

Choosing a College

Ryman Arts, Fall 2007



There are thousands of schools you can apply to – how do you choose? When looking at schools on College Day, or elsewhere, think about what kind of school is right for you. You may not have a strong opinion in all these categories, and we encourage you to keep an open mind. Think about how you feel about these different aspects of college:

⊙ Curriculum

Are programs offered in your fields of interest? Do they have a large department in your favorite subjects or just a couple of classes?

Art School Curriculum: Which art departments are you interested in? Is their emphasis more academic or vocational? Do they have the facilities you need to fully develop your skills?

⊙ Location and Housing

Are you planning on living at or near home, or do you want to live away from home? If you want to live away, is dorm space available to all students? Do you want to be in a city, suburb or rural environment?

⊙ Size

Do you want to be in a small, medium or large student body? Do you want to know most of the students on campus, or do you want to go to a school that's like a city unto itself? All schools are different, but in general a small campus offers more individual attention and a personalized experience, and a large campus offers more resources, social opportunities and academic departments.

⊙ Specialized Groups

Would you prefer to be at a school where almost all the students are of the same religion, gender or ethnicity as you? There are religious colleges, women's colleges and colleges that cater to particular ethnicities all over the country. An art school or a very academically competitive school are also specialized groups, in that you have a shared interest with the entire student body.

⊙ Cost and Financial Aid

What is the tuition at this school, and what kind of financial aid do they offer? Do not ever reject a school based on its tuition – a good financial aid package can make an expensive private school less costly to you personally than a state college. However, it's important to be aware of potential costs from the beginning.

Art School: In addition to tuition and housing costs, you may have high art supply costs, depending on your chosen medium. Keep your art supply costs in mind when planning for college.

⊙ Art

Are you going to major in art, minor in it, or just take a few classes on the side? Do you want to develop vocational art skills so that you can go directly into an art-related career out of college, or are you more interested in developing your conceptual and academic art skills than being career oriented? Is there a particular art career you are aiming for? Think about which school can best help you reach your goals both personally, professionally and artistically.