College Research Worksheet

Prior to submitting a college application, you need to research the various college options you have available. During your research, there are three important things for you to consider: fit, match, and cost. This worksheet will help you think through each of them.

Does the college **fit** with your preferences? There are several factors to consider in regard to fit such as the size of the school, the location of the school, and services available on campus. Also, it is important to consider the college’s graduation rates and retention rates (the number of students who return to school for their second year) when researching what a college has to offer you. Finally, does the school offer your major? If you’re not sure what you’d like to major in, visit Nevada Career Information System at [nvcis.intocareers.org](http://www.nvcis.intocareers.org) to explore and learn more about careers and majors that align with your interests and talents.

Does the college **match** with your academic record? For this, you’ll need to understand how your high school grade point average (GPA), your college entrance exam scores (SAT and/or ACT), and the courses you’ve taken in high school match the college’s entrance requirements AND the average GPAs and scores of students admitted. Keep in mind that what a school requires could be different from the averages of who they admit. You should plan to apply to multiple schools and should include at least one of each of the following types of schools:

* Reach School – this does not mean out of reach, it just means that the school may be more selective (look at the percent of applicants admitted) and your academic record may be on the lower end of what the college typically accepts. In other words, you *may* be admitted to this school
* Match School – typically, at a match school, your academic record will be similar to the “average” student admitted to this school. In other words, you are *likely* to be admitted.
* Safety School – a safety school will usually have either open enrollment (meaning anyone who submits a completed application is admitted) or will be considered a “less selective” institution. Your academic record will exceed the institution’s requirements and averages for students admitted. In other words, you will almost *definitely* be admitted.

Finally, it is important for you to understand the **cost** of the institutions to which you would like to apply. Keep in mind that the “sticker” price of a college may be very different from the “net” price of a college after you consider the amount of aid that is typically available to students.

Use the worksheet below to think through what type of college you would like to attend. The worksheet will also ask you to detail your academic record by providing information on the various academic indicators that many colleges consider during the application review process. If you’re unsure of any of the information requested, be sure to work with your school counselor so you have the most accurate information possible.

After the worksheet you will find a table that you can complete with information specific to the colleges you are researching. Remember, you should plan to apply to at least one reach, one match, and one safety college. Visit [CollegeCost.ed.gov](http://www.collegecost.ed.gov) to conduct your research.

Use the completed tables to help you identify what colleges you would like to apply to!

**Identifying Your College Fit**

**LOCATION**

**Where would your ideal college be located (circle one)?**

In-state Out-of-state Either

**How important is location to you (circle one)?**

Very Important Important Not Important

**TYPE OF SCHOOL**

**In what kind of setting would your ideal college be (circle one)?**

Rural Suburban Urban

**How important is setting to you (circle one)?**

Very Important Important Not Important

**How big would your ideal college be (circle one)?**

Large Medium Small

**How important is size to you (circle one)?**

Very Important Important Not Important

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

**What services would be available on your ideal campus (circle all that apply)?**

Tutoring Employment Services

Career Counseling Academic Support Services

Minority Student Services Disability Services

**What other things are important to you at your ideal college?** Things to consider are what you want to major in; whether the campus is co-ed or single gender; the diversity of the campus; whether students live on-campus or if a majority of students are commuters; etc. Use the space below to identify any other characteristics your ideal college would have.

**Your Academic Record**

If you don’t know some of this information, check with your school counselor!

My grade point average is: \_\_\_\_\_\_ By graduation, how many years of the following

classes will you have taken?

My SAT Reading score is: \_\_\_\_\_\_ English \_\_\_\_\_\_ Science \_\_\_\_\_\_

My SAT Math score is: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Math \_\_\_\_\_\_ Art \_\_\_\_\_\_

My SAT Writing score is: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Social Studies\_\_\_\_\_ History \_\_\_\_\_\_

My ACT Composite score is: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Foreign Language \_\_\_\_\_ Electives \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Go to [CollegeCost.ed.gov](http://www.collegecost.ed.gov). There, you can search for colleges that “fit” and “match” the information you completed on the previous page. Be sure you keep in mind what characteristics are important to you in regard to fit! Or, search for a specific college to which you think you would like to apply to learn more about them. **For each college**, complete this table to determine if the college is a good fit and match for you and whether the costs seem reasonable based on your anticipated resources.

**Name of College**: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**FIT**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Location of college (City, State) |  | 4-year or 2-year? |  |
| Size of college |  | Public or Private? |  |
| Number of undergraduate students |  | Co-ed? Women only? Men only? |  |
| Setting of college |  | Students live on campus or commute? |  |
| Do they offer my major? | Yes No | Diversity of campus |  |
| Percent of students that return sophomore year |  | Graduation Rate |  |
| What services are available on campus that are important to me? | |  | |

How well do you think this college **fits** your preferences? Excellent Fit Good Fit Okay Fit Somewhat of a Fit Does not Fit

**MATCH**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How selective is this college? |  | Have I taken the required high school courses? | Yes No |
| Percent of applicants admitted? | % | Percent of students with my SAT score | % |
| Percent of students with my GPA | % | Percent of students with my ACT score | % |

Comparing my academic record to this college, this would be a **Reach, Match, or Safety** college for me (see definitions above)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**COST**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Total estimated cost to attend | $ | Percent of need met | % |
| My calculated net price | $ | Percent of need met through scholarships/grants | % |
| Percent of freshmen with need who received aid | % | Percent of need met through loans | % |

**I plan to apply to this college:** Yes No **If Yes, Application Deadline:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_