



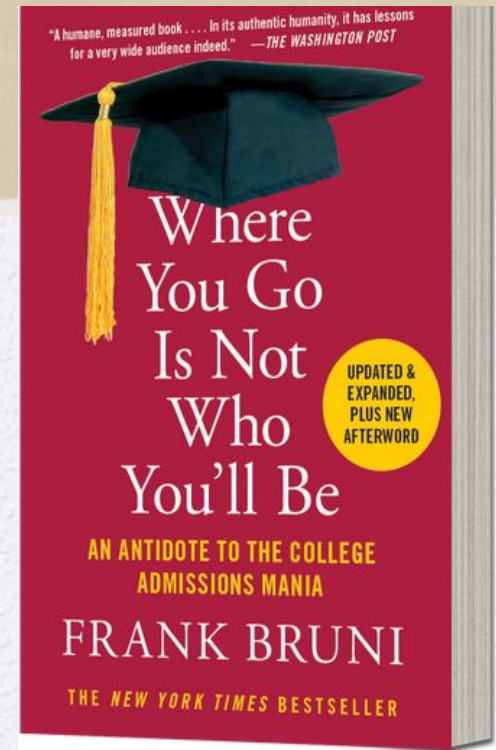
Helping Students Find Their College Fit

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College is about...

- pursuing passions or discovering them.
- training for a career, connecting w mentors.
- engaging with others.
- it IS about finding a place you can afford,
- where you can be yourself or find yourself.
- it's **NOT** about finding the most selective college you can get into.



Making the Match

It's not about finding the best college...

- It's about finding the right college.
- The right college is where the student can be happy & successful.
- Successful students are happy. Happy students are successful.



It's not hard to get into most colleges

- According to the College Board there are more than 2,400 four-year colleges in the country.
 - 1200 of them accept more than 50% of those who apply.
 - 400 colleges accept more than 75% of those who apply.
- 75% of students are accepted at their 1st or 2nd choice school.
- There are more than 300 colleges that accept ANYONE who graduated from high school = Open Enrollment
- If they want to go to college, they're in!
- **It's just hard to get into those highly selective colleges. Everyone else can RELAX.**

Their Right Fit (Not Mom's or Dad's or a friend's)

- Help the students find out **WHO** they are and **WHAT** they are passionate about (**Interest inventory, Personality test**)
- Help students discover what they need: **Negotiables & Non-Negotiables** – nice to have, must haves
- Change your language from “Getting into college” to “**Finding Right FIT colleges**”.
- For most schools, it is a buyers market.
61% did not fill their freshman targets!



So how do you begin?

- [NACAC Step-by-Step Guide](#)
- Get to know your student
 - Review Student Records – Transcript, Schedule, Naviance
 - Jr/Sr Interview, Counselor LOR Form or Other Survey
 - Strengths Explorer
 - Do What You Are – Myers Briggs Personality to career
 - Career Interest Profiler - Holland Type Indicator

Formulate a College Game Plan

What's important to the student? Wants/Needs?

- Academic Interests
 - Private/Public/2 or 4 yr
 - Academic Profile
 - Social Interests
 - Athletics, Rec Facilities
 - Social Interests, Diversity
 - Physical/Medical Needs
 - Size (School, City, Dorms)
 - Urban, Suburban, Rural
- Level of Rigor Desired
 - Single Sex vs Co-Ed
 - Professional Goals
 - Financial Concerns
 - Learning Needs
 - Religious Concerns
 - Mental Health Needs
 - Food Concerns, Dining
 - Distance from Home

Main types of 4 Year Institutions

- Research Universities (National Universities) [GW](#), [NYU](#), [UNL](#), [UNO](#)
- Masters Level/Regional Universities [Creighton](#), [Tampa](#), [Wesleyan](#)
- COLLEGES:

National Liberal Arts Colleges [Augustana](#), [Doane](#), [Grinnell](#)

Regional Colleges [Peru State](#), [Wayne State](#), [Hastings](#), [Midland](#)

Specialty Colleges: Arts, Music, Business [Bryan](#) [LGH](#)
Medical, Cosmetology [Xenon](#)

Research Universities

- Research Universities are the best known institutions and are the schools that capture the most media attention.
- Large array of majors
- Academics who are leaders in their field.
- Research Universities can be midsize or large schools offering loads of student activities, organizations, cultural events and Division I sporting events.
- Access to professors at some research universities can be limited for undergrads.

