

Student Opportunity and Access Program

California

SOAP

Serving Students Since 1979

SAN DIEGO & IMPERIAL COUNTIES

Choosing a College that is Right for You

Presented by Cal-SOAP

Information gathered/quoted from: Randall S. Hansen's "Choosing a College that's Right for You" and
www.CollegeBoard.org

Subjects to be discussed

- Why is College Important?
- How Do I Prepare a Student for College?
- When Should I Start the Conversation About College with my child?
- How Do I Select the Right College for me?

Why College Is Important

- College graduates have a higher yearly income and greater lifetime earnings.
- • According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the average income for a Bachelor's Degree holder was \$59,000 versus an income of \$26,000 for a high school graduate.
- • A Bachelor's Degree holder earns (on average) about twice as much in a lifetime as a high school graduate.

Why College is Important

- College graduates have better career options, greater chance of landing a job, and a better chance for progress in their career.
- • It is estimated that in 2028 there will be 19 million more jobs for educated workers than there are qualified people to fill them. (Source: KnowHow2Go)
- • The more education you have, the more likely it is that you will have a job. College gives you more choices in careers and more flexibility to change jobs.

Defining College

- 4-year university
- 2-year college and transfer to 4-year university
- 2-year college (Associates)
- Certificate: Vocational/Trade skills that leads to employment

Four
years at
university

OR

Two years
community
college +
two years at
university



Bachelor's
Degree

Start the Conversation About College

- Start Conversations early, experts recommend-Cradle to College
- “IF” vs. “WHEN”theory
- Teachable Moments: on-line information, college visits, campus tours, college fairs.
- Talk about your own experience
- Inquire about career dreams and professional aspirations
- Encourage your child to talk with teachers and mentors about their own academic journeys
- Start saving for college now.

Preparing for College Options?

- Know your role in the college process—student vs parents
- Understand what colleges and university look for in students
- Research early
- Do campus tours
- Create a college team

Student's Role

1. Strive for strong grades and a competitive GPA
2. Set your goals
3. Make a plan
4. Do your research
5. Stay motivated
6. Talk to your parents

Parent's Role

1. Prioritize your child's education
2. Provide motivation
3. Celebrate achievements
4. Be involved

The College Talk

- We will now take a 2-minute break...
- PARENTS/GUARDIANS: Turn to your students and ask them one or all of the following questions:
- Where do you want to go to college (i.e. possible campuses, cities, states)?
- What do we need to do to prepare you?
- What careers are you interested in?
- What are your strongest and weakest subjects in school?

**CHOOSING A COLLEGE THAT
IS RIGHT FOR YOU...**

COLLEGE EXPLORATION BEGINS TODAY

**UNDERSTANDING THE
5 SYSTEMS OF HIGHER
EDUCATION IN
CALIFORNIA
AND THEIR REQUIREMENTS**

University of California



- Stats:
 - 10 campuses
 - Research-based
 - Tuition \$14,000 per year
 - Total cost: \$33,000-\$36,000 if you add books, health insurance, food, rent, transportation, etc.
- Basic admission requirements:
 - A-G coursework
 - 3.0 GPA
 - SAT with Essay or ACT with Writing
 - SAT Subject Update: not required, but recommended at certain campuses for certain majors. It could add value to the application, just like an AP Test Score could add value.
 - “Comprehensive/Holistic Review”
 - Points assigned for extracurricular activities, leadership roles, community service, etc.
 - Transfer Agreement Guarantee for CA Community College students

California State University

- Stats:
 - 23 campuses
 - Traditional university setting
 - Tuition \$7,500 per year
 - Total cost: \$18,000-\$28,000 if you add books, health insurance, food, rent, transportation, etc.
- Basic admission requirements:
 - A-G coursework
 - Meet minimum eligibility index (a number derived from an equation that considers both GPA and SAT/ACT scores)
 - SAT or ACT (no Essay)
 - Transfer Agreement Guarantee for CA Community College students



California Community College

- Stats:
 - 110 campuses
 - Transfer, Associate's Degree, vocational, and certificate programs available
 - Tuition: \$2,000 per year (or free with the Promise)
 - Total cost: \$9,000-\$17,000 if you add books, health insurance, food, rent, transportation, etc.
- Basic admission requirements:
 - High school diploma or GED or
 - 18 years old
 - (Note: High school students can enroll in community college classes with principal approval.)



