

Finding the Right College 'Fit'

PGHS COUNSELING 2022



WHERE DO I....

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?

Identify the End Goal

- For many students/parents, the end goal is for their student to ‘get into’ a selective college after high school graduation
 - This is an understandable goal due to the intense cultural pressure that ties college or university prestige to future success
- The focus is on how the student can/will gain acceptance to a specific school or specific set of schools
- This mindset places the priority on the school and not the individual needs of the student



What is 'College Fit'?

During their college search, students are encouraged to expand their college search beyond schools with quickly recognizable names and perceived reputations. The **ideal goal** is for students to create a list of schools that will meet their unique needs as individual students.

| Academic | Social | Financial | Preferences | Atmosphere |
|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Major(s) | Student Activities | Cost of Attending | Location | Visit |
| Class Size | Diversity | Affordability | Size | Virtual Tour |
| Academic Resources | Weekend Activities | Available Aid | Religious Affiliation | |
| | | | Athletic Designation | |

Selecting Potential Colleges is a Personal Journey

- Identifying a good college fit is a very personal experience
- It takes time, reflection, individual exploration, and research
- Parents, Counselors, and Teachers can provide guidance and support, but the student is the primary driver in the college search and application process



US News Best Colleges Rankings

VALUE ADDED

- Provides 4 broad categories of universities and colleges:
 - National Universities
 - National Liberal Arts Colleges
 - Regional Universities
 - Regional Colleges
- Straightforward, well known search engine
- Can be used as a rough guide to assess schools

SHORTCOMINGS

- Methodology does not measure the educational experience for each individual student
- Cannot compare school ranks between the four categories
- Statistically skewed to favor smaller, private schools with lower acceptance rates and smaller class sizes
- Ranking does not take cost into consideration

Evaluating Acceptance Rates

- Admission rates are simply the **number of students admitted** divided by the **number of students that applied**.
- THEREFORE: A popular school with a recognizable name (and a healthy marketing budget) may receive thousands of applications for a limited number of freshman spaces.
- FOR EXAMPLE:
 - UCLA had **139,490** students apply in 2022 but only offered **15,028 students admission**. The resulting acceptance rate for UCLA for Fall 2022 was 11%.
 - Claremont McKenna College had **5,632** students apply in 2022 but only offered **633 students admission**. The resulting acceptance rate for Fall 2022 was also 11%.
- While it is true that selective schools receive increased numbers of applicants because of their *reputation*, acceptance rates are not necessarily an assessment of the quality of education provided but of the school's *popularity*.



Selectivity

The selectivity of a school is based on their Admissions Rates, which can be impacted by a number of factors that do not directly correlate with academic excellence.

- **Selective colleges** admit less than 50% of applicants
 - University of Florida, CSU Long Beach, University of Washington, University of Oregon
- **Highly-selective colleges** admit less than 35% of applicants
 - CalPoly SLO, San Diego State, Pepperdine, UC Irvine, UC Santa Barbara, UC San Diego
- **Super-Selective** admit less than 20% of applicants
 - UC Berkeley, UCLA, University of Southern California (USC)
- **Ultra-selective colleges** admit less than 10% of applicants
 - Brown, Duke, CalTech, Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, University of Chicago, Yale

Creating a Balanced College List

A balanced college list includes an equal amount of colleges and universities in your “Reach,” “Target,” and “Likely” categories that you are **excited** about applying to and can see yourself attending.

Reach/Dream

- Notably, these schools are *not* “out of your academic range” but rather at the very top of it.
- All Ultra-selective schools should be classified as a Reach/Dream School due to their admissions rates.

Target

- Are schools that match your GPA and standardized test scores (if required or used). While chances of being accepted is reasonable there’s still the possibility of being waitlisted or denied, especially the more competitive a school is.

Likely

- The school should check off all of your boxes (size, location, degree offering) but consistently accept students with GPAs and test scores below yours.
- You want the college to fall within, not below, the academic range in which you are sufficiently challenged and get out of the college what you need.

