

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A COLLEGE

Choosing an approach to higher education that is a good fit for any person is something that should not be taken lightly; but many times is. For example, **DID YOU KNOW THAT?**

1. 30% of those who start a college education end up transferring to another school.
2. Those who transfer typically take longer to graduate.
3. College tuition on average increases 3 ½% to 5% each year.
4. It takes on average 6.2 years to earn a bachelor's degree.
5. Based on 2006 – 2007 data from The College Board, if a student takes 6 years to graduate, the cost difference could be anywhere from \$33,000 to \$67,000 more than planned, on tuition alone.

Some of the main reasons why students transfer to another school are:

1. **Changing majors:** students realizing that the career they chose was not suitable for them.
2. **Not the right fit:** the overall school atmosphere was not right for the student and did not meet their underlying needs.
3. **Finances:** too expensive, not enough financial aid.
4. **Academics:** the school was too easy or too hard.

Choosing the right college is as important today as choosing the right career and should be approached in a similar manner. Students who are comfortable with their school do better academically and socially. Many people do not take enough time when it comes to selecting where they will go to school. Many times schools are chosen or chosen for them for the wrong reasons, such as:

1. My dad and or mom went there.
2. My friends or significant other are going there.
3. It's a school with lots of social activities.
4. The brochures made it look nice.
5. It offers the academic program I'm looking for and campus atmosphere doesn't matter as much.

There are many resources on the Internet today that offer tips on “choosing the college that is right for you”. Unfortunately, almost all of that information is based on asking yourself a handful of basic questions which do not take into consideration the student's underlying needs. As a result, students are mismatched to a school they ultimately will not get much out of. Some students do themselves the disfavor of struggling and sticking it out.

We use the Birkman Method® because it is a systematic process based on over 40 years experience in various businesses, education, health care, and organizational consulting. It is a positive investment that focuses on the student first. The Birkman Method® assesses the student's underlying needs and preferred behaviors and then generates a profile which can be used in analyzing the type of college and major best suited for the individual.

What beneficial information can one expect to get from the Birkman Method®?

1. **Academic requirements:** Would the student do well in an environment of high demands or is a more supportive, less tense environment more conducive?
2. **Teaching style:** Would the student fare better in a more structured environment or do better in an environment that has fewer course distribution requirements.
3. **Location:** How far away from home could a school be and would the student feel comfortable in an urban, suburban or college town setting?
4. **School size and personality:** Would the student feel more comfortable in a small or large school?
5. **Class size:** Would the student learn more in a small class environment or a large lecture class with a distinguished professor?
6. **Social atmosphere:** Would the student prefer an active social environment or a more subdued social atmosphere?
7. **Activities:** What type of activities would the student be interested in? Athletics, theater, musical groups, clubs?

Each student has different requirements based on their needs, learning style and other preferred behaviors. Starting your college experience at a school that in some way is not the right fit can result in wasted time and money should a transfer be necessary; to say nothing of the emotional stress.

College is a new and challenging experience. Proper consideration and time should be given to ensure a rewarding and pleasant experience. Keep in mind that a student could be there up to six years. The time and money spent for careful consideration is insignificant compared to the time and money spent on a college education and the resulting success reached during a lifetime.

