

Selecting A College: What I Need to Know

How do I decide where I go to college?

Students choose a college for many reasons-someone in your family attended the same college, the college is located in a part of the country that you like, size, cost, and reputation. There are three types of colleges for you to consider:

1. Community college,
2. Two-year college,
3. Four-year college or university.

Characteristics of Three Types of Colleges

<i>Type of College</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>
<i>Community College</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers experience in a college environment while living at home • Has few admissions requirements • Provides the chance to increase academic skills through developmental or remedial classes • Is an opportunity to try out one or two college courses • Offers a chance to build a good academic record before you transfer to a four-year college • Has lower tuition and costs than a four-year college • Has services to support students with disabilities
<i>Junior College</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an opportunity to live away from home in a small, supportive environment • Has small classes in which teachers provide individualized attention • Offers classes to work on improving reading, writing, and math skills • Offers training for a variety of careers • Has services to support students with disabilities
<i>Four-Year College or University</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has services to support students with disabilities • Offers many different classes to develop talents or knowledge in one subject • Offers the chance to live away from home in a dorm or apartment and to develop independent living skills

Adapted from: Taymans, J. M., West, L., and Sullivan, M. (2000). *Unlocking potential: College and other choices for people with LD and AD/HD*. Bethesda, MD. Woodbine House.

Other considerations for selecting a college include:

- Do you want a city, suburban, or rural environment?
- Are there specific disability services and programs available to meet your needs?
- What is the college's reputation and cost?

Another option is to take continuing education or non-credit courses classes at a college or university. To take continuing education classes, you do not have to go through an application or admission process. You sign up for the course, pay the fee, and attend the class. Taking continuing education courses will provide you a chance to take courses without worrying about grades, while strengthening your study skills.

After you have decided what type of school you would like to attend and identified what accommodations, technology, and modification you will need, you will want to talk with your parents, teachers, and guidance counselor.

Where do I get more information about the college that I might want to attend?

Once you have selected five colleges that you would like to attend, you will need to get more information about each college. You can get this additional information several ways:

- Visit the guidance office at your school and look for a catalogue or book from the college that contains this information.
- Google the name of the college on the Internet and find the college's website.
- Obtain the phone number of the college's admissions office and call to have them send you a catalogue.

To keep all this information organized and in one place, keep a file box with a folder for each college, or you can set up a folder on your computer for the information. In addition to the folder, you may find it helpful to develop a fact sheet for each college so that you can record important information (see college fact form at the end of this document)

After you and your family have read the catalogues, decide if these colleges are a 'fit' for you. Together you can identify about five colleges that you may want to get more information or visit before you begin the admission process. If the colleges are close by, you and your family may want to visit the college. If you visit the school, ask the admissions office to arrange a tour of classes while they are in session. If you decide to self-disclose your disability, try to visit a class that includes a student with disabilities who uses accommodations. You also can ask if you can speak to other students with disabilities.

If you cannot visit the school, admission counselors from the colleges often visit high schools to talk with students interested in attending the school. These visits often occur from September to December. Your guidance counselor will have schedules of those visits.

College Selection Fact Form

Contact Information			
Name:	Admissions Phone Number:		
Address:	URL:		
College Characteristics (circle or fill the answer)			
Community college	# of students	Urban	Small college
2 year college	#students with disabilities	Suburban	Medium college
4 year college	classroom size	Rural	Large college
Yearly Costs (fill in)			
Tuition:	Food:	Fees:	
Dorm:		Books:	
Admission Requirements			
Standardized admission test (list type)	High school courses (list)		
Admission deadlines (date)	High school grade point		
Essay Needed Yes No	Class ranking		
Interview Needed Yes No	High school activities (list)		

College Selection Fact Form

Disability Services

Is there a Disability Support Office? Yes No

How many disabilities support counselors are available?

What is the number of students with disabilities attending college?

What type of support, accommodations and services are available? Is there an additional cost? Yes No Amount

What documentation is needed to receive disability support, accommodations and services?

Additional Questions/Information