

Neuqua Valley Spring College Information Night

Sponsored by Neuqua Valley Guidance Department <http://nvhsguidance.weebly.com/>

NAVIANCE—NVHS College/Career Planning Program—Naviance provides career exploration, interest inventories, college search engines, scatter grams with NVHS data, NVHS college visit schedule and more. - All NVHS students will have a comprehensive lesson by their counselors during a class period in their freshman, sophomore and junior year. Naviance student and guest access is available online from the NVHS home page, the student splash page and <http://connection.naviance.com/neuquavhs> . Students log onto Naviance with their district computer login & password.

CHOOSING A COLLEGE: FINDING THE RIGHT FIT

Choosing a college is a process and it is unique to each student's experiences, level of interest, and involvement. A key word in admissions today is "fit." This refers to the match between the student and the college. When the match is good, then the student flourishes and is successful. The college that is best for each student depends on which is the best fit for that student.

KNOW YOURSELF

Sometimes the hardest part of the college selection process is knowing when and where to begin. An excellent starting point for every student is a certain amount of introspection and self-reflection.

- **Academic interests and abilities**—Know your strengths, interests, challenging areas. What type of classroom do you prefer? Large, small, interactive, discussion based?
- **Goals and values**—What is your goal in going to college? What is your personal value system? How does it fit into college?
- **Career Interests**—What are you thinking about studying and doing after college?
- **Personality and relationships**—What is your personality type? What type of people do you like to be around? What type of campus atmosphere do you want? Where would you be comfortable?
- **Begin your search with your individual needs and interests**—Decide what is important to you in your college search process.

PERSONAL FACTORS

Personal factors will be determined and prioritized individually by students' interests, but all will be present at college. Personal factors include athletic programs, social life, opportunities for religious expression, transportation possibilities and atmosphere of the college. The atmosphere further includes personal or impersonal handling of student questions and concerns, the presence or absence of a religious atmosphere, a study or party mood among students and whether the school is single sex or coed.

FIELDS OF STUDY

Students do not need to know their specific major when choosing a college. Many college freshmen are unsure of their college majors and many will change their majors in college. However, students should be able to articulate which classes they enjoy most and which they enjoy least. Colleges welcome undecided students. Many offer special academic exploration programs for such students. Many schools have a core curriculum of liberal arts courses, which require students to study a variety of subjects in order to become intellectually well-rounded as well as exposed to a broad array of disciplines. Students should study a field in which they are most interested; careers are not always identical to majors. Resource: Career Cluster and Majors. <http://onetonline.org/find/career>

LOCATION

When considering location, remember it will greatly affect the campus atmosphere, mix of students and types of social activities. The locale of a college will significantly affect the experience the students have at the school. Urban schools offer the greatest variety of activities, while suburban schools tend to be more "neighborly" in locations. Schools located in rural areas, like many public universities, may have a "college town" feel. The remoteness and even isolation of a campus can be a plus or a minus, depending on students' interests and needs. Distance from home will have to be considered as well. What is too far away? What is too close? Being 2,000 miles away from home may appear desirable, but remember that being that far away will certainly limit trips home throughout the school year and add to college expenses.

SIZE

Colleges range in size from about 100 to 50,000 students. To determine which size college will best meet your needs, examine the type of learner (not just socializer) you are. The size of the college does make a difference. In fact, the size of the college may well be the most important factor in choosing a college.

- Do you enjoy the accessibility and personal relationships with your high school teachers? A smaller school may appeal to you.
- Are you eager to study with renowned researchers? Then, a larger school may appeal to you.
- Will you welcome the personal, close atmosphere a small school affords? Will you feel trapped at a small school?
- Will you feel lost and overwhelmed at a large school? Will you feel more independent and free in a large school?

When considering college choices, you may want to vary the size of the college campuses that you visit before ruling out a very large or very small school. Regardless of size, all colleges put the responsibility of learning squarely upon the students' shoulders.

COST

Obviously, cost is a major factor to be considered. The total cost for a year includes; tuition, fees, room and board, books, supplies, transportation and personal expenses. Costs can range from \$4,000 at the community college to over \$50,000 for a private college. An average cost is anywhere from \$22,000-\$38,000 per year. Limiting prospective colleges on a cost basis alone may exclude some excellent colleges from a student's list. Students can apply for financial aid and scholarships and see what the price is in the end. We recommend that all students apply to one school that is an **academic** and **financial** safety for them. All colleges now have a **net cost calculator** on their website as mandated by the federal government in 2011. This allows families to better estimate the cost of attending a college, before the student applies. This is an excellent resource!

FACTORS INFLUENCING FIT

The following factors make up the overall "fit" between the student and the college. These factors are considered by all students in the college search process; however, it is individual by student, and it is important to determine which factors are top priorities **for you**.

- **Factors**—Admission standards, size, location, governance, fields of study, personal factors and cost.
- **Academic Rigor**—You should attend a college which meets you where you are intellectually & moves you to a higher level of intellectual functioning & appreciation. The college environment should challenge & interest you, not bore or overwhelm you.

GOVERNANCE- PUBLIC OR PRIVATE-- All schools fall into one of these two categories.

- **Public**- State supported schools. Tuition costs are kept to a minimum by using state taxes to offset costs.
- **Private**- Further divided into sectarian and nonsectarian institutions. Sectarian schools are most often owned and operated by religious groups. Nonsectarian schools are privately owned and operated. Most were, at one time, religiously affiliated.

FIVE GENERAL LEVELS OF ADMISSION STANDARDS

- **Open**—All high school graduates are accepted. Example: community colleges.
- **Liberal**—Some students from the lower half/quarter of the class are accepted. Many small private schools focus more on courses taken than on grade point average and rank. Conversely, many large public universities will allow a higher ACT to balance out a lower GPA.
- **Traditional**—Admitted students are typically in the top half to top quarter of the class. Most have ACT scores from 18 to 24.
- **Selective**—The majority of the students in the top quarter of the class are accepted. Accepted students tend to have ACT scores between 22 and 26.
- **Highly Selective**—Students in the top 20% are competitive for admission. Test scores usually range from 26 to 32.
- **Highly, Highly Selective**—Nationally, accepted students are primarily from the top 5% of the class, depending on the university. Typically, students have ACT scores from 32 to 34. These students very often have another very compelling aspect to their applications. Usually, 8-10% of the students from the applicant pool are admitted.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Check admission requirements with each college because the colleges do have different admission requirements. Most four year colleges generally require 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social studies, 4 years of English and most recommend 2 years of a foreign language. Some colleges require 2 years of a foreign language. Look at the average GPA and ACT /SAT scores that are accepted in addition to the ranges of GPA and ACT/SAT scores that are accepted. Specific requirements will be posted on the colleges' websites.

COLLEGE VISITS

Visiting a college campus is very important. It is the only way you can get a "feel for the campus" and decide if you would be comfortable and successful at that school. Take a tour and ask questions. You may also want to meet with someone from admissions or an academic department that you have an interest in pursuing. You can set up a campus visit by calling the admissions office or visiting their website for a list of their tours and open houses. Use your summer to make some college visits!

COLLEGE ATHLETICS

Are you interested in college athletics? Be sure that you meet the academic eligibility requirements. For NCAA eligibility, be sure to send your ACT score and a transcript at the end of junior year. Check requirements at www.eligibilitycenter.org For NAIA athletics and eligibility go to www.naia.org

