

The College Process and Self Awareness

So Where Do I Begin?

- 1) Answer the questions below to develop your own self awareness and profile of what you are seeking in colleges.
- 2) Develop a list of 10-20 colleges in which you are interested.
- 3) Research the colleges on your list by visiting their websites, calling the admissions offices, and talking to friends, family members, and graduates of these colleges that you may know.
- 4) Determine which schools offer the programs in which you are interested. See which schools are ranked the highest for your programs and if their admissions criteria fit with your strengths. It is always important to consider which schools focus on undergraduate teaching, as this is where you will find more individual attention and focus on learning.
- 5) Narrow your list to 1-3 choices as follows: Top Tier, Middle Tier, and Lower Tier, according to admissions standards.
- 6) Decide which schools you would like to visit and make a plan for further research.

Student Questionnaire

Many students need some help as they begin to think about themselves as college candidates and try to establish criteria for colleges they want to investigate. Here are a few questions to help parents and students as you begin. They are, obviously, directed at the student. See also the section on youscience.com and determine the best time to complete your analysis.

- What are your academic interests?
- What are your strengths as a student? In the classroom? Outside of the classroom?
- Have you worked to your potential at Habersham? What sort of academic challenge do you hope to find in college? Are you often one of the leaders of your classes here, or do you find yourself pedaling hard to keep up with your work? (Which position is more comfortable for you?)
- Do you enjoy regular interaction with faculty mentors?
- How do you prefer to be assessed as a student: in seminar discussions? on exams? frequent writing assignments? longer research papers? collaborative or individual projects?
- What activities do you enjoy the most outside of class?
- Do your activities show any pattern of commitment, competence, or contribution?
- What do you consider your greatest contribution to your community? (school or local)
- Which interests do you plan to pursue in college and beyond?
- What are the characteristics that you feel are crucial for you in a college?
- Are any particular facilities important to you?
- Do you hope to find a politically active campus? If so, are there certain student groups or voices you hope to see represented?
- What sort of social opportunities do you hope to find in college?

- Is a particular location important to you? To your parents?
- Do you need academic structure? What curricular requirements do you expect a college to have, if any?
- Does the composition of the student body matter to you? Describe.
- Will financial aid be a factor? If so, you and your parents need to consider that from the outset of your search.

The more self-aware students are in this process the easier it will be. If students can be specific about what they want in a college, it is easier to help them identify colleges that fit their criteria. Of course, we understand that many students, especially at this early stage, don't yet have a clear understanding of what they are looking for and we are here to help them.