Private Colleges

- Stats:
 - Many, many campuses (i.e. University of San Diego, Point Loma Nazarene University, Stanford University, National University)
 - Campus settings/foci vary widely
 - Costs vary widely
- Basic admission requirements:
 - Vary, but *generally* accept courses covered by the A-G curriculum
 - GPA varies, but *generally* selective
 - Testing requirements vary, but *generally* require SAT or ACT
 - (SAT Subject exams may be required or recommended, depending on campus and major)
 - Transfer requirements and programs vary
 - *Generally* practice Holistic Review
 - Extracurricular activities, leadership roles, and community service considered



Vocational/Technical Institutions

- Stats:
 - Many campuses, depending on field of study (i.e. Art Institute of San Diego, FIDM, Paul Mitchell School, Universal Technical Institute, Concorde Career Institute)
 - Degrees and/or certificates available
 - Costs vary widely
- Basic admission requirements:
 - Admission requirements vary widely. Research application procedures at each program of interest.
 - (Note: Many vocational programs are available at community colleges for a much lesser cost.)



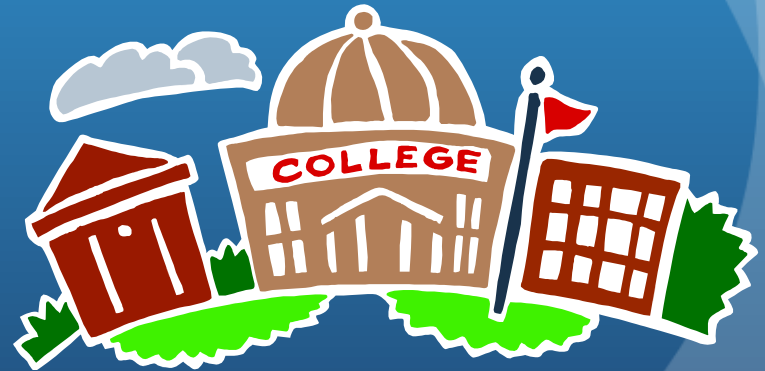
- What should you consider when choosing a college?

Step 1: Thinking About Your Major

- Tips for choosing possible majors: Here are a few questions you should ask yourselves...
 - What are my favorite classes?
 - What are my favorite hobbies/extracurricular activities?
 - What do career/personality assessment tests usually suggest for me? (collegeboard.com; princetonreview.com)
 - What am I good at?
 - What do I love doing?
 - *Where* do I see myself for the rest of my life?
 - *What* do I see myself doing for the rest of my life?

Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Institution type:
 - Public
 - Private
 - Vocational/specialized
 - 4-year
 - 2-year
- Degrees offered:
 - A.A., B.A., B.S., M.A., M.S., Ph.D., Certificates, etc.



Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Majors and minors offered:
 - Do the majors offered match *your* interests?
- Academic focus of campus:
 - Theoretical vs. practical
 - Popular majors (and percentage of students in each major)
- General education and major curricula:
 - Structured vs. individualized
- Graduation rate/time:
 - Past student performances

