

THE ROAD AHEAD: COLLEGE SEARCH AND SELECTION



Angie Fernandez '90, P'22, P'23, P'25

Executive Director for Student Engagement, Retention and Persistence

Dickinson College

Carlisle, PA

fernand2@dickinson.edu

ASK YOURSELF

What classes do I
enjoy *and why*?

What about my
school do I like
and what don't I
like?

How do I learn
best?

What am I
passionate about?

What do I/you see
as my strengths?

How do I spend
my free time?

Who has helped
me to be
successful?

What are some
new things I could
try to challenge
myself?

TAKE THE
ANSWERS AND
CREATE A
PLAN

Classes

Clubs

Athletics

Work

Internships

Free time

NOW ASK YOURSELF

What might I want to study?

Do I want a college with small or large classes?

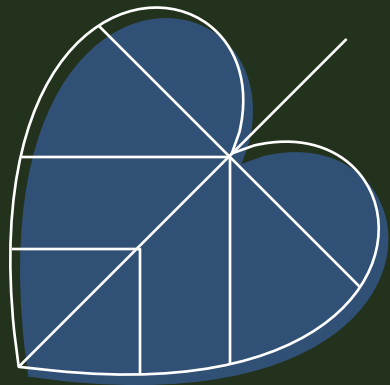
Do I want research opportunities?

Are there support services I'll need?

Do I want to be near or far from home?

What kind of area do I want to be in?

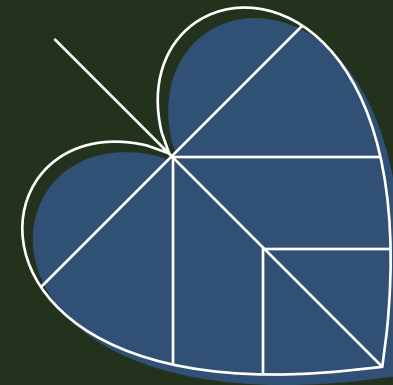
Are there financial factors that will impact my options?



IT'S A PROCESS



Return to these questions frequently,
on your own and with others.



RESEARCH

TOOLS
THROUGH
YOUR SCHOOL

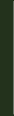
BIG FUTURE

COLLEGE FAIRS

WEB SITES

STANDARDIZED
TESTING >
MAILING LISTS

CREATING COLLEGE LISTS





Sign In 

Search 

Explore Careers Plan for College Pay for College Resources & Programs My BigFuture 

[College Search](#)

 Search by college name

 Saved Colleges (0)

Explore Colleges

Use the filters to narrow your search to schools that are a good fit for you.

Majors

Location

Type

Affordability

Campus Life

Credit

Admissions

Reach, Match, Safety

Degrees

Common App Members



Get matched with colleges

Get a list of colleges that match your interest with our personalized college quiz.

Match me



COLLEGE Navigator

English [Español](#) [About](#)

Name of School

Type name of school here

States (use map for more than 1 state)

No Preference

Alabama

Alaska

Use Map



ZIP Code

Miles from ▾

Programs/Majors

0 Items Selected



Browse for
Programs

Level of Award ?

☐ Certificate

☐ Associate's

☐ Bachelor's

☐ Advanced

Institution Type ?

☐ Public

☐ 4-year

☐ Private non-profit

☐ 2-year

☐ Private for-profit

☐ < 2-year

+ MORE SEARCH OPTIONS



Show Results



[Guide Me](#) | [Clear Search](#)

Find the right college for you



Guide Me

- » Refine your search with *More Search Options* to select additional search criteria.
- » Build a list of schools using *My Favorites* for side-by-side comparisons.
- » Pinpoint school locations with an *interactive map*.
- » Export search results into a *spreadsheet*.
- » Save your session including search options and favorites.
- » [Add College Navigator](#) to your browser search bar.

[College Affordability and Transparency Center](#)



Browse lists of institutions with the highest and lowest tuition & fees and net price, and lists of institutions not meeting the 90/10 revenue requirement. [» GO](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Preparing for your Education

Find out what you need to do to prepare for education beyond high school. [» GO](#)

Financial Aid

Apply for Federal Student Aid on FAFSA. [» GO](#)

Postsecondary Education Outcome Measures: ED, DOD, and VA

ED, DOD, and VA have identified a set of potential education outcome measures for Veterans and service members. [» GO](#)

Careers

Deciding on a career? Consult the *b/s.gov*

TRY SOME "TEST" VISITS

With a sense for the types of colleges and universities that seem to fit YOU and what you want and need, visit nearby places that fit that "type" or do virtual visits at the schools that look like strong possibilities.



FORMING YOUR LIST

Now it's time to bring together those most-important-to-you factors, the schools your research shows would be good matches and the ways your "test" visits have confirmed or reshaped what you're looking for...

and lay that up against what you know of schools' selectivity and institutional priorities.



