1. What is Ahead
2. Myths
3. Personal Fit

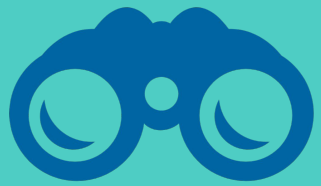
Session #1: Look Ahead & Personal Fit

Preparation now

= less stress later



Photo by Maddy Strasser



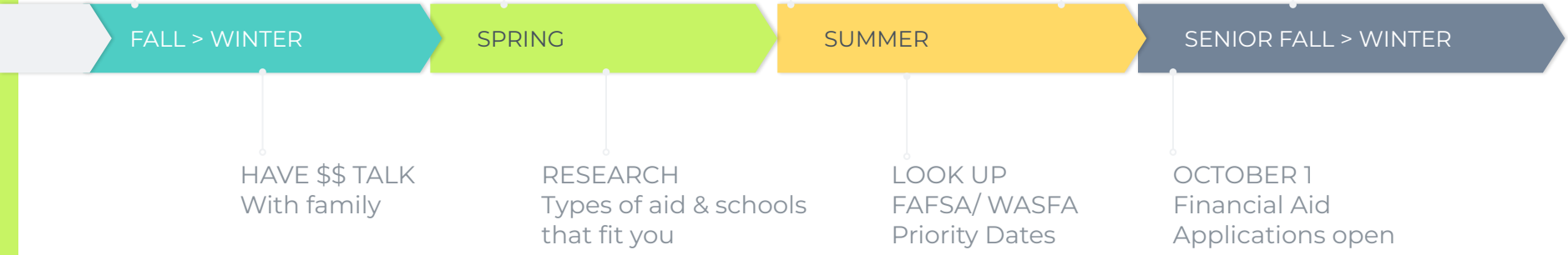
1.

Look Ahead

- Timeline
- Who does what
- What to anticipate

Timeline for 4-Year Colleges Starting Now

FALL 2026:
Attend all JAFC sessions & check email!



Who does what

Shorewood

- Guides via events, website, emails, packets & tools
- Advises throughout process
- Offers free workshop in June
- Sends application materials according to student setup

You

- Attend events, read emails
- Use tools provided to research & develop list
- Sign up for opportunities
- Complete applications & direct process

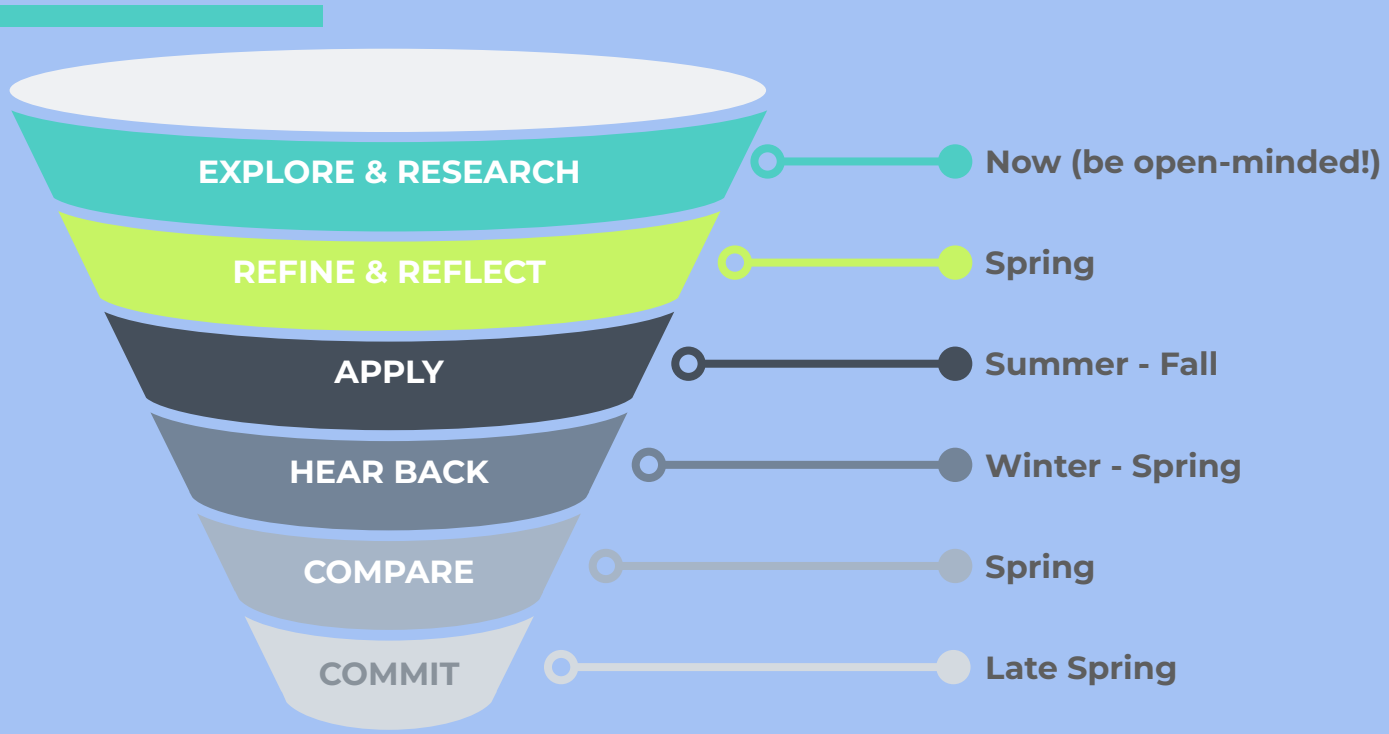
Parents/Guardians *can help, but they aren't going to college.*
The search & application process is excellent preparation for college since it involves self-reflection, communication, details, and independence.