Regional Universities

- Regional universities offer bachelor's and master's degree programs, but few if any doctoral programs.
- Most have less of a focus on postgraduate research, which can be an advantage for undergraduates.
- Size, access to professors, student activities, etc. vary greatly at these institutions.
- Draw majority of students from the surrounding region in state or surrounding states, but work to attract diverse student body

National Liberal Arts Colleges

- More than 50% of the degrees earned at Liberal Arts colleges are in the humanities and sciences.
- Many degrees are now offered economics. Some liberal arts colleges offer business degrees.
- Provide pre-professional, undergraduate education or limited graduate programs. Small classes and a personalized education.
- Large lecture halls are rare. Institutional priority includes fostering meaningful connections between students and professors.
- Excellent option for science & math majors. 20 students or less rather than hundreds. Individualized attention. PreMed. No Engineering traditionally but this too changing at a few schools.

Regional Colleges

- Tend to exclusively educate undergraduates or have modest graduate programs.
- Professors teach and have high level of interaction with students.
- Most of the students attending baccalaureate colleges major in vocational or practical degrees such as business, nursing, journalism, parks & recreation and education.
- Draw larger percentage of students from local area and surrounding states

Academic Profile

- **College #1**
 - 19-26 ACT
 - 3.40 GPA
- **College #2**
 - 24-29 ACT
 - 3.65 GPA
- **College #3**
 - 32-35 ACT
 - 4.04 GPA

What do these numbers potentially say about a student's ability to get in to each school?

Is there anything we can infer about academic scholarships?

What does this tell us about the rigor of each institution?

NE College Acceptance Rates & Scores

Chadron - Open	Bellevue	N/A	100%	Hastings	20-26	64%
Peru - Open	Bryan LGH	21-27	87%	Midland	19-24	61%
Wayne - Open	Clarkson	21-26	52%	NE Christian	N/A	100%
UNK - 85%	St. Mary	N/A	60%	NE Methodist	21-24	35%
UNL - 75%	Concordia	20-27	73%	NE Wesleyan	21-27	74%
UNO - 86%	Creighton	24-30	71%	Union College	18-27	64%
Comm College - Open w/ option to transfer	Doane	21-26	76%	York College	17-23	50%
	Grace	16-25	57%			

Academic Programs

- Not every school offers every major or track
- Are there other learning opportunities that are important for the student's goals? Internships, Crime labs, Mock Trial, Small Business Projects, Ensembles, Publications
- Encourage students to research the colleges they are interested in – what matters to them?
 - Majors, minors [What Can I Do With This Major?](#)
 - Internships
 - Research, Labs
 - Study Abroad

Outcomes

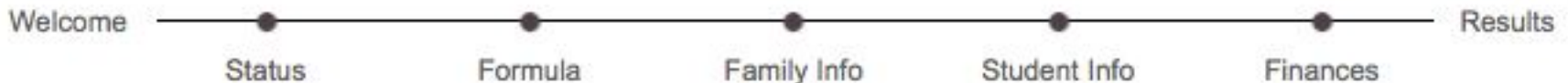
- Retention rates
- College Completion Rates
- Success Rates after Graduation
- Salary potential



Money matters when looking for FIT

- Don't let price stop you. Financial Aid & Scholarships can make a college VERY affordable.
- Determine one year cost or Expected Family Contribution by using Net Price or [EFC Calculators](#)
- Explore Net Price Calculators

EFC Calculator



Pro Tips



Generally,

- In state publics usually best bargain. State taxes go towards tuition.
- Higher the college Rank - Lower the Merit Aid awarded. All admitted students are bright & merit worthy!!
- Higher the college Rank - Higher the Need based Aid. Need based aid awarded In-state students at highly ranked public schools. Some aid is reserved for institutional priority students (first gen, talented, minorities, high performing, geographically desirable areas).
- Merit and Financial Aid timelines are different at different schools -- ASK! Don't assume \$\$ isn't being awarded. Scholarships may be awarded separately from Fin. Aid.

Helping students Access Health & Mental Health Care On Campus

Many colleges have a counseling center or health clinic on campus. Some have BOTH. They can talk with students or link them to other campus or community-based resources.

Here are things to look for when selecting a college:

- Are health and mental health services provided?
- How do students make appointment for each?
- Are drop-in services available?
- How do students access services after hours or in case of emergency?
- What mental health services, groups and programs are available?
- Are there any fees for services and supports?
- Are there limits on the type or amount of services available? If so will they link students with care in the community?
- If not on campus, how far off campus must a student travel for care?
- Will insurance cover the fees? Personal or Student? In network or out?

HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVACY LAW AND RULES

Encourage families to contact the Office For Students With Disabilities if there is a physical or mental health concern.

