Factors to Consider When Making Your College Decision

by Autumn Jones

Choosing a college that is a good fit for the future student is important. Many students find themselves wanting to attend school "A" because they have family members who are alumni, friends who are attending, or they are a big fan of the sports team. They may not even apply to school "X", "Y" or "Z" because of the pressure they feel from friends, family, or school counselors to attend school "A". Finding the right fit for the student based on their needs is most important. Here are some key factors to consider when researching higher institutions.

The WSU Pullman campus is located in the heart of the rolling hills of the Palouse.

TYPE: Are they public or private? 2 year or 4 year? Are they single sex or coed? Do they have a religious affiliation? What do they devote time and resources to: research or teaching and learning? Strength of the athletic program?

LOCATION: What’s the location like? Do I like the surrounding areas – cities, etc? What is the transportation situation (buses, trains, biking, etc.)? Will I be able to easily get to class by walking, biking, taking the bus, etc.? Is the community surrounding the campus considered safe? Do I want to be closer or further away from home? How far is it from home? Will I go home too much if I’m close by? How much will it cost to visit home? Will this cost be burdensome during holidays, breaks, etc.?

ENVIRONMENT: You should also consider the ambience of your surroundings when choosing a college. Think about where you grew up and how much of a change you want. Rural vs. urban night life, lights, people, weather, geography.

SIZE: What’s the size of the student population? A small campus is usually around 1,000; large is 35,000+. What’s the student-faculty ratio? What are the typical class sizes? Many freshmen courses are larger and often decrease in size as you get into courses within your major.

MAJORS: Very few high school students have enough information or experience to choose a major. You need the variety and depth of college coursework to determine your interest and aptitude. Most college students change their minds two or three times before they settle on a major. Being undecided is a good thing and will leave you open to more academic experiences.


TUITION: In-State vs. Out of State What do typical student costs outside of tuition look like? Think of housing, meal plans, books, etc. How much is it to live in a residence hall at this school? How much is a typical meal plan at this school? How much do student typically spend on books each semester?

CAMPUS LIFE ASPECTS: What kind of resources and activities are available or nearby? Clubs and student government, recreation, entertainment, athletics, student services, housing, dining, libraries.

DON’T FORGET TO VISIT!! Visit and experience what it is like to be a student. Talk with current students, staff, and faculty. Don’t rely only on brochures. Investigate what resources are available. WSU hosts many visitation events in fall and spring as well as...
daily tours. Attend a visitation events (Sports Summit, Future Cougar Day, Fall/Jr. Preview),
daily tours (Pullman campus), and Camps (EXCEL, Nah–Ha–Shnee).

*If you would like to schedule a campus visit, I would be happy to assist you.*

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**For Accepted Students:**

Congratulations on being accepted to Washington State University!

**Freshmen Next Steps**

Congratulations on your admission to WSU! We look forward to seeing you on campus
soon. Before then, there are a few steps you need to take to confirm your admission and
reserve your space at WSU. Here’s what you need to do:

1. **Confirm your admission** and save your spot by paying the $200 non-refundable
tuition deposit* (advanced payment on tuition). This will reserve your space at WSU. **You’ll need to do this before you can apply for campus housing and sign up for orientation/registration.** For assistance setting up your network ID and navigating myWSU, visit **myWSU info**.

2. **Apply for on-campus housing** as soon as possible after confirming your admission. The sooner you apply for housing, the better your chances of getting one of your top residence hall choices. The housing application requires a $400 advanced housing payment* plus a $150 security deposit. **Freshmen are required to live on campus** for their first year.

3. **Sign up for Alive! orientation** as soon as possible after confirming your admission. All new students must attend an orientation session to meet with an academic advisor and register for classes. The Alive! orientation matriculation fee* is $230 for students and $155 for parents/guests (parent attendance is optional). Some grants are available for those with financial need, please contact **New Student Programs** for more information.

4. **Take the online math placement exam** before attending orientation. Get started on this step early so you can take advantage of the 6-week online review.

5. **Take the writing placement exam.** The exam can be taken online at any time, or as a pencil-and-paper test at your Alive! orientation session.

6. Provide proof of immunization. You’ll need to provide proof of measles (Rubeola) immunity before registering for classes. Forms and other information are available from WSU Health and Wellness Services.

7. **Sign in to myWSU** (WSU’s student information system) and review your personal to-do lists for financial aid, orientation, and more.

*Ready to confirm your admission or make a housing deposit, but finances holding you back? I can help! Contact me for assistance.*

Peace! Love! GO COUGS!