

College Search Night 2011

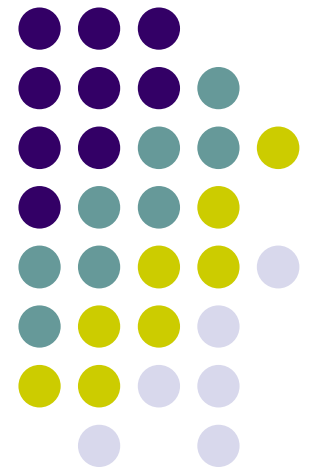
Finding the colleges that are RIGHT for you!

“College is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.”

~Frank Sachs,

(former President, National Association for College Admissions Counseling)

Presented by Marianne Scott and Kerstyn Battenberg



Fact vs. Fiction In Finding the Right College



The only college worth attending is an Ivy League, Top Ten, or Upper Tier school.

There are over 3700 colleges nationwide with 100 - 200 being “top-tier” schools. Hundreds of colleges provide outstanding opportunities for students.

Only stellar students go to good colleges

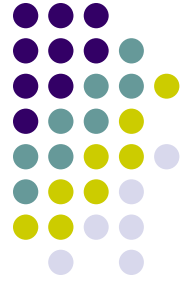
The vast majority of the more than 4,000 colleges and universities in the U.S. admit over 80% that apply. The B student with average SAT or ACT scores can be admitted to thousands of good schools.

A degree from a “name” college is the only way to get ahead in life.

Employers want the best person they can find, regardless of the school name on the diploma. A strong GPA, good recommendations and people skills are the most important factors for employment after college.

Fact vs. Fiction

In Finding the Right College



The best colleges are the most selective ones.

Selectivity does NOT equal quality. “Best” is a selective term.

You have to be rich to go to college these days.

Many schools provide high-quality academic experience at a reasonable price, and there are many types of financial aid available. Even at expensive private colleges, students rarely pay the full “sticker price”.

Step 1 - The Soul Search:

Find out who you are and what you need.



Who am I?

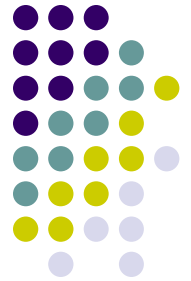
- What do I like to do? What don't I like to do?
- What subjects are my favorites? What totally bore me?
- What are my strengths, talents, skills?
- What are my weaknesses or fears?
- What are my hopes, dreams, or goals?
- Why am I going to college?

What do I want?

- Do I want to be in the city, a suburban, or a rural environment?
- Do I want to stick close to home or attend college far away?
- Do I want a small, mid-sized or large campus?

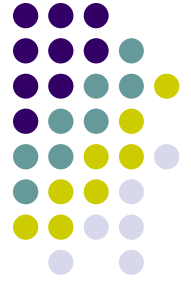
Step 1 - The Soul Search:

Find out who you are and what you need



- **What do I need from a college experience?**
 - Do I have a major, a minor or a career in mind?
 - Am I better in larger classes with smaller study sessions or smaller classes with classroom discussion with the professor? - Are athletics, internships or Greek life important to me?
 - Do I know how much money my parents plan to provide for my college education?
 - Do I need to look for financial aid?
 - Will I need to work in college?
 - Do I need a competitive academic environment or a non-competitive one?
 - Do I need support from a counseling center or a learning center?
 - Will I need to be able to pursue my interest in music, theater, drama, dance or art?

Step 2 – College Search Resources: Where do I look?



Internet

- Naviance Family Connection: <http://connection.naviance.com/cdmhs>
- CdMHS website: www.cdmcollegecorner.com
- Independent Educational Consultants Association: www.IECAonline.com
- College Board: wwwCollegeBoard.com
- Cappex – “The College Search Made Simple” - www.Cappex.com
- UniGo: www.unigo.com

Guide Books

- College Handbook - CollegeBoard
- Fiske Guide to Colleges
- The Best 373 Colleges - Princeton Review
- The Insider’s Guide to the Colleges – Yale Daily News
- The Hidden Ivies – Howard Greene
- The College Finder – Steven Antonoff

Step 3 – College Options: What type of college is right for me?

The pros and cons are general in nature.



Large State Research Universities

(UCLA, UA, UO, CU Boulder)

Pro – Name recognition, diversity, many majors/courses, top athletics

Con – Impersonal, large classes, teaching assistants, limited advising

Regional State Universities

(CSUF, ASU, OSU, SDSU, CSULB)

Pro – Same as above, more focus on undergrads, practical learning

Con – Same as above, less diversity, can be commuter or “suitcase”

Community Colleges (OCC, IVC)

Pro – Inexpensive, close to home, chance to start over, transfer options

Con – Close to home, non residential, older students, no campus life

Step 3 – College Options: What type of college is right for me?



Military, Technical, Art Schools (West Point, Embry-Riddle, Julliard)

Pro – Reputation, clear goals/talents, career/internship opportunities

Con – No liberal arts core, one area focus, limited social life.

