

College Search: Helpful Websites

There are many resources that can help you learn more about colleges so poke around to see what you find most helpful.

[ChatBot](#): With support from our Tech Office, we've created an AI-driven college search Chatbot that we hope can help you explore colleges that fit your interests and thinking. The tool asks you to reflect on your interests, what characteristics you're looking for in a college, and initiates a back and forth conversation to help you narrow down options that fit your criteria. It is a fun tool to help with creating a list and can be used over and over again. We 'trained' the Chatbot on how to ask questions and to use professional sources to provide your feedback. Check it out!

[SCOIR](#): SCOIR is the platform that we use to support the application submission process. It's also a comprehensive college search engine and a place for you to store all of your college information. Use the search tools to identify potential colleges, easily maintain a working list of schools you're interested in and use the Drive to keep all of your information in one place.

[CollegeData.com](#) - This is a great site for all of the harder-to-uncover information that it provides. This is a very comprehensive site that offers an important level of detail about individual colleges, including insight into Greek life, admissions and financial aid information, including easy to find information on standardized test statistics, all the way down to the weather!

Start out at "[Explore Colleges](#)" tab and then click on "[College Match](#)" to complete a search. You can **search for schools** according to level of difficulty in terms of admission (helpful in making sure you have a list focused on target schools), as well as schools that are **financially friendly**. Complete the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) calculator so that you can dig into your results to learn about anticipated **cost of attendance** as well as **average student debt** students graduate with at a specific school. Learn more about freshman **retention rates** (an important indicator of how a college meets the needs of its freshmen) as well as **graduation rates**. You'll even see how many rainy days the school averages a year! Once you've heard from colleges and have financial aid awards, use this site to **compare awards** so you can fully understand what each award means. Dig in - it's worth it!

Here's a quick link to information specific to [UMass Amherst](#) so that you can see the level of detail available.

[Big Future](#): College Board's search engine is another helpful way to tease out schools that fit your interests and to gauge your admissibility. There are helpful videos on getting started and easy to use search function to whittle down your options. This site also offers great information on paying for college and scholarships (really dig in to scholarships during senior year).

Other search sites that students like

- [Niche](#)
- [Cappex](#)
- [CollegeScoreCard](#)
- [Unigo](#) - great way to get behind the scenes information from students on campus
- [College Confidential](#)