#IApplied: Building Your College List

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ACT’s Center for Equity in Learning
myOptions

MOBILE-FIRST COLLEGE PLANNING FOR GEN Z

College Discovery & Match

College Planning Checklist

Scholarship Opportunities

Ability to update FAFSA Status

Advice

Mentors
Engage with Your School Counselor

• In person or virtual advising session(s)
• Small group advising session(s)
• “Nudges” via text, apps or other platform
• School’s website
• Online “share” space to organize information
Consider the Options

- Four Year
- Two Year
- Technical College
- Apprenticeship Program
- Certificate Program
Life Cycle of Building a College List

9th/10th Grade
- Initial List

11th Grade
- Balanced List

12th Grade Early Fall
- Match and Fit List
- Final List
How to Start the College Search Process

College Search is a Journey
Consider the “life cycle” in building a balanced college list.
• It takes time. Build a calendar.
• Self-exploration & self-reflection
• Team beats individual…Don’t do this alone!

Know Your Numbers
Students need to use data and information in building a college match list.
• GPA, Rank, and Test scores
• Strength of high school course load
• Research college admissions requirements
How to Start & Finalize College Search Process

Grades 9 & 10
- GPA is based on your grades
- Class Rank is based on your GPA
- Strength of course load

Grades 11 & 12
- Academic data
- Maintain or increase GPA
- Academic achievements
How do co-curriculars, community service, and part-time jobs help shape college lists?

- Self-Exploration
- Build Relationships
- Exposure & Visibility
Research: What to consider

**Match**
- GPA
- College entrance test scores
- Courses taken

**Fit**
- Culture and social environment
- Student supports and services
- Size, location, majors offered, etc

**Cost**
- “Sticker” price
- “Net” price
- Net price calculator
College Match

Know Your Numbers
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College Student Profile
Compare your numbers to different college’s student profiles.
• Google “admitted student profile” with the college name
• School admission selectivity: percentage of student applicants admitted
College Fit

Values and Priorities
• Is this school ready for me?
• Does it have what I want?
• Does it have what I need?

Importance of
How important are each of these factors
• Close to home?
• In state or out of state?
• Size of school
• Diversity of the student body
• Religious affiliation
College Cost

Determining “net” price

- Net Price Calculator
  https://collegecost.ed.gov/

- Tuition
- Room and board
- Supplies
- MINUS
  - Scholarships
  - Financial aid
College Match

**Likely**
- Open enrollment
- Considered “less selective”
- Academic record exceeds institution’s requirements
- 1 application to likely school

**Target**
- Academic record similar to “average” student admitted
- Expected to be admitted
- 2 applications to target schools

**Reach**
- Not out of reach
- More selective
- 1-2 applications to reach schools
College Research Worksheet

Student Resources

• Visit college websites
• Follow colleges on social media
Tools for Students

• College Research Worksheet
• Cost of Attendance Comparison –
  • Net Price Calculator https://collegecost.ed.gov/
• ACAC College Match & Fit Toolkit
• myOptions.org https://myoptions.org/student-advice/
• ACT Apply to College resources: https://www.act.org/content/act/en/students-and-parents/college-planning-resources/applying-to-college.html
American College Application Campaign
College Match and Fit Toolkit

Register for myOptions®

In preparation for the college application process, please complete this registration to help build your list of colleges. You will be asked about your background, college preferences, and goals to create your free myOptions profile. Your profile provides you with:

- College and scholarship matches
- A customized college planning checklist
- College and career planning advice

Once you complete registration (takes about 10 minutes), check your email to access myOptions. We also encourage you to connect with your high school counselor, college adviser, or other mentors through myOptions so they can help support you through finalizing your college list, college applications, and your FAFSA.

Find your high school

[Input field to enter your high school name]

[Button to get started]
Video: How to Narrow and Balance Your College List
QUESTIONS?
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