

Handout AAA: College Self-Assessment

Take some time to think about your goals for your education and your life. This self-knowledge will help you decide what to look for and which questions to ask as you investigate colleges. Later on, it will help you sort out which colleges and universities have the curriculum, facilities and atmosphere that will be best for you.

Important factors to consider:

Type of College:

- **Liberal Arts College:** Generally for four year undergraduate programs where students major in a particular focus while also receiving exposure to a wide range of academic subjects, including sciences as well as the traditional humanities such as literature, philosophy, and languages.
- **University:** Consist of graduate programs and undergraduate programs where students earn degrees more focused in a chosen field.
- **Two-Year College:** Two year programs grant certificates, diplomas, and/or associate's degrees. The credits earned can potentially be transferred toward a four-year degree at a liberal arts college or university or the student can enter the workforce.

Size of School:

- **Small:** 750 to 1,999 undergraduate students
- **Medium:** 2,000 to 7,499 undergraduate students
- **Large:** 7,500 to 14,999 undergraduate students
- **Very Large:** 15,000 or more undergraduate students

Geographic Area:

- Northeast
- Midwest
- Southeast
- Southwest
- West Coast
- Other

Location:

- Rural
- Small town



- Large city

Level of Difficulty:

- Moderately difficult
- Very difficult
- Most difficult

Costs:

- Merit scholarships
- Need-based aid

Other Factors:

- Clubs, activities and sports in which you would like to participate
- Are you interested in opportunities for international study?
- Is the college's distance from your home important to you? How close or far away should it be?
- Are you looking for a particular type of climate or scenery? Do you want access to outdoor recreation?
- Is the diversity of students important to you? Would you like to attend a school with people from other parts of the United States and from other countries?
- Would you prefer a residential college where most students live on campus and take part in college activities on the weekends? Or, a commuter college where students live off campus and commute back and forth to campus?
- Is the size of the town or city where the college is located important to you?
- Do you want to attend a college with a particular religious affiliation?