

A FEW POINTS OF CAUTION

- Many students spend hours deciding on their few top choices and five minutes selecting one or two safety schools. ***We strongly advise that you spend as much time and consideration selecting your fifth and sixth choice schools as you do your top choice schools.*** Realistically, you may eventually matriculate at the fifth choice institution. While it may not be as selective as the top choice, you should insure that it has what you are looking for and is an institution where you stand a good chance of being happy and successful. If your few top choices are small, selective liberal arts colleges, it does not make a great deal of sense to include a large, multi-dimensional university as a safety choice. If you want a small, liberal arts college, you should spend the necessary time finding a school of similar type that will qualify as a likely choice.
- Many students feel that simply because a particular institution falls into “realistic” as opposed to “reach”, it does not offer programs of equal quality. Such an assumption is, in many instances, incorrect. The selectivity of any institution is dependent on the size of its applicant pool which, in turn, may be affected as much by geographic location, popularity, and reputation as by actual academic quality. ***Many schools, for a variety of reasons, may be “realistic” schools from an admissions perspective yet offer programs equal in quality to the student’s few top choices.***
- Pay close attention to both required and suggested application filing dates. Some are very early in the fall such as Penn State University and the University of California.
- ***We would like to dispel the notion that if you want to go to a good college or university, you must look at an eastern school.*** There are many good schools throughout the country, and we encourage you to investigate options outside of New England and New York. Such a regional approach can, in some instances, limit your ability to attain admission to the quality school you desire. You may, for a variety of reasons, be considered a more unique and attractive candidate by a highly selective school outside of the Northeast area than by a school equal in quality within the area. If you are not accepted at a school you really want to attend, consider starting elsewhere and reapply later as a transfer student.
- The application pools at most colleges and universities are increasing. ***Be aware that the selectivity also is increasing.***
- Many schools are no longer NEED-BLIND; ***OR YOUR ABILITY TO AFFORD THE SCHOOL MAY IMPACT THE ADMISSIONS DECISION.***
- Many students and parents still feel that they can select any one of the various state universities as a safety choice. This is not necessarily the case. Many state universities have established quotas governing the number of out-of-state students admitted, thereby creating ***keen competition*** for a limited number of places. Specific admissions criteria should be carefully reviewed.