Demystifying 'Yield'

- Yield is calculated by dividing the **number of students who enroll** (accept their admissions offer) divided by the **number of students offered admissions**.
- FOR EXAMPLE:
 - UCLA offered admissions to **15,028** first-time students in 2022. Of the 15,028 students who were accepted, 6,570 enrolled in the Fall of 2022. Therefore, the 2020 **Yield for UCLA was 44%**.
 - Claremont McKenna College offered admissions to **633** first-time students in 2022. Of the 633 students who were accepted, 358 enrolled in the Fall of 2022. Therefore, the 2022 **Yield for Claremont McKenna was 57%**.
- Interesting article on Yield: [Universities, Colleges Where Students Are Eager to Enroll](#)

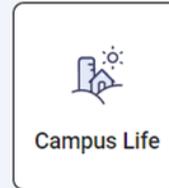
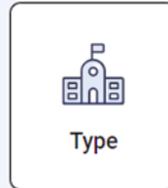
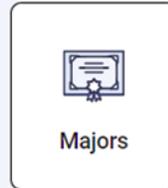
Major Clarity

- Major Clarity is a College and Career web based program that PGHS uses throughout high school to help plan for life after high school
- Major Clarity helps students through self-discovery assessments, aligning their interests and strengths for goal setting, career exploration, and college research tools
- On Major Clarity, you can take a career interest inventory, complete a resume, search for colleges, and explore a variety of post-secondary options.



Find the right college for you.

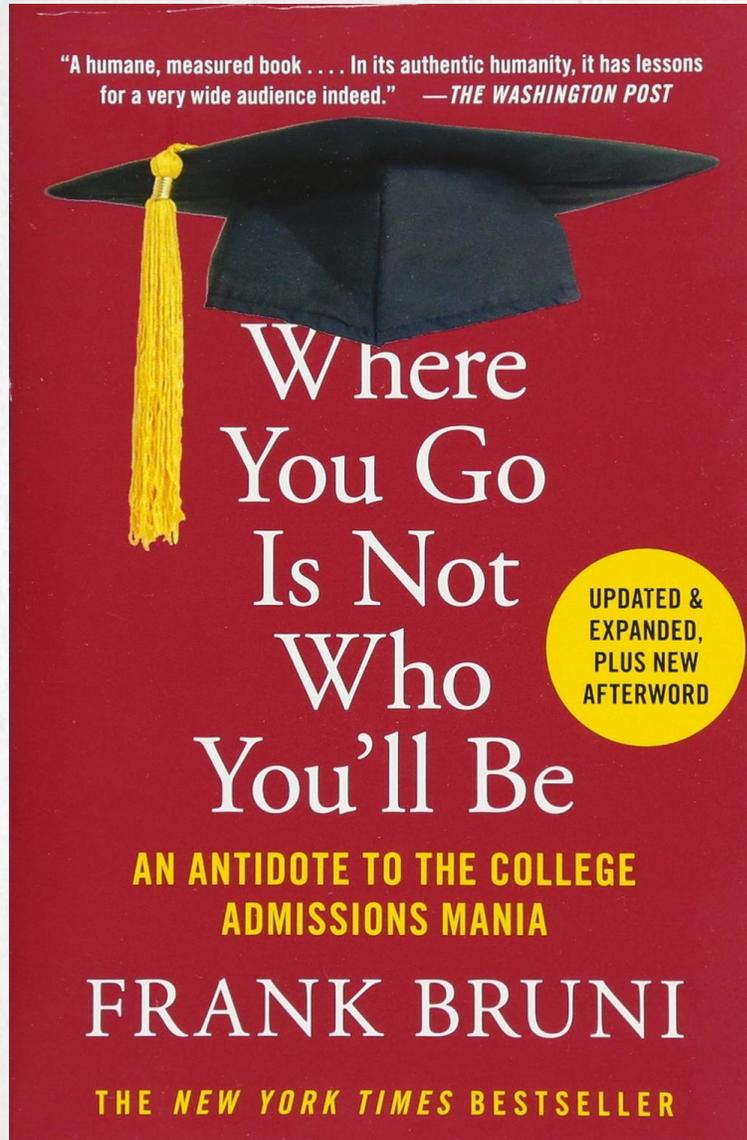
Choose a category to start exploring.