Comprehensive Private Universities (USC, Stanford)

Pro – Medium sized, focus on undergrad, active student life, diverse

Con – Expensive, highly selective, can be large and impersonal

Private/Liberal Arts Colleges (Pomona, Occidental)

Pro – Small classes, accessible professors, friends and activities

Con – Expensive, not as diverse or known academically or athletically

Step 3 – College Options: What type of college is right for me?



Ivy League (Harvard, Princeton, Yale...)

Pro – Prestige, strong faculty, great facilities/resources, job placement

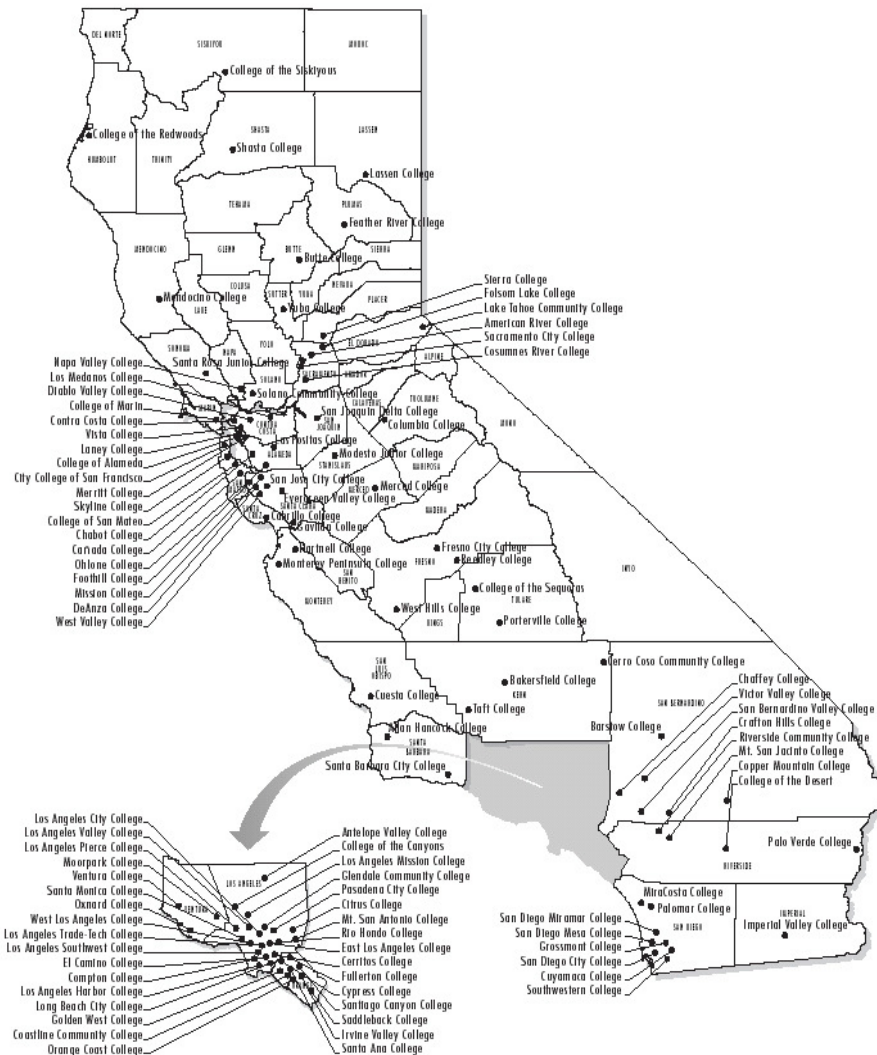
Con – Very expensive, distance from home, extreme weather, competitive

Christian/Catholic Colleges (Vanguard Azusa Pacific, LMU, USD)

Pro – Values based education, friendly, fun-loving, community service

Con – Small and not well known, not as diverse, faculty without doctorates

California Community Colleges



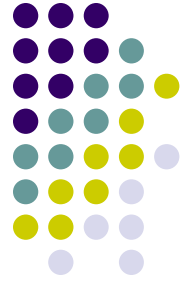
<http://www.californiacolleges.edu/explore-colleges/map-of-ccc-campus-locations.asp>

California State University Campuses



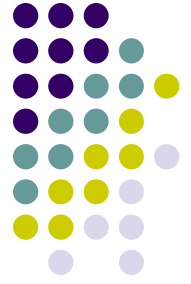
http://www.calstate.edu/datastore/campus_map.shtml

University of California Campuses



<http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/campuses/welcome.html>

Step 4 - Getting Accepted: What are colleges looking for from me?



- 1) **Rigor of courses** – while grades are important, colleges want to know that a student is willing to challenge oneself
- 2) **Grades** – strong effort and upward trend. Colleges want to know who will be arriving on campus, not who the student was four years ago.
- 3) **Test scores** – Solid scores consistent with academic achievement
- 4) **Passionate and consistent** involvement in extra-curricular activities – “Depth, not breadth”
- 5) **Meaningful letters of recommendation** – provides insight on student’s integrity, special skills, positive character traits and interest in learning

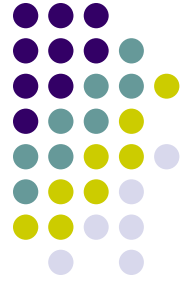
Step 4 - Getting Accepted: What are colleges looking for from me?



