

THE  
**PRINCETON REVIEW**

S T U D E N T   A C C E S S   G U I D E

# THE **BIG BOOK** **OF COLLEGES**

1 9 9 6   E D I T I O N

**UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ON  
1,200 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

## **The Buyer's Guide to College**

Comprehensive indexes and a user-friendly format help you quickly choose the schools that best match your interests

Contains complete and up-to-date information on admissions, campus life, financial aid, athletic programs, and much more

**Edward T. Custard**

■ THE PRINCETON REVIEW STUDENT ACCESS GUIDE

# THE BIG BOOK OF COLLEGES

by Edward T. Custard

Random House, Inc. New York

1996 Edition

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First Edition

■ THE PRINCETON REVIEW STUDENT ACCESS GUIDE

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THE BIG BOOK  
OF COLLEGES

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*1996 Edition*

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# FOREWORD

Welcome to the *Big Book of Colleges*. And, man, is it big. We've included 1,201 (to be exact) regionally accredited colleges, and gathered loads of useful information about each of them. You may feel as if everything you need to know to help you choose where to apply and attend is now in your hands.

It's only the beginning. This *Big Book*, like other college guides that resemble phone books, has useful statistics and deadlines. It can help you find schools that offer degrees or majors you're looking for. And help make sure you take required tests or courses. There's a lot more to choosing a college.

We've tried to give you some help with the first part of your college search, a time when you should narrow these schools to fifty or hundred that you might research in depth. Hopefully, you'll find that our "Admissions Wizard" is a quick way to eliminate schools that are wrong for you.

You're about to make one of the biggest decisions of your life. Never trust any one source too much—even us. When it comes to college, it seems that everyone has advice. People may tell you that you want a coed school, or one within 500 miles of home, or the one your father attended. You may be sure you want a school with a Division I sports program. Until you've thoroughly explored a variety of colleges, it's all just guessing. This is no time to rely on hunches or sentiment.

College is four years of your life, and will cost up to \$150,000 of your folks' savings (or your future earnings). It's not only good financial sense to make an informed decision, it's good common sense. College is an opportunity for personal growth that won't likely present itself in the same way ever again. There's nothing that compares to the experience—most grads will never forget their college years. We wish the same for you, and hope you find the *Big Book* helpful in your search for the right place.

—Ed Custard  
June 1995

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# INTRODUCTION

Before you dive into *The Big Book of Colleges*, we want to use a few pages to give you some tips for your college search—especially on how to get the most out of this book, and what to do once you’ve made your choices and are ready to apply. Since the most important thing for you to do now is to get started on your search, I want to start right off by revealing the secret to getting admitted to the college of your choice.

It’s almost never the focus of talk about college admission in the media, and parents and students discuss the subject all the time without even realizing that it’s the crucial element to getting admitted. We’re talking about matchmaking—finding colleges that have the educational and social environment you’re looking for, where you are well-suited academically and have something which the college is looking for in return. You have a lot more control over where you’ll wind up going to college than you might think.

Matchmaking is a two-step process. To be most effective, you should begin with a thorough self-examination, or *personal inventory*. Your personal inventory is best structured in the form of a spreadsheet or chart, so that when you begin to consider your options you can use it to check off those colleges that satisfy the various needs or wants you’ve identified. In this way, the best of your college choices will gradually begin to identify themselves.

Divide it into two sections. One section is biographical, including your high school course selection, GPA, SAT or ACT scores, rank in class, and personal information like extracurricular activities—especially those you plan on continuing in college. This will help you to assess how you stack up against each college’s admissions standards and student body.

The second section is a listing of the characteristics you need or want in the college you’ll choose to attend. This list should include anything and everything which you consider to be important, such as location, size of the student body, availability of scholarships, dormitory options, clubs and activities—even school colors, if that has some kind of significance to you. This part of your inventory should be ever-changing as you become more and more aware of what is truly important for you to find in the college of your choice.