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SELECTIVITY

Understanding selectivity means understanding the likelihood of your admission, though admission is never guaranteed so you'll want to have a couple of schools in each category. Acceptance rates and the grades and/or standardized test scores for admitted students will give you a sense of a college's selectivity.

If you are looking, for example, at the mid-50% range of credentials for a particular college's admitted students and your credentials match the bottom of that range (the 25th percentile) this might be a **REACH** school for you, whereas a **MATCH** school is one where your credentials match the middle of that range and a **SAFETY** school will be one where your credentials match the top of that range (the 75th percentile).

FACTORING IN COST WITH YOUR REACH – MATCH – SAFETY LISTS

If the cost of college is a major factor for you, be sure to also have on your list both schools that would be financially feasible without significant aid or scholarships and those that would be good options for you IF they come through with substantial aid and scholarships. This keeps your options open, since you won't know what financial aid or scholarships might be possible until you apply!





INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

It's also important to consider a particular college's priorities in understanding the likelihood that you'll be admitted. If that college has just built a new performing arts center and you're a talented artist, you may have a greater likelihood of being admitted. If athletics are important to a college and your connections with a coach suggest you'd be a valuable member of the team, that could make a difference. If your passion for robotics aligns with very strong or growing academic programs and research on the campus, you may be a more likely admit. If the school seeks students from in-state or from a wider geographic area, where you come from could be a factor.

FINALIZING YOUR LIST



DRAWING ON THE SELF-REFLECTION THAT
HELPED YOU TO IDENTIFY THE TYPE OF
SCHOOL YOU WANT AND NEED



CONSIDERING THE SELECTIVITY AND
INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES OF THE
COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU WANT TO APPLY

LEARNING MORE AND DEMONSTRATING INTEREST



Your college research is, first and foremost, about gathering what you need to make good choices. But, along the way, as you sign up to receive information, attend sessions, visit and communicate with faculty, staff or coaches, you're also demonstrating your interest in the college. The people you meet along the way will remember you. Colleges may also be keeping track of how much you engage with them and, when tough decisions are being made, the student who has demonstrated greater interest may very well be the one the college chooses to admit.

PRESENTING YOURSELF TO COLLEGES



Begin thinking about the things you'll want to highlight in your application to demonstrate why the colleges you're interested in should also be interested in you.

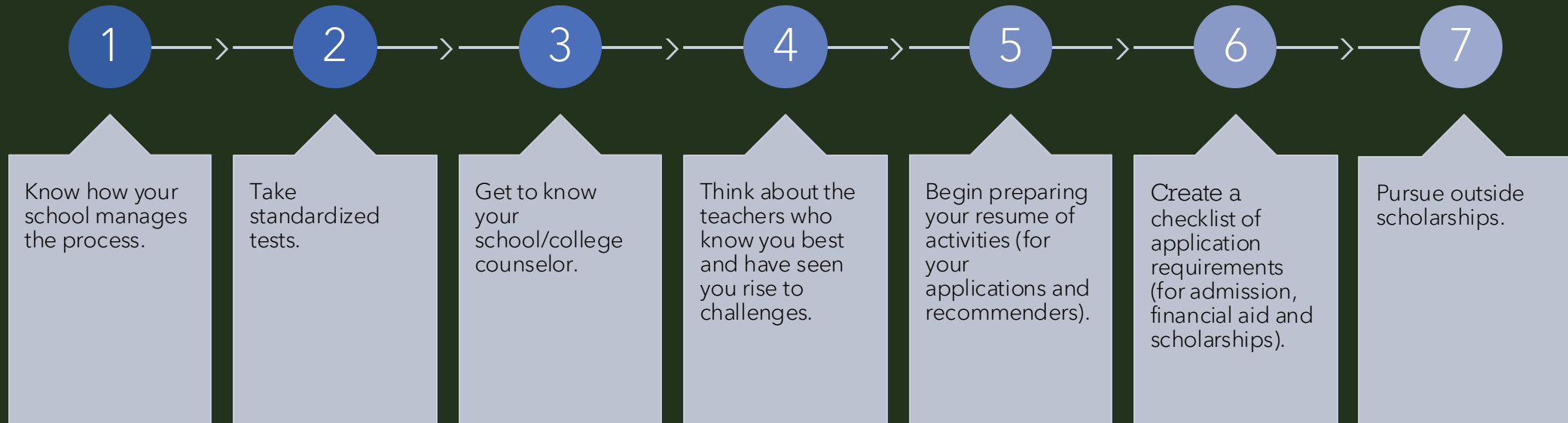


Reach out to your contacts at those colleges and take advantage of their visits to your high school or participation in a college fair. Help them to get to know you beyond what you'll say in your application (and remember that demonstrating your interest matters).



And create an email address for your college search that you'll be proud of!

PREPARING TO APPLY



QUESTIONS? |