Big Future

- Free online search engine created by the College Board
- Easy to use
- Popular with students and counselors
- [College Search - BigFuture | College Board](#)

[College Search - BigFuture | College Board](#)



Book Review:

Where You Go Is Not Who You'll Be

by Frank Bruni

- Engaging review of the current college admissions culture
- A helpful resource to help reduce anxiety regarding the admissions process
- Clarifying perspective when assessing what may be a good college 'fit'
- Suggested *Readings and Resources* in appendix
- The audiobook is narrated by the author

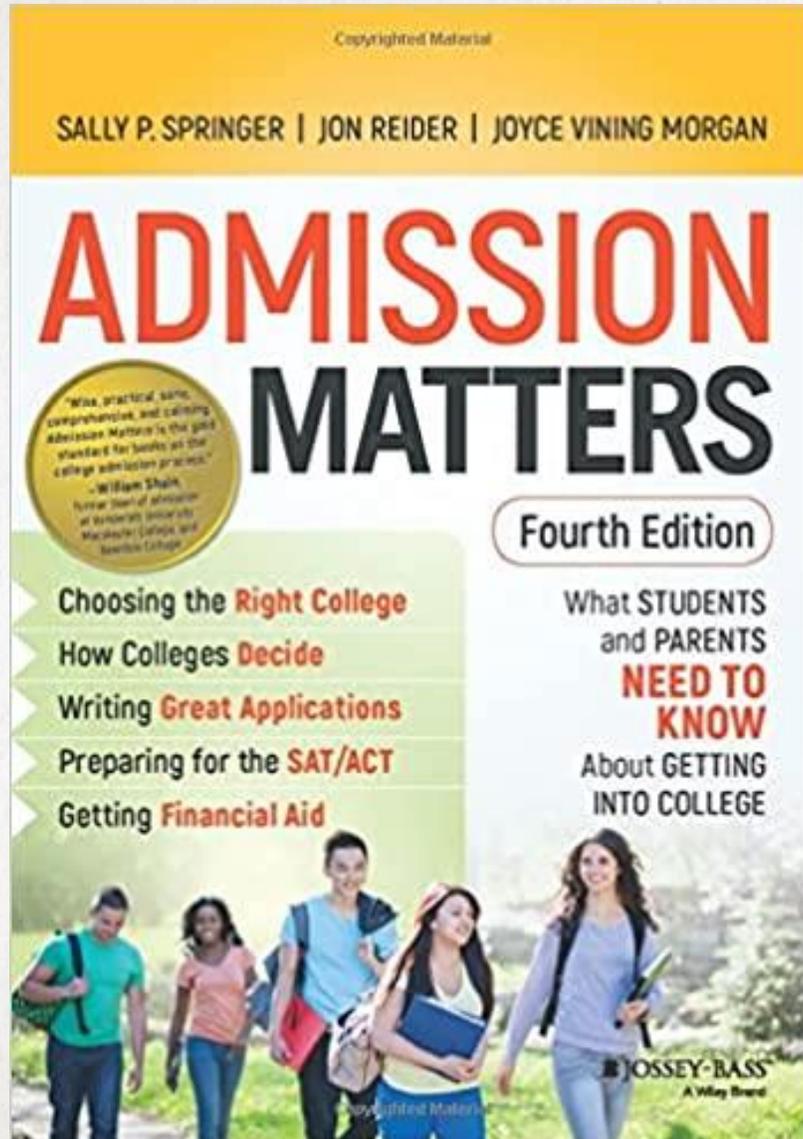


Book Review:

College Match: A Blueprint for Choosing the Best School for You

by Steven R. Antonoff

- Emphasizes types of colleges that might be a good fit for different types of applicants
- Workbook style quizzes and questionnaires to help students identify aspects of their personal fit
- Helpful guidance regarding campus visits, essay writing, and building your college list