Armed with your personal inventory, you can begin to take advantage of the many resources available to help you narrow your choices about where to apply. There are five sources for information and advice which have become standard for most college bound students.



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## 1. College Admissions Viewbooks, Videos, Brochures, and Catalogs

If you are a junior or senior in high school, you know more about the kinds of information these materials should include than the people who are responsible for designing and writing them. No college that spends half a million dollars on glossy literature is going to be objective about its content. In the best of this material, you can probably get a decent idea of the academic offerings on the campus and the basic admissions requirements. In all of it, you will never see any but the best looking students and the most appealing architecture on campus, nor will you hear about the years of tuition increases above the rate of inflation. Look this stuff over, but don't make any decisions based solely on what you read or see.

## 2. Your Friends

No one knows colleges and universities better than the students who currently attend them. Seek out any and all of your friends, sons and daughters of family friends, and recent graduates of your high school who attend college. Especially those who attend colleges which you are considering. Talk to them when they come home. Arrange to stay with them when you visit their colleges. Pick their brains for everything you can get. It doesn't get any more direct and honest than this.

## 3. Books and College Guides

There are two types of books that can be helpful in your search; those that discuss specific aspects of going to college, and college guides. In the first category, naturally we like *The Student Access Guide to Paying for College*. *Choosing A College*, by Thomas Sowell, is well worth seeking out; many of the most significant points Sowell makes about how to evaluate colleges can't be found in any other work. On the side of college guides, our *Student Access Guide to the Best 309 Colleges* is not only a personal favorite, but the best-seller among all qualitative college guides. In addition to the *Best 309*, look at *The Fiske Guide to Colleges* or the *Yale Daily News' Insiders Guide to the Colleges* for good second opinions. As for comprehensive guides—those that emphasize data over narrative content, you're holding the newest, most useful one in your hands.

## 4. Computers

There's a lot of help out there. The section in this book entitled "College Admission Goes Electronic" will give you full details on ways that you can turn the internet into an enormous college database, and how to apply for admission electronically. Our site on the World Wide Web (WWW) will provide you with access to all of the information that we have on colleges and testing, and direct links to hundreds of colleges. Alternatives to us include the Guidance Information System (GIS), found in many guidance or college counseling offices, as well as in some public libraries. And College Counsel's The College Advisor enables you to get a 50 page report including colleges you match up well with, based on a questionnaire they've developed. They can be reached at 800/457-5256. Once you have your hands on this information, look it over carefully and share it with your college counselor.

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## 5. Your Counselor

Once you've developed some ideas about your personal inventory and college options, schedule a meeting with your counselor. The more research you've done before you get together, the more help you're likely to get. Good advice comes out of thoughtful discussion, not from the expectation that your counselor will do your work. When it comes time to file applications, look over the materials and requirements together, and allow plenty of time to put forth your best.

## USING COLLEGE INFORMATION IN *THE BIG BOOK OF COLLEGES AND ELSEWHERE*

Throughout the course of your college search, you'll confront an amazing array of statistics and other data related to every college you consider. In order for all of this information to be helpful, you need to have some sense of how to interpret it. We've included a detailed key to the college entries in this book a few pages deeper into this introduction. Almost all the statistics we've compiled are self-explanatory, but there are a few which will be more useful with some elaboration. Don't use student/teacher ratio to assess average class size; they are not interchangeable terms. At almost every college, the average class size is larger than its student/teacher ratio. At many big universities, it is considerably larger. What is useful about the ratio is that it can give you an idea of how accessible your professors will be outside of the classroom. Once you are in college, you'll grow to realize just how important this is.

In the same way, the percentage of faculty who hold doctorates is useful information. When you're paying thousands of dollars in tuition each year, there's something comforting about knowing that your professors have a considerably broader and deeper grasp of what you're studying than you do. In contrast, teaching assistants (TAs) are just one or two steps ahead of you.

