

## **Selection Process: Things to Consider When Selecting a College or Trade/Technical School**

This very important decision needs some serious consideration. Talk about your decision with your family, school counselor, or other people you know very well. Knowing who you are and what you want out of life is crucial in making major decisions. Keep things in perspective. Consider the idea that doing well “wherever you go to school” is as important as “where you go.”

<b>Location</b>	Where do you want to go to school...in a city, near a city, or far from a city? Do you want to be close to home, far from home, or somewhere in between? Don't make the decision based on “getting away from here” → Consider the advantages and disadvantages of all possibilities
<b>Size</b>	Small (under 2,500) → where you are known or recognized by most people Large (over 10,000) → where you are recognized only within certain groups  The number of students affects class size, diversity, access to clubs/organizations, athletics, faculty, etc.
<b>Cost</b>	Involve your family in this decision. Consider what your family is willing and able to spend on your education. State-supported schools are generally less expensive for “in-state” residents and private schools offer financial aid scholarships for qualified applicants. College Financial Aid Offices will assist families with financial aid planning information. You can also ask your school counselor for additional resources.
<b>Programs of Study</b>	If you know what you plan to study, make sure the college you are interested in offers a program that matches your interests. Consider the possibility of changing your major...does the school have other programs that match secondary interests. Ask about the ease of changing your major or discuss the advantages and disadvantages of applying with an “undeclared” major.
<b>Admissions Profile</b>	Investigate what factors are considered in the admissions process and take a realistic view of how you compare to students who have been accepted to the particular college in the past. Your investigation should also indicate how competitive the academic atmosphere of the college will be. Realize that often the more selective colleges have a more academically competitive atmosphere.
<b>Student Activities</b>	Much of your time will NOT be spent in a classroom. Find out which clubs and activities are available. Experiences outside the classroom can provide valuable social, recreational, and career opportunities.
<b>Residential Life</b>	This will be your “home away from home” and living arrangements can affect your entire college experience. There are a variety of possible housing situations. Become familiar with the many options. Look for the one that best suits you. Find a college that can accommodate your needs.
<b>Support Services</b>	What kind of support is available if I need help with my studies? What kinds of programs are available to assist you with any problems that you might encounter? Consider academic difficulties, job placement, career counseling, changing majors, and physical/mental health services.
<b>Quality of Academic Programs</b>	What will I have when I graduate from college? Inquire about specialized accreditations, opportunities for professional experiences, percentage of graduates going on to graduate schools and the success of graduates finding employment in their chosen field of study.
<b>Faculty</b>	How accessible are the professors, What is the average class size? Who teaches the classes...graduate students, adjunct faculty, or full-time professors? What percent of classes have fewer than 20 students? Will I have an advisor? How accessible is that advisor when I have questions?

**The most important factor in determining your college is understanding yourself and your priorities!**