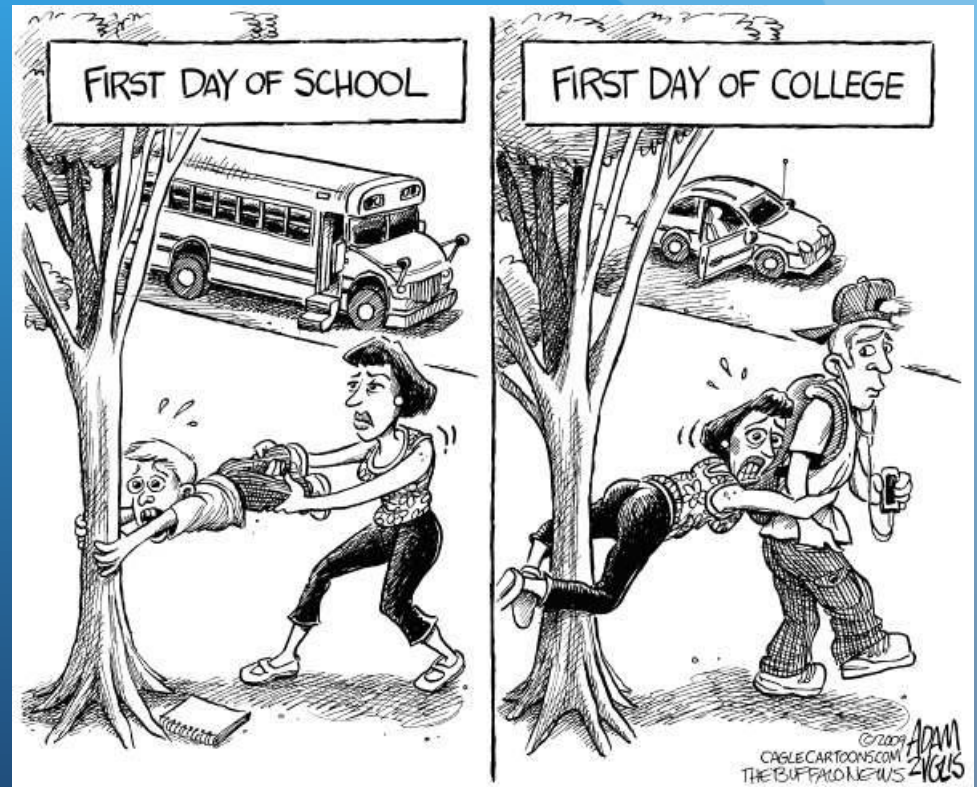
Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Campus/enrollment size:
 - Large vs. small classes
- Faculty:
 - Number, background, distribution
- Campus quality/reputation:
 - National rankings
 - Alumni advice
 - *Note of caution: Campus reputation is highly subjective and should not be one's ultimate priority.*



Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Geographic location:
 - Distance from home
 - In-state vs. out-of-state
- Campus and community setting:
 - Urban vs. rural
 - Safety
 - Surrounding resources (stores, eateries, residential areas)
- Housing:
 - Availability (Guarantees?)



Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Just a few campus characteristics that may be important to you:
 - Religious Affiliation
 - HBCU: Historically Black Colleges and Universities
 - Gender specific vs. coed
 - Student body diversity
- Campus resources available:
 - Libraries
 - Computer labs
 - Food and social quads

Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria



- Extracurricular activities offered:
 - Sports (Division I, II, III)
 - Creative and performing arts (theatre, music, dance, art, design, etc.)
 - Clubs and student organizations (i.e. social justice, social networking, environmental conservation, etc.)
- Social life:
 - Sororities and fraternities
 - Student involvement



Step 2: Make-or-Break Criteria

- Costs:
 - Tuition fees
 - Room and board
 - Books and supplies
 - Basic living costs
- Financial aid offered:
 - Financial aid package (March-June)
 - Federal/state grants (FAFSA)
 - Campus grants (supplementary forms?)
 - Scholarships (campus-based and external)
 - Loans

Step 3: The Long List

- Begin compiling the long list of colleges that fulfill the criteria that are most important to you from Step 2.
- Time frame: Freshman year till early October of your Senior year
- Remember: This list is *not* final. Make it as long as you want. The more options, the better!



Step 4: Research, research, research

- Learn more about your long list of campus choices by investigating each. Here are some tools:
 - College catalogs, campus visits, campus websites, third-party websites (like CollegeBoard.org), college fairs, alumni, high school counselors, campus advisors, and Cal-SOAP College Peer Advisors.
 - Especially helpful: CollegeBoard College Profiles and [College MatchMaker](#)
 - Time frame: Sophomore year till early October of your Senior year

Step 5: The Wish List

- Using the most important criteria from Step 2 and all of the research you have gathered, narrow down your long list of colleges to a manageable number. (This number will vary by student.)
 - Choose as many colleges as you have time and financial resources for which to apply.
 - Don't be afraid to apply to "reach schools"!
 - ALWAYS have a few "back-up" schools.
 - All students should apply to at least one nearby community college in case you decide to take the transfer path OR if you should need to take a general education class that may be impacted at your university
- Time frame: September-October of your Senior year

Step 5: The Wish List

- A note on “selectivity”: Given budget constraints and overall increased academic performance in recent years, many campuses are enforcing more selective admission requirements.
- What selectivity means for you (application criteria):
 - Less selective campuses
 - More selective campuses
 - Very selective campuses
- Importance of multiple applications
- Renewed importance of community college

Step 6: Campus Visits

- The best way to really get a feel for a college is to personally visit the campus.
 - Experience your potential home of 4 years by taking a tour, staying in the dorms, talking to students and faculty, eating in the quad, and sitting in on a class.
- If you cannot visit the campus, here are some tips:
 - Visit the campus website- many have “virtual tours”.
 - Research online for campus history, statistics, and interesting facts.
 - Email or call faculty and staff by looking for the Contacts page on the campus website.
 - Acquaint yourself with the classes offered by reading syllabi posted online.
 - Read the campus and community newspapers to get a sense of local issues and activities.

