



SCHEDULE A CHAT

EMAIL



HOW TO BUILD A COLLEGE LIST

A Guide to Researching Colleges
that ensures your student is on the
path to get it right!

Creating a good list is not merely matching grades and scores because the college experience is much more than just academics! Students want to thrive inside and outside of the classroom, in classes that interest them, activities that engage them and with people they enjoy being around. This guide will provide students with a great place to start the list building process.

Pre List Building Activity: *Getting to Know Yourself*

The first step in building a college list is for students to think about themselves. They need to know what inspires them, what interests them. It is not uncommon for this to be new for students. College is all about choices and there are so many to make. When I work with students, I help them reflect on who they are, what they like and dislike, what makes them tick. Here are some resources that can help students think about themselves:

mynextmove.org

|

16personalities.com

|

youscience.com

Pre List Building Activity: *What Do You Want In A College*

After students have thought about their interests, likes, and dislikes, they need to think about what they want and do not want in college.

There are over 4,500 colleges and universities in the United States alone, each of them a little bit unique. The idea is to find the colleges that are a good **fit** for them.

A fantastic resource to help students in this exploration is from Dr. Steven Antonoff, **"Qualities that Make a College Right for You."**

When I work with students, I use questionnaires, card games, and conversations to help them find colleges whose characteristics align with their values, interests, and priorities.

Your Preliminary List: *Let's Do the Research!*

Now that students have thought about who they are and what they want in a college, they need to put together a list of colleges and take a deep dive into researching them, examining academics, campus life, and financial affordability.

As students research, they need to be a little bit like Goldilocks and look for colleges that are "just right." If they absolutely cannot imagine themselves at a particular college – for whatever reason – students should cross it off their list. BUT, note the reason!

When I work with students we come up with a list of 10-12 colleges that are a good fit for them, a list of colleges they are excited to attend next year.



Step 1

Get an Overview of the College

Start on the college website to get basic information.

Pay attention to size (number of students), location, setting, diversity, standout characteristics, vision and priorities of the college, and basic admissions data. If this is a large(r) university, how is it organized- are there smaller "colleges" or "divisions" within the larger university?

Other great resources for researching colleges

The Fiske Guide

| BigFuture.collegeboard.com

| CollegeExpress.com

Step 2

Research Your Academic Interests

Pay attention to the college's academic requirements.

Is there a Core Curriculum? Is there an Open Curriculum? What are the General Education or distribution requirements?

Students can go to the web pages for the academic majors that interest them. Check out the professors – their research interests and classes they teach. Do the professor's interests match their areas of interest?

Consider other aspects of the academic experience: Is there an honors track within the major? Can students do research in the major?

Can students study abroad? Are their internships related to their academic interests? What is the academic advising model? Are there student support services, such as a writing center and peer tutors?



Step 3

Research Campus Life

Look at the student organizations, residential halls, dining facilities, and other campus facilities.

Are there clubs and activities that interest the student? Are the dorms nice? What sorts of housing options are there?

What are the dining facilities and meal plans?

Check out **Niche.com** for a review of how good the college food is.

Keep in mind that college is more than just academics. Students need to be able to **imagine** themselves on that campus. There are many colleges and universities with excellent English departments or pre-med programs - the key is to find colleges that combine a student's academic and non-academic preferences.



Step 4

Beyond the College Website

In addition to college websites, here are some other resources that provide information about colleges:

Campusreel.org

Campustours.com

Collegescoops.com

Unigo.com

YouVisit.com

YoUniversitytv.com

Students can also check out Yelp to learn about restaurants and coffee shops in town . . . or to make sure there is a place to get their favorite type of cuisine.

Step 5

Can I Get In?

Applying to college is not a linear process, where a student can input certain variables and get a result. In fact, one of the only predictable things about college admissions is that it is unpredictable. For this reason, students need to create a balanced list that has a mix of colleges with a high probability of admission, a medium probability of admission, and a low probability of admission - and they need to make sure that they would be happy at **every** college on their list. To give students and families a general idea of where a college falls on this spectrum, here are a few resources.

Naviance Scattergram
(if your high school uses Naviance)

Collegedata.com

Collegesimply.com

**Moody's Quick and
Dirty Chances List**



Step 6

Can I Afford It?

In addition to academic and non-academic fit, colleges must also be a financial fit. To determine affordability, families need to look beyond the "Cost of Attendance." Families can get a rough idea of what colleges will expect them to pay by using the Net Price Calculator on the college's website (all colleges are required to have them).

Keep Notes!

As students research, they should remember to take notes. It can get very confusing when exploring many colleges.

Contact me for guidance on navigating the admissions process. I work with a maximum of 15 students per admission cycle to ensure they get the personalized attention they deserve.



MEET KATE

Experienced admissions evaluator, teacher, legal trainer, and mother giving you the specific wisdom you need for your unique journey.

I am a graduate of Princeton University and the Columbia University School of Law. Prior to launching KS College Success, I worked in the Princeton University Admissions Office where I read thousands of undergraduate applications.

My expertise includes evaluating students' strengths, matching students to best fit colleges, essay coaching, and ensuring a dynamic application that will stand out from others. I am focused on an intentional approach to college admissions and able to provide comprehensive guidance or targeted support to help students on their journey to college admissions success.

**SCHEDULE A CHAT TO SEE HOW I
CAN HELP YOUR STUDENT**

SCHEDULE A CHAT

EMAIL

KIND WORDS

"What I love about Kate is that she is charismatic, fun, inspirational, and very insightful. Even though I am done with college applications, I still use many of the skills that she taught me."



COLLEGE SUCCESS

Applying Wisely, Building Confidence, Getting It Right.

www.kscollegesuccess.com