the freshman and sophomore offerings at a four-year college; and Vocational-Technical Schools, which offers career-oriented postsecondary programs.
- **Special Criteria?** Do you want to attend a college with a religious affiliation? An all girls or all boys college? Historically Black College? Is the college geared more towards research or teaching?
- **How selective of a college do you want to attend?** Admission policy standards: *open* (all high school graduates are accepted, Average ACT 16-21); *liberal* (some freshman accepted who are in lower half of their class, Average ACT 17-22); *traditional* (the majority of freshman are in the top 50% of their high school class, Average ACT 18-24); *selective* (the majority of freshman are in the top 25% of their class, Average 21-26); *highly selective* (the majority of freshman accepted are in the top 10% of their class, Average ACT 25-30). Do not rule out a college because you do not believe that you will be admitted. Take a chance!
- **Is the college or major accredited?** Attending an unaccredited college or receiving a degree from an unaccredited major may result in a loss of employment opportunities and denial of graduate school admission. Check with college and department for accreditation.
- **Are the credits you earn transferable to another college?** For example some institutions may grant degrees, but do not issue transferable college credits.
- **What are the admission requirements?** Is the admission based on GPA, test scores, class ranking, course-work level, extracurricular or community service? Does the college require the ACT or SAT test? Are there special admission requirements for your major?
- **What size of community is important to you?** Are you comfortable in a rural setting or in a large city? A small town or near a large city? Will a rural campus provide enough on-and-off campus activities? Will a large city campus provide too many off-campus distractions or more opportunities for employment or internships? If the campus is located within a small "college town", do you like this type of atmosphere?
- **What geographic areas interest you?** Do you prefer to live near home, in-state, or out-of-state? **If you plan on attending a college far from home, remember many colleges do not allow students to stay on campus during breaks; can you afford to travel home?**
- **What size school would you be comfortable with?** Are you comfortable with a very small campus with less than 1,000 students, or does a college campus with 20,000 students appeal to you? With a small college you will know everyone, while at a large campus you can be anonymous. Small colleges will have small classes, more discussions, more flexible programs, but limited class selections. Large colleges will often have large classes, but will offer a more diverse class selection. Large colleges offer more extracurricular activities, larger libraries and labs, and graduate programs.
- **Commuter campus?** Do a majority of students live on campus or do they commute to school everyday? Colleges with a higher percentage of commuter students tend to have less social activities on campus.
- **How much are you willing to pay?** Do not rule out a college due to cost. Many colleges offer lucrative financial aid packages. Compare financial packages before making a decision on which college to attend. You can also check the college websites for the Net Price Calculator (NPC) which requires some basic financial information from the student and parent, and will provide the net price for attendance. If you choose an expensive college with a lot of out-of-pocket expenses and loans, will your future career earn enough money to repay your debt?
- **Job Placement?** What is the job placement rate for graduates? What percentage go on to graduate school? Employment placement services available? Jobs

available on campus or close to campus?

- **What kind of campus activities are you interested in?** Clubs? Organizations?
 - **What sports are offered?** Are scholarships offered to play sports? If so, who can play? Do they offer a spectator sports team? Do not pick a college because you are a sports fan of that college; the college may not be the best fit for you. You can always become a fan of another college.
 - **Weather?** Do you want to be where it is warm, or do you want the change of seasons?
 - **Housing?** Availability of dorms or affordable off campus housing? Dorm Sizes and meal plans? Coed? Same gender? Can you live at home to save money?
 - **Academic offerings?** Is a study abroad program offered and if so, can the credits be easily transferred? Are there co-op or internship programs for your field of study? Can you take accelerated or honors courses? Research opportunities? Is the curriculum in your major flexible or do have to take specified classes?
 - **Special Programs?** Do you want to march in a band? Be a mascot? Sing in a choir?
 - **Classes?** Who teaches the classes, experienced professors or graduate students? What is the student-faculty ratio? Average class size? Are there quality professors in your major? Online classes available? Part-time study or weekend classes available?
 - **Are support services offered?** Tutors? Counseling Services? Disability services? Career services? A health clinic?
 - **Childcare?** Does the campus offer childcare and are their reduced rates for students or scholarship money available for childcare?
 - **Student population?** How diverse is the student body? Diversity broadens your learning experiences. What is the female-male ratio? How like-minded are the student and faculty to yourself?
 - **Transportation options?** Buses available on and off campus? Can you have cars on campus? Bikes allowed if this important to you? Can you walk between classes easily or do you have to take a train or bus?
 - **School safety?** Emergency call boxes or campus escorts? ID checks? Check with the college for their safety record at www.campustours.com/. How safe is the dorm?
 - **Academic and recreational?** Library? What technology services are offered? Wireless access available? What type of recreational facilities are available? Latest science labs? Theaters? What is life like on the weekends? What is the campus atmosphere like?
 - **Fraternities and Sororities?** How important is a Greek Life? Is the Greek Life on campus strong?
 - **Graduation and retention rate?** What is the percentage of students who graduate? What is the freshman retention rate? A good rate is often an indicator of student satisfaction.
 - **Where do you find college information?** College websites, internet searched, college admissions counselors, college fairs, alumni, school counselors, program instructors, professionals in the field and TCTC Media Center and guidance office.
- Once you answer the questions listed above, you are ready to make one of the most important decisions about your future. Search for colleges that match your interests, personality and goals. A wise college admission officer once said, "Don't look for a college that offers you the most riches in your future, but which college will offer you the most richest experience. You can use the Ohio Means Success website, <http://www.ohiomeanssuccess.org/>, that is an interactive college search with lots of parameters to use to filter in your search. Try to limit your searches to no more than five colleges. Visit the college in person if possible, or take a virtual tour online; however in person college visits are the best way to determine if the college is a good match. During the visit, meet faculty and students. Arrange a campus tour and a meeting with admissions. Ask about admission requirements. Check out the dorms, dining options and the library and go to a class. Inquire about placement record for graduates in your field. Make an appointment with a financial aid counselor and check out scholarships. **Remember to always apply for admission and financial aid before the deadlines.**

College Information Websites

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| www.campustours.com/ | www.unigo.com/ |
| www.collegeview.com/index.jsp | www.nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ |
| www.thebestcolleges.org/ | www.collegeboard.org/ |
| www.petersons.com/college-search.aspx | www.college-insight.org/ |
| www.mycollegeoptions.org/collegesearch | |