Step 7: Apply!

- Apply to as many of the schools on your Wish List as realistically possible.
 - Time frame: November to January of your Senior year
 - UC and CSU application deadlines: November 30
 - Private and Independent college deadlines: vary
- Cal-SOAP College Application and Cash4College Workshop: November 25th and 26th (for 12th graders)
Time and location: 10:00am-2pm @ Lincoln High School
 - Visit www.calsoapsandiego.org for more information

Step 8: Money, money, money

- While you're waiting to hear back from campuses, apply for as much financial aid as you need.
 - FAFSA deadline: March 2 of senior year
 - CSS Profile deadlines: vary
 - Scholarships: Apply widely!
 - www.fastweb.com
 - www.scholarships.com
 - www.maldef.org



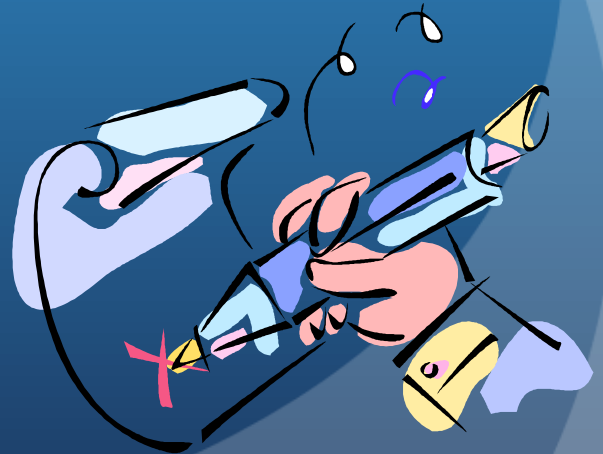
Step 9: You've Got Mail!

- Begin sorting through acceptance/rejection letters as well as financial aid packages.
 - Time frame: March-June of your Senior year
 - Make sure each campus sends you a financial aid package in order to better inform your decision process
 - Talk with your family about your choices.



Step 10: Decision Time!

- Select your campus choice!
 - Submit *one* SIR (Statement of Intent to Register) by the deadline requested (usually May 1) to your college.
 - REMAIN UP-TO-DATE WITH COLLEGE MAIL AND EMAIL
 - Submit all requested paperwork by the deadlines:
 - Housing
 - Orientation
 - Registration
 - Placement exams
 - Supplementary admission forms
 - Campus-based financial aid forms



Final Tips...

- Always try to visit your campus choices.
- Don't rely on name recognition. Find your best fit!
- Don't accept generalizations about colleges (i.e. "hard to get into," "party school," "too expensive"). Do your own research.
- Don't be afraid to apply to "reach schools." But, always have a few back-up plans.
- Don't pick campuses just because your friends are going there. Make your own decisions!
- Don't rule out colleges because of cost. There is financial aid available. And, remember, college is an *investment* in your future.
- Talk with your family, teachers, counselors, and Cal-SOAP advisors about your choices. We are here to help!



Helpful Websites

- www.californiacolleges.edu (California Colleges)
- www.collegeboard.org (Big Futures-college search)
- www.csac.ca.gov (Financial Aid)
- www.sdcoe.net/news/Pages/2019-student-scholarship-opportunities.aspx (scholarships)
- <https://www.sdfoundation.org> (scholarships)

Cal-SOAP College Fair 2019

- Meet representatives from 100 colleges across the U.S. at Cal-SOAP's annual College Fair!
 - Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2019
 - Time: 6:00pm - 8:00pm
 - Location: Scottish Rite Center
1895 Camino del Rio South
San Diego, CA 92108
- To contact Cal-SOAP:
 - (619)295-1468
 - www.calsoapsandiego.org

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