Another interesting group of statistics are those that deal with the percentage of students who go on to graduate or professional school. Never allow yourself to be overly impressed by such statistics unless you've taken the time to ponder their meaning and visited the college in question. High percentages almost always mean one of two things: that the college is an intellectual enclave which inspires students onward to further their education, or that it is a preprofessional bastion of aggressive careerists. There isn't anything inherently wrong with either one, but neither has universal appeal to prospective students. Colleges that are exceptions to this rule are rare and precious. The single most misleading figures of all provided to prospective students are those for medical school acceptance rates. Virtually every college in country can boast of high acceptance rates to medical school for its graduates; pre-med programs are designed to weed out those who will not be strong candidates before they even get to apply! If you're thinking about medical school, also ask colleges about how many of their students apply to medical school each year.

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One final piece of advice about statistics relates to the college's own acceptance rate. Simply knowing the percentage of applicants who are admitted each year is helpful, but it is even more helpful if you know how many applied as well. When you compare these figures to the freshman profile, you have the most accurate picture of just how tough it is to get in. An 80% acceptance rate doesn't mean there's an open door if you don't match up well to the academic achievements of the college's typical freshman.

A few final thoughts about your college search and the admissions process.

Once you've narrowed down your options and decided where to apply, don't waste any time requesting application materials and getting to work. The admissions process is stressful enough without putting extra pressure on yourself by waiting until the last minute. The first thing you should do when you receive the necessary forms is to go over them with your college counselor. Immediately remove the recommendation forms (if they are required) and give them to the teacher(s) and counselor who will be completing them for you. They'll have a better opportunity to write a thorough and supportive recommendation if you give them more than the night before they are due in the mail to complete them. This is also the time to make your request for official transcripts. Again, it takes time to do these things. Plan ahead.

As for completing the applications, organize yourself and all the materials. Keep everything in folders and accessible in case you need to speak with an admissions officer over the telephone. When essays and information on your extracurricular activities are required, do some outlining and rough drafts before you commit yourself to the actual forms. It's not a bad idea to ask colleges for two applications. It's amazing what damage your little brother and/or a flying cup of coffee can do.

Speaking of damage, paying for college requires some of your attention too. We don't have nearly the space or time to go into such a complicated and stressful subject now, but it's also important that you get to work on your financial circumstances right away. I mentioned earlier that our *Student Access Guide to Paying for College* is a good source of information. As a comforting thought, keep in mind that while college is costly, few pay the "sticker price," - and millions of students are currently attending. Regardless, you have to have your finances in order before you can attend or get the best financial aid possible.

Last but not least, DON'T TAKE IT EASY DURING YOUR SENIOR YEAR! Colleges routinely request mid-year grades, and they expect you to continue taking challenging academic courses and keep your grades up throughout your high school career. Doing so takes you one step closer to getting good news. Hopefully, so will your experience with *The Big Book of Colleges*. On behalf of The Princeton Review, have a good time and good luck. We'll see you on campus!

**■ PART ONE**

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# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

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# HOW THE BIG BOOK OF COLLEGES IS ORGANIZED

Every college and university in this book has its own full-page spread, and each entry follows the same basic format. Unless we've noted so in the descriptions below, the source for all of the data presented in the *Big Book* is Wintergreen/Orchard House, Inc., a college research and database publishing organization. As is customary with college guides, all data reflects figures for the academic year prior to publication, unless otherwise indicated. Since college offerings and demographics vary significantly from one institution to another, and some colleges report data more thoroughly than others, few entries will include all of the individual data that are described below.

## The Heading

School name, address, phone, fax (if available), eMail (if available), internet site (if available), college code numbers for both the College Board (CEEB) and the American College Testing Program (ACT) where applicable. As mentioned in "College Admission Goes Electronic" in the front of this book, all internet site addresses were accurate and functioning at the time of publication. Check our site on the internet at <http://www.review.com> for the most up-to-date links to colleges. Further, if you see a disk graphic appearing by the school's name that indicates the institution's acceptance of electronic applications.