What to Anticipate:

- Self-reflection:
  - Now for priorities
  - Later in essays
- Research: tools & starting points provided
- Decisions: small and large
- Management of process
- Some uncertainty, but that means you are growing!

STUDENT PROCESS Now - Fall 2026





2.

Myths

Getting in, where to go, and what to look for

Myth or Truth?

Impossible Odds

It's really hard to get into college

Reality

Pretty Good Odds

Most colleges accept most students.

Average admission rate: **73%**

Name Matters

It's important to go to a well-known college

Reality

Fit Matters

What you *do* in college matters more than perceived prestige.

Goal: Getting In

You should focus on being accepted

Reality

Earning a Degree

Focus on your education and graduating

Myths About Majors

You have to decide what Major/Career you want before you apply to college.

If a college doesn't have your exact major, choose another college.

Some Majors at *Some* Colleges are Direct Entry

Meaning you have to apply to the major when you apply to the school



There are three types of majors at the UW — open, minimum requirements and capacity-constrained. Your admission to a major at the UW depends on the major you are interested in and your application type.

Types of majors

Open majors

These majors are open to you when you're admitted to the UW or anytime thereafter.

Majors with minimum requirements

These majors have additional admission requirements. Once you're a UW student and meet the minimum requirements, you can be admitted without further screening.

Capacity-constrained majors

Capacity-constrained majors have additional requirements and selective screening, which may include an additional application process. Completing the minimum UW admission requirements does not guarantee admission to capacity-constrained majors. With the exception of computer science and engineering, you can apply to these majors once you are a UW student.

MOST students change majors while in college

College of Letters and Science

- Bachelor of Arts in American Studies
- Bachelor of Arts in Asian Studies
- Bachelor of Science in Anthropology
- Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences (Department of Ecology)
  - Biology Teaching Option
  - Conservation Biology and Ecology Option
  - Fish and Wildlife Ecology and Management Option
  - Organismal Biology Option
- Bachelor of Science in Chemistry and Biochemistry
  - Biochemistry Option
  - Biochemistry Option: Pre-Med Track
  - Chemistry (Professional) Option
  - Teaching Option
- Bachelor of Science in Earth Sciences
  - Geography Option
  - Geology Option
  - GIS/Planning Option
  - Paleontology Option
  - Snow Science Option
- Bachelor of Science in Economics
- Bachelor of Arts in English
  - Writing Option
  - Teaching Option
  - Literature Option
- Bachelor of Arts in History
  - History Option
  - History Teaching Option
  - Science, Environment, Technology and Society Option (SETS)
- Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies
  - Environmental Studies Option
  - Global and Multicultural Option
  - Quaternity Option
  - Global Studies Minor
  - Global Studies Health Minor
  - Sustainability Minor
- Bachelor of Science in Mathematics
  - Applied Mathematics Option
  - Mathematics Option
  - Mathematics Teaching Option
  - Statistics Option
- Bachelor of Arts in Modern Languages and Literatures
  - French K-12 Teaching Option
  - French and Francophone Studies Option
  - German K-12 Teaching Option

College of Agriculture

- Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Business
  - Agribusiness Management Concentration
  - Farm and Ranch Management Concentration
- Bachelor of Science in Agricultural and Technology Education
  - Agricultural Education Broadfield Teaching Option
  - Agricultural Communication, Leadership, and Extension Option
  - Technology Education Broadfield (5-12)
  - Industrial Technology
- Bachelor of Science in Animal Science
  - Equine Science Option
  - Livestock Management and Industry Option
  - Science Option
- Bachelor of Science in Environmental Horticulture
  - Environmental Horticulture Science Option
  - Landscape Design Option
- Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences
  - Environmental Biology Option
  - Environmental Science Option
  - Geospatial and Environmental Analysis Option
  - Land Rehabilitation Option
  - Soil and Water Sciences Option
- Bachelor of Science in Financial Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Microbiology
  - Microbiology Pre-Veterinary Track
- Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources and Rangeland Ecology
  - Rangeland Ecology and Management Option
  - Wildlife Habitat Ecology and Management Option
- Bachelor of Science in Plant Science
  - Crop Science Option
  - Plant Biology Option
  - Plant Biotechnology
- Bachelor of Science in Ranching Systems
- Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Food & Bioenergy Systems
  - Agroecology Option
  - Sustainable Crop Production Option
  - Sustainable Livestock Production Option
- Pre-veterinary Medicine Program
  - Non-degree program

College of Education, Health and Human Development

- Bachelor of Science in Community Health
- Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education Preschool-Age Three (P-3)
- Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education K-8
  - Early Childhood Education Option
  - Mathematics Option
  - Science Education Option
  - Special Education Option
- Bachelor of Science in Food and Nutrition
  - Dietetics Option
  - Nutrition Science Option
- Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education
  - General Science Broadfield Option
  - Social Studies Broadfield Option
  - (Departmental Teaching Options)
- Bachelor of Science in Health Enhancement K-12 (Health and Physical Education)
- Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management
  - Food Enterprise
  - Lodging and Facilities
  - Restaurant Management: Farm to Table
- Bachelor of Science in Human Development and Family Science
  - Child Development
  - Family and Consumer Sciences Education Option
  - Human Development and Family Science Option
- Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology
  - Exercise Science Option
  - Health and Fitness Option
- Bachelor of Science in Sustainable Food & Bioenergy Systems
  - Sustainable Food Systems Option
- Certificate of Gerontology