Learn more about each college's office for students with disabilities. Talk with the office about possible accommodations for the condition, if needed. **If students are 18, colleges can not share information with parents without the student's consent.**

Consider signing a **HIPPA & FERPA** release so your medical & mental health information can be shared w/ your parents. **Parents are legally permitted to share information about students with the school,** with mental or medical health professionals.

This **one-way communication can help if your parents or a trusted adult are worried about you or have important information** about your mental health, including medications, successful treatment approaches, co-occurring medical conditions or special needs

Health privacy and confidentiality laws require an emergency or an imminent threat of harm to self or to other people before parents may be contacted and health information shared. While many people believe that parents would be contacted, this is not always the case. The interpretation of "emergency" or "imminent threat of harm to self or other people" can vary, and identifying a mental health crisis is not always easy. Further, **a mental health provider may believe that the family is a major source of conflict.**

Help Families find On Campus Health & Mental Health Care

- Encourage families w/ physical or mental health issues or disabilities to meet with Disability Services, Health Services and/or the Counseling Office during the search process.
- Do the same w/ the LGBTQ, 1st Gen, MultiCultural if the student is interested!
- Invite the student & rep into your office, meet together. Normalize things.
- Sit down & help the student type a letter to share with the counseling center.
- Pick up the phone and make the call for them. Help them start the conversation.
- Don't know how to have the conversation? Take a campus visit or pick up the phone. Ask. It's amazing what you will learn in 30 min to an hour.
- Spend time exploring SetToGo.org The site seems initially clumsy but has great info for educators, students and their families.

College Search

Consider the many items we have discussed and then get searching!

- [College Navigator](#)
- [CollegeScoreCard.ed.gov](#)
- [Big Future College Search](#)
- Supermatch on Naviance

Campus Visits Real & Virtual and College Reps

- College Visits: Encourage students to get their feet on multiple college campuses.
(small, medium & a large; a public & private)
- Introduce students to Virtual tours using: [YouVisit](#), [Naviance](#) and [CampusTours](#)
- College Visits! The reps are here to see YOUR students, to sell their school.
 - It shows demonstrated interest and they can learn a great deal from the reps.
 - Encourage them to come with questions

If they cannot visit campus now:

- Contact your Admissions Counselor! Best resource.
- Visit the campus website– many have “virtual tours”.
- Research online for campus history, statistics, and interesting facts.
- Acquaint yourself with the courses required for the major.
 - Read the bios of professors. See what they are researching.
- Explore what is going on on campus
 - Find student groups on social media
 - Read the campus and community newspapers
- Ask about Accepted Students and Fly-In Opportunities.

The final college list

- 1-2 Dream= 5-25% chance of acceptance
- 2-3 Maybes= 16-60% chance of acceptance
- 2-3 Match= 61+% = chance of acceptance
- 1 Safety = 80+% chance of acceptance in state

Each school you apply to should be an academic,
social & financial fit

Helping Write Meaningful Essays

- Counselor assists w/ generating the Idea for the essay
- Generating the topic is the toughest part for many
- Have them send you minimum of two beginning essays
 - Content & Voice should be the student's
 - Don't edit out 17 year old voice
 - Moment in time essays often read best
 - Be themselves, Tell their story
 - They shouldn't overuse thesaurus
- Student should find a proofreader (English Teacher?)

Writing Essays that FIT

~~Essay Topics to Avoid~~ include topics that are safe and easy, topics everyone writes about that college admissions teams have read 400 times.

~~Summer Camp~~

~~Parents divorce~~

~~Week long service trip to Guatemala~~

~~Explanation for failing a class~~

~~Drug or alcohol rehab~~

~~Anything you don't want your grandmother to read~~

~~winning score in the big game~~

~~Summer Job~~

~~Break up with boy/girlfriend~~

~~The best summer ever~~

~~My favorite pet~~

~~Negative essays, don't bash anyone~~

Any of these topics could result in a strong essay if they are personalized and true to the student, tell who they are, what they are passionate about, what they want to study or why they want to study at a particular place.

Students need to get to know themselves, visit college websites and college campuses before they can write their best FIT essay.

**“College is a match to be made
not a prize to be won!”**

Frank Sachs
Former College Director
Blake Schook, Mpls, MN

Resources

- [NACAC Guides](#)
- [College Score Card](#)
- [College Navigator](#)
- [Naviance](#)
- [Big Future College Search](#)
- [Set To Go](#)
- [EFC Calculator](#)
- [What Can I Do with this Major](#)

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