## The Icons

A feature that we hope will make using the *Big Book* easier. Each college entry will have from four to six icons under the heading. The icons represent six categories, in the following order: enrollment size, environment, cost, selectivity, intercollegiate athletic division, and inclusion in *The Student Access Guide to the Best 309 Colleges*. For a complete listing of icons and their descriptions, see the end of this section.

## The Lead Text

Describes the college or university. Includes all data available that relates to date of founding, any religious affiliation, whether the school is public or private, coed or single sex, campus size, and location.

## Students & Faculty

### Enrollment

The total number of full-time undergraduates.

### Student Body

The percentage of male, female, out-of-state, and foreign students. The number of foreign countries represented.

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**Ethnic Representation**

By percentages according to ethnic group. Figures may not add up to 100%, as student reporting of ethnicity is voluntary by law.

**Retention & Graduation**

The percentage of freshmen who returned for sophomore year. The percentage of last year's seniors who entered as freshmen and graduated in four years. The percentage of graduates who pursue further study within one year.

**Student/Faculty Ratio**

The ratio of full-time faculty to undergraduates.

**Full-time Faculty**

The number of full-time faculty and/or the percentage of faculty who hold Ph.D.s or other terminal degrees.

**Academics****Academic Calendar**

The school's schedule of academic terms. A "semester" schedule has two long terms, usually fall and spring. A "trimester" schedule has three terms, usually one before Christmas and two after. A "quarterly" schedule has four terms; students typically attend three quarters per year, including summer if they so choose at some colleges. A "4-1-4" calendar is similar to a semester schedule, but includes a month-long term in between semesters.

**Degree(s) Awarded to Undergrads**

All Associate's (two-year) and Bachelor's degrees awarded by the college.

**Campus-wide Requirements**

Can include phys. ed., general ed., chapel attendance, religion courses, and assembly/convocation attendance.

**Majors**

350 total possible major categories, according to the US Department of Education Classification of Instructional Programs. Some schools may offer a variety of majors within some categories listed here. Check with the college's admissions office if you find a classification that covers your interest area but do not find the specific program you seek.

**Majors with Highest Enrollment**

The three most popular majors.

**Percentage Enrollment by Category**

Covers Arts & Humanities, Business, Math & Sciences, Social Sciences, Education, and Preprofessional enrollments. May add up to more or less than 100%, since not all majors fall into these broad categories and preprofessional students must also have a true major.



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**Special Academic Features**

Undergrad access to grad level classes. Reported only if undergrads may take graduate courses.

**Cooperative Education Programs**

Programs that allow students to concurrently work and study, both for academic credit.

**Combined Degree Programs**

Programs offered either by the college alone or in conjunction with another university that combine undergraduate degree programs with graduate study, thus shortening the amount of time required to get both degrees. Examples are BA/MD (college and med. school), BA/JD (college and law school), and BA/MBA (college and business school) programs.

**Off-campus Study**

Opportunities for study away from campus provided by the college itself, sometimes in conjunction with other colleges. Examples include Semester at Sea, Junior Year in New York, and the Washington Semester.

**Domestic Exchange Program(s)**

Programs that allow you to spend a term or a year at another college in the US, or in the case of McGill and the University of Toronto, in Canada.

**Foreign Exchange Program(s)**

Programs that allow you to spend a term or a year at another college in a foreign country.

**Student Services****Remedial Services**

Services offered for students in need of strengthening skills in a particular academic area (e.g. reading, writing, math, study skills).

**Counseling**

Services offered for students in a variety of categories (e.g. minorities, veterans, non-traditional students, academic, religious).

**Career Placement**

Services offered for students seeking career assistance (e.g., internships, on-campus job interviews, resume assistance, career classes, interest inventory, alumni services).

**Physically Disabled Services**

Special programs offered (e.g. note-taking, tape recorders, tutors, reader services). Also includes the college's own assessment of campus accessibility to physically disabled students

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### ***Learning Disabled (LD) Services***

The college's own assessment of the level of services available to LD students. Admission requirements for LD students (interview, essay, untimed tests). Contact information for LD program administrators.