Book Review:

Admission Matters Fourth Edition

- Easy to read guide for all aspects of college admissions
- Particularly beneficial chapters:
 - How Colleges (and Students) Differ
 - Where Should You Apply?
 - Applying Well
 - Students With Special Circumstances
 - Making Your Decision After The Colleges Make Theirs

"One of the most nuanced, coolheaded examinations of the admissions process that I've read." —FRANK BRUNI, *THE NEW YORK TIMES*

**WHO GETS IN
AND WHY**
A YEAR INSIDE
COLLEGE
ADMISSIONS
JEFFREY
SELINGO

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF
THERE IS LIFE AFTER COLLEGE and *COLLEGE (UN)BOUND*

Book Review:

Who Gets In and Why: A Year Inside College Admissions
by Jeffrey Selingo

- Deep dive into the nuts and bolts of college admissions
- A good resource for a parent/guardian that wants to understand more of 'why' and 'how' of admissions
- Thought-provoking chapters on Early Action/Early Decision and Paying for College
- Concept of Buyers vs. Sellers

Buyers versus Sellers (Jeffrey Selingo)

BUYERS

- Offer superior education to students
- Less recognizable names, often because they do not have sports teams that play on ESPN
- May offer more merit based aid to attract competitive students
- Schools with lower YIELDS are more likely to offer increased merit aid to strong students
- The majority of colleges are 'buyers'

SELLERS

- Offer superior education to students
- Typically a 'brand name' school that signals prestige in the job market or social circles
- Significant numbers of highly qualified students compete for a select number of admissions
- Are more likely to prioritize financial aid to those in the lowest socioeconomic ranges
- Often have high YIELDS even if students have to pay full tuition and fees if accepted

2013-2014 EDITION

COLLEGES
THAT CHANGE
LIVES

40 SCHOOLS THAT WILL
CHANGE THE WAY YOU
THINK ABOUT COLLEGES

LOREN POPE

Author Of *LOOKING BEYOND THE IVY LEAGUE*

REVISED BY HILARY MASELL OSWALD



Book Review:

Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change The Way You Think About Colleges

by Loren Pope

Revised by Hilary Masell Oswald

- Identifies schools that prioritize creating and maintaining unique learning environments
- Many of the schools profiled do not top the traditional college rankings despite their academic excellence

What is the Common Data Set (CDS)?

- Gathering information about colleges and universities takes a lot of work. While much of the information you are interested in is likely on the college's webpage, each school displays its data in its own unique format.
- This is where the **Common Data Set**, or CDS, comes in. The CDS compiles some of the most important facts and figures about a college in a standardized format that all participating schools use. You can compare apples to apples!
 - A. General Information
 - B. Enrollment and Persistence
 - **C. First-Time, First-Year (Freshman) Admission**
 - D. Transfer Admission
 - E. Academic Offerings and Policies:
 - F. Student Life
 - G. Annual Expenses
 - **H. Financial Aid**
 - I. Instructional Faculty and Class Size.
 - J. Disciplinary Areas of Degrees Conferred
- You can find a school's Common Data Set by **Googling the school name and Common Data Set**

Common Data Set (CDS) Cal Poly, SLO (example)

Common Data Set 2021-2022

C. FIRST-TIME, FIRST-YEAR (FRESHMAN) ADMISSION

C1-C2: Applications

C1 First-time, first-year (freshman) students: Provide the number of degree-seeking, first-time, first-year students who applied, were admitted, and enrolled (full- or part-time) in **Fall 2021**.

