



# Navigating the College Search

## A John Carroll University Presentation

### Handout

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<b>Strength of the Academic Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How do I learn best?</i></li></ul>
<b>Professional Success of Graduates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Reverse-Engineer from your dreams. Do the research.</i></li><li>• <i>Check the College Navigator for graduation rates and ask good questions when you visit!</i></li></ul>
<b>Overall Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Don't rule out applying to schools just because of price.</i></li><li>• <i>Costs should play a role in choosing a college but not in applying</i></li><li>• <i>Borrow for what you need, not for what you want.</i></li><li>• <i><u>NEVER</u> pay for financial aid help or scholarship searches.</i></li></ul>
<b>Campus Physical Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>What type of setting lifts your spirits the most?</i></li></ul>
<b>Social Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Read the student newspaper online for a feel of a campus.</i></li><li>• <i>Visit the campus when your types of events are happening and "eavesdrop" on the campus.</i></li></ul>
<b>Campus Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>How important are family and connections to me?</i></li><li>• <i>What is immediately near the campus for me for my education and my personal enrichment?</i></li></ul>
<b>Athletic Programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Do I want to play or watch?</i></li><li>• <i>Will I miss participating in competitive sports?</i></li></ul>

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#### Useful Resources

- 1) **College.gov:** <http://www.college.gov> -- Source for information and resources about planning, preparing and paying for postsecondary education (such as 2- or 4-year colleges and universities, and vocational or career schools).
- 2) **College Navigator:** <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/> -- Designed to help prospective students compare colleges on factors such as net price, programs offered, retention and graduation rates, financial aid, campus safety, and accreditation.
- 3) **College Measures.org:** <http://collegemeasures.org/> -- Website focuses on key outcomes measures including graduation rates, first-year retention rates, education-related cost per student, cost per degree, student loan default rates
- 4) **Financial Aid**
  - a. <http://www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov/> Learn about the financial aid process and get an early estimate of your eligibility.
  - b. <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/> Fill out your aid application.
- 5) **College Financial Aid Offices**
  - a. [www.jcu.edu/finaid](http://www.jcu.edu/finaid) check out our **Common Myths about Financial Aid** page!
- 6) The Finaid Page: <http://www.finaid.org/> Online loan/debt calculators, advice on scholarship searches, scams, helpful planning.
- 7) JCU and **specific school websites** (dig deep and be sure to use their cost calculator early)  
<http://sites.jcu.edu/success/>
- 8) **Local Libraries**