## **Facilities**

### ***Housing***

Availability of campus housing and if so, types available, including coed, female only, sorority, male only, fraternity, apartments, and married student housing. Availability of college-owned off-campus housing or assistance in finding off-campus housing. Any housing requirements that may exist, such as freshmen required to live on-campus. The percentage of students living in school housing.

### ***Library Holdings***

The number of bound volumes, periodical subscriptions, microform items, CD-ROM titles, and audio visual titles held by the college library.

### ***Computers***

Information on access to computer facilities, including hours available, locations, and limitations. The total number of computers and number of those networked. Internet access availability. Information on universal computer course and/or computer ownership requirements.

### ***Special Academic Facilities/Equipment***

Other facilities and equipment of note (e.g., nuclear reactor, on-campus elementary school for student-teachers, scanning electron microscopes, etc).

## **Extracurriculars**

### ***Activities***

Standard activities available (e.g. student government, yearbook, radio, TV, magazine, newspaper). Name and frequency of student newspaper. Total number of registered organizations, honor societies, fraternities (with % of males who are members), sororities (with % of females who are members).

### ***Athletics***

Intercollegiate athletics available, listed by sex.

### ***Percentage Of Students Who Are On-Campus On Weekends.***

Precisely. This one speaks for itself.

## **Admissions**

### ***The Princeton Review Selectivity Rating***

Admissions competitiveness, ranging from 56 to 100. Determined by a formula that considers the college's acceptance rate, the yield of acceptees who enroll, and the class rank and average test scores of entering freshmen. By incorporating all these factors, our rating adjusts for "self-selecting" applicant pools.

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**Freshman Academic Profile**

Average high school GPA. Class rank distribution. The percentage from public high schools. Average SAT I and/or ACT composite scores.

**Basis for Candidate Selection**

The criteria considered by the admissions committee in evaluating candidates. Academic criteria in order of importance, followed by non-academic criteria in order of importance.

**Freshman Admission Requirements**

High school diploma/GED requirements. The number of academic units required in total and by academic subject. (Individual subject totals may not equal the total number of academic units required; in most cases, the difference can be made up with additional academic courses of your choosing. Check with the admissions office for any additional preferences.) Standardized test requirements and preferences. On and off-campus interview requirements/availability. Minimum academic standards if specified.

**Freshman Admission Statistics**

The number of students who applied, who were accepted, and who ultimately enrolled.

**Transfer Admission Requirements**

Transcript and test score requirements. Interview requirements. Minimum GPA required.

**Transfer Admission Statistics**

The number of transfers who applied, were accepted, and ultimately enrolled.

**Transfer Credit Policy**

Lowest course grade acceptable, maximum number of credits transferred. The number of credits required in residency for Bachelor's degree.

**Special Admission Requirements (Freshmen/Transfer)**

Generally, portfolio or audition requirements for art and music applicants. Any other special requirements for applicants to particular majors.

**General Admissions Information**

Application fee. Common Application participation. Application deadlines. Admission notification date. ("Rolling" indicates that decisions are sent to candidates as they are made, rather than held for a common notification date.) Special admission policies available, including HEOP (Higher Education Opportunity

Why Are the SAT Scores in this Book Different from Those of Lesser Guidebooks?

The main reason is that the College Board recently "recentered" the SAT. Beginning with the fall 1994 PSAT, they've added about 100 points to everyone's scores. This is not as generous as it sounds; the national average SAT score was designed to be 1000. As more women, minorities and poor people have taken the test, though, the average has dropped to about 880. Recentering has simply restored the old curve.

While the 100 points probably made you feel great, they may have given you a faulty impression of where you might get into college. So we've recentered the colleges' averages accordingly.

We've also adjusted the scores of colleges that have been caught cheating on (a.k.a. "selectively reporting") their SAT scores. They've made themselves look more selective by ignoring the scores of people with low scores (athletes, foreign students, minorities, etc). Special thanks to Moody's Investors Services for their help here.