- Include early decision, early action, and students who began studies during summer in this cohort.
- Applicants should include only those students who fulfilled the requirements for consideration for admission (i.e., who completed actionable applications) and who have been notified of one of the following actions: admission, non-admission, placement on waiting list, or application withdrawn (by applicant or institution).
- *Since the total may include students who did not provide gender data, the detail need not sum to the total.*

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total first-time, first-year (freshman) men who applied | 27380 |
| Total first-time, first-year (freshman) women who applied | 27190 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total first-time, first-year (freshman) men who were admitted | 7693 |
| Total first-time, first-year (freshman) women who were admitted | 10315 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Total full-time, first-time, first-year (freshman) men who enrolled | 2408 |
| Total part-time, first-time, first-year (freshman) men who enrolled | 9 |

| | |
|---|------|
| Total full-time, first-time, first-year (freshman) women who enrolled | 2451 |
| Total part-time, first-time, first-year (freshman) women who enrolled | 16 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total first-time, first-year (degree-seeking) who applied | 54570 |
| Total first-time, first-year (degree-seeking) who were admitted | 18008 |
| Total first-time, first-year (degree-seeking) who enrolled | 4884 |

C2 Freshman wait-listed students

Students who met admission requirements but whose final admission was contingent on space availability

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| | Yes | No |
| Do you have a policy of placing students on a waiting list? | X | |

If yes, please answer the questions below for **Fall 2021** admissions:

| | |
|---|--------------|
| WAITING LIST | TOTAL |
| Number of qualified applicants offered a place on waiting list: | 9829 |
| Number accepting a place on the waiting list: | |
| Number of wait-listed students admitted: | 978 |

Common Data Set 2021-2022

| | Units Required | Units Recommended |
|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Total academic units | 15 | 21-23 |
| English | 4 | 4 to 5 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 4 to 5 |
| Science | 2 | 4 |
| Of these, units that must be lab | 2 | 2 |
| Foreign language | 2 | 4 |
| Social studies | 1 | 1 |
| History | 1 | 1 |
| Academic electives | 1 | 1 |
| Computer Science | | |
| | 1 | 2 |
| Visual/Performing Arts | | |
| Other (specify) | | |

C11 Percentage of all enrolled, degree-seeking, first-time, first-year (freshman) students who had high

| Score Range | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Percent who had GPA of 4.0 | 59.41% |
| Percent who had GPA between 3.75 and 3.99 | 24.96% |
| Percent who had GPA between 3.50 and 3.74 | 11.74% |
| Percent who had GPA between 3.25 and 3.49 | 3.12% |
| Percent who had GPA between 3.00 and 3.24 | 0.59% |
| Percent who had GPA between 2.50 and 2.99 | 0.13% |
| Percent who had GPA between 2.0 and 2.49 | 0.04% |
| Percent who had GPA between 1.0 and 1.99 | |
| Percent who had GPA below 1.0 | |
| Totals should = 100% | 100% |

Crossroads of Fit and Affordability

- College can be one of the most significant financial investments a person makes in their lifetime
- Often high school students and families wait until college acceptance letters are received before actively discussing how the student will pay for college
 - Delaying these conversations until the Spring of a student's senior year places increased pressure on the student and family to make significant financial decisions in a very short window of time
- Therefore, families should consider including affordability in the student's College Fit exploration and balanced College List



Community College for Transfer Pathway

Students who plan to attend MPC for one or two years and then transfer to complete their four-year degree should still prioritize exploring their personal college fit and create a potential college list.

- Explore the Transfer Admission Guarantee Program (TAG) with the UC
 - [Transfer admission guarantee \(TAG\) | UC Admissions](#)
- Students attending MPC after graduation can take advantage of potential college credit for AP scores of 3, 4, or 5
- Explore taking Dual Enrollment Classes at MPC during 11th and 12th grade
- Register *early in the Spring* of the student's senior year to ensure optimal course selection
- Meet with their MPC Counselor at least once per year, preferably every term, to solidify their Educational Plan

Questions?

PGHS Counseling 831-646-6590

Margaret Rice

Counselor, Grades 9 & 10

mrice@pgusd.org

Kristin Paris

Counselor, Grades 11 & 12

kparis@pgusd.org

Jay Ehret

Outreach Counselor

jehret@pgusd.org

Janet Light

College and Career Center

jlight@pgusd.org

Summer Coe

Administrative Assistant

scoe@pgusd.org
