

College Preferences – Questions to Think About

1. Why are you going to college?
2. As a result of your college experience, what do you hope to be able to do?
3. What activities/interests are important to you to continue in college to help maintain or find your balance?
4. What are you good at? What do you enjoy? What do you wish to do more of? What subject areas are you most comfortable studying?
5. What level of academic challenge works best for you? Do you thrive on rigorous academic exploration or do you prefer a pace that you determine? Do you thrive on large classes with smaller study groups, or do you prefer to learn with the Socratic method in smaller groups?
6. How much structure and direction do you need? To what extent do you want to determine your own courses and path to a degree? Do you appreciate being in a program that people with experience have designed?
7. Which geographic areas of the country appeal to you? How important is it to you and your family to be within driving distance or one plane flight away? Are you open to going anywhere, regardless of geography, for the right program and learning environment?
8. Do you thrive in urban environments, or do you prefer more rural settings? How close do you wish to be to a major metropolitan center? Do you spend your free time and weekends enjoying activities offered by a city environment, or do you prefer activities that get you out into a more natural setting?
9. To what extent are you looking for diversity in your community- this could include diversity of cultures, interests, backgrounds, style, activities, values? Would you find this exciting or intimidating? To what extent do you wish to challenge your viewpoints and values? Do you prefer to find a like-minded community that confirms your values?
10. How free are you to make your own college decision? To what extent will others impact your decision on where to apply and then on where to go? To what extent must you consider finances, geography, and academic programs?
11. How important is your immediate living environment? Are you willing to share a room, walk everywhere, and explore culinary options?

TIP: There are many published books on college readiness, college selection, and college preparation. Browsing these books may be helpful for self-exploration. As you go through this college selection process, both application and decision, you learn more about yourself. You may change your mind several times; reading and visiting colleges is the best way to decide what is most important to you.