

Four Factors of Fit

Consider all factors in your college search to find colleges that are the right fit for you.

Each college and university is unique – like you. Below are some questions to ask as you consider colleges.



ACADEMIC MATCH

TEST SCORES AND GPA

How do your test scores and GPA compare to those of enrolled students?

GRADUATION AND RETENTION RATES

Do most students return after their freshman year? Do most students graduate on time?

MAJOR

Does the college offer a wide variety of majors? Does it offer the major(s) that interest you?

INSTITUTIONAL OFFERINGS

RESOURCES

What does the college provide in terms of the latest technology, lab facilities, and libraries? What is the faculty/student ratio?

CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES

What campus support services are available? Use the [Discover Campus Support Services](#) guide to learn about:

- First Year Supports
- Academic Supports and Advising
- Counseling Services
- Financial Aid
- Residential Life

PERSONAL PREFERENCES

CAMPUS SIZE

How many students are at this school? Do you want a small or a big college?

CAMPUS LOCATION

Is the campus in a rural, suburban, or urban setting?

CAMPUS LIFE

What student activities are available at the college? Do you want to live on campus?

AFFORDABILITY

ACTUAL COSTS

How much would you pay to go to the school? See the [My SCOOP Sheet](#) for examples of how the price paid might be lower than the sticker price.

FINANCIAL AID

The average full-time college student in 2015–2016 received

- \$14,460 to pay for college.
- \$8,390 of this came from grants.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Are there state-specific scholarships available? Check out the [Scholarships and Grants List](#) for some examples.



TARGET FOUR OR MORE COLLEGES

1 or more SAFETY

Colleges that will almost certainly admit you

2 or more MATCH

Colleges that are likely to admit you

1 or more STRETCH

Colleges that will consider you and might admit you

Applying to 2 four-year colleges instead of just 1 increases your chance of enrolling by

40%

Applying to more than 2 four-year colleges increases your chances even more

The College Board. (2017). Trends in Student Aid, <https://trends.collegeboard.org/student-aid/highlights>.

Smith, J. (2013). The effect of college applications on enrollment. *The B.E. Journal of Economic Analysis & Policy*, 14(1), 151-188.