

Let's Talk About Making a Decision...



Tips for DECIDING

- If possible, go back to campuses or get to the ones you haven't been to yet. Walk or drive around the area, stay overnight in a dorm, have a meal on campus, etc.
- Virtually (or in person if allowed) sit in on a class, or talk with someone from potential major department
- Reach out to Fin Aid offices with any questions about your aid offers
- **Eliminate all options that are not within your financial comfort zone.**
- Now narrow the remaining options to three. Your criteria could be financial or geographic or any other reason that makes sense to you. Try to reduce the scope of your decision to three choices by April 1. Three seems to be a reasonable number that most psyches can juggle.

How?

- Imagine for the next 24 hrs you're going to attend School A. If you have a sweatshirt or hat for that school, wear it. See how it feels. Repeat with School B, then C, etc (You do *not* have to buy hats for each school, just say to yourself, "I'm going to [name the school]" a few times throughout the day). You can also do this with several schools over the course of one day.
- Create a good old-fashioned pros and cons list. Ask: What's my *true* intention in going to college (i.e., what do I value most)?
- Rate each priority from 1-10 based on how important it is to you, then add up the points for each college. That'll give each college a numerical score. Once you do this, ask yourself, "How do I feel now?" You may be surprised that the highest "score" school isn't actually the one you wanted--in which case you have your decision.
- Now you are picking between three options that all make sense, and you need to trust your gut instinct and use subjective tools. Join the Facebook group for admitted students. Chat with current students on College Confidential. Imagine your prospective peers as your future best friends. Do you feel valued? Picture yourself there and happy for the next four years. Your college experience will be as fabulous as you make it, so listen to your heart and pick the community that feels right!

Tips for DECLARING

May 1st has typically been the deadline for declaring your intent to attend. And while this has gotten a bit more wiggly in the last two years, I still think it's best practice to deposit at your first choice school by the end of April.

This allows you to get going with housing, start to get excited, connect with your potential roommate, start thinking about what to pack, and have plenty of time to get involved with pre-start activities.

The critical step of declaring includes accepting any portion of your aid package that you wish to take, paying your deposit, and (ideally) filling out your housing form.

Remember the expectation that you eventually respond to ALL schools offering you acceptance with either a "Thank you, I'm coming" or "Thanks for the offer, I have decided to go somewhere else." YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY WHERE

It's also nice to follow up with any reps that you built any kind of relationship with--interview, emails, visits, etc.--to say thank you, even if you decide not to attend their school.

Remember you have an obligation to deposit and accept entry to just one school

*See below what that means if you are waitlisted

Tips for WAITLIST

This year in particular we are seeing an uptick in waitlisting, especially at popular and more selective schools who have the luxury of an even larger applicant pool and are using waitlists more heavily to protect their yield.

If you are waitlisted and you don't love the school and love another school more where you were accepted—then you can just say “no thanks” and get removed from the wait list

If you are waitlisted at your first choice, you should carefully follow their instructions and send/do whatever they ask of you---likely an acceptance to be on the waitlist and sometimes a short answer/update on any changes since you applied and a Letter of Continued Interest (LOCI). I am more than happy to help you with any of this!

After that, you should go back to the tips for DECIDING above and decide which is your next first choice school, and plan on depositing there by the end of April so you have a spot.

If you come off of the waitlist at the other school, you can tell the second school, “wait, actually I got pulled off the waitlist at my best fit college and have decided to attend.” You will lose your deposit at the other school, and have to redeposit at the new school.

*Note: This is the ONLY time you should ever deposit at more than one place