



Summary of “Finding the College that’s the Right Fit for You” U.S. News & World Report – posted August 21, 2008

Start With You

Consider these questions: What are your values and goals? What’s your learning style? Which classes do you enjoy or hate? What makes you happy? Talk to your guidance counselor, favorite teacher and parents about your interests and skills. Find out what you’re truly interested in learning/doing.

Do Your Homework

Don’t equate name recognition with quality or fit for you personally. Look at several options – in/out of state, regional, national and schools you’ve never heard of before. Look over school websites including department sites, faculty pages and sites related to your personal interests/values. Utilize opportunities to meet with admission reps who visit Edgewood during the school day (posted online or at Student Services).

Size up Schools

While there is some truth to the stereotypes about big universities and small colleges, there are many exceptions. Small schools can provide a wealth of connections and accessible opportunities, and large schools that are run well can provide an intimate atmosphere within individual colleges/departments. Find professionals in your field of interest and ask them where they went to school – the answers may surprise you.

Make Your Shortlist

The one and only “magical fit” school is a fairy tale. There are several schools where you can be happy and do very well. The common recommendation is to pick one or two “reach” schools, a couple of middle range schools and one or two “sure bets” or “safety schools” so you have options from which to choose. If you can’t make an easy decision, then prioritize what’s most important and make a pros/cons list. Make the decision for yourself and your education, so that you’re happy and comfortable with your choice.

Hello Campus!

Nothing beats visiting campus (or even taking a virtual tour); it’s your “test drive”. Keep a campus visit journal – jot down notes/impressions from your visit as soon as possible. Not only does this help you in the decision making process, but also can be a tool for improving your essay or interview.