- 6) **Essay** – It must be well written and unique to student – written in the student’s voice and exhibits student’s personality, values and goals
- 7) **Special talents/experiences** – These help demonstrate that a student is well rounded and interesting.
- 8) **Demonstrated leadership in activities** – The activity itself can look very different. Leadership can show up in many forms (i.e. coaching youth sports, on campus, church, etc). Colleges want to know what you will ADD to their community
- 9) **Demonstrated intellectual curiosity** – What have you done above and beyond your classes?
- 10) **Demonstrated enthusiasm to attend** – Did you visit prior to applying?

http://www.iecaonline.com/PDF/IECA_CollegeTopTenList.pdf

Step 5 – Comparing Colleges



How are colleges similar and different?

Some things to consider:

- Expenses
- Location
- Size
- Admission Requirements
- Student Body
- Housing
- Financial Aid
- Social Environment
- Personal Opinion

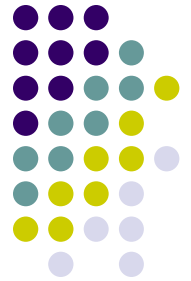
Step 5 – Comparing Colleges



Resources for finding the right academic match:

- Naviance Family Connection – search by GPA and test score data of previous CdM seniors
- College GPA averages
- College test score averages
- College percentage accepted – the more selective the college, the lower the percentage will be
- Visit college classes – feel the academic environment
- Honors Programs – provide extra rigor and resources
- Learning Centers – provide extra academic support
- Community Colleges – do not use GPA or test scores for admission

Step 5 – Comparing Colleges



College Rankings (U.S. News and World Report): Helpful or Hurtful?

- Can help build an initial list to research.
- Colleges on a magazine ranking list are not always good matches for you.
- Don't confuse rankings and/or selectivity with quality. They often have little in common.
- Don't take the rankings too seriously.
- Pick the colleges that are number one or rank high with YOU.

Step 6 – Visiting Colleges

How to Navigate your College Visit



Use your vacations:

- President's Recess and Spring Recess are great times to be on campus, to see the campus in action. Colleges usually have spring break in March.
- Weekends and Summer Recess are good also, but the campus may not be in full operation and you may not see many students.

Before you go:

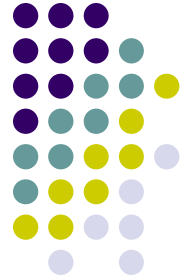
- Use the college website or call the admissions office in advance. Some need reservations for the information sessions and campus tours.
- Research the school ahead of time in order to brainstorm questions to ask.

On campus:

- Talk to current students – ask them what you **REALLY** want to know!
- Absorb the atmosphere (classrooms, library, dorms, student union, rec center, student newspaper, kiosks, etc.)
- Look around without Mom and Dad – do **YOU** like it here? Can you picture yourself in this environment?

Step 6 – Visiting Colleges

How to Navigate your College Visit



Get the information that you need:

ASK STUDENTS:

- Why did you choose this college?
- How easy is it to get classes or change majors?
- Are professors accessible to students?
- What are the weekends like?
- What do you like most about this school? Least?

ASK YOURSELF:

- Do the students seem happy and involved?
- Do the students seem friendly and would I fit in? Do I see someone like myself?
- What does the academic environment feel like? Does it seem competitive or collaborative?
- Do I want to leave or do I wish I could stay on this campus longer? Does it feel right to me?

ASK IN AN INTERVIEW:

- Is it possible to double major or have a minor?
- What type of advising is available?
- Are jobs available on campus?
- What are recent graduates doing in the work force?

Check out cappex.com for College Visit Checklist: <http://www.cappex.com/media/collegeVisitChecklist.pdf>

Step 7 – Making Decisions



How do I make a final list of college matches?

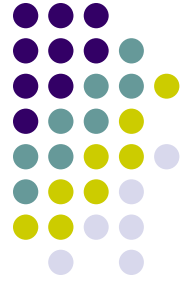
“Where will I be happy, successful and graduate?”

Long Shot Colleges (2-3): You would love to attend these schools but they may not accept you. You may be close or below the average accepted GPA and test score averages.

Solid Pick Colleges (3-4): You like these schools, want to attend them and are fairly confident they will accept you. Your GPA and test scores match or are above their accepted averages.

Sure Bet Colleges (2-3): These are very good schools for you as far as admission. Your GPA and/or test scores are above their accepted averages. You select these schools because **you like them and would be happy to attend if they accept you.**

Success in the College Search



Fun facts from UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute about Today's College Freshman

- 79% were accepted to their first choice college
- 60.5% are attending their first choice school
- 52% attend college within 100 miles of their home
- 48% had a A+, A, or A- grade point average in high school
- 4% had a C or C+ grade point average in high school
- 83% of today's freshmen said their desire to attend college was to get a better job

There is a school for anyone that wants to attend college! With an open mind and willing thought, we can find it together.

College Search Night 2011



Thank you for attending tonight's session...

*and thank you for supporting the **CdM Foundation!***

www.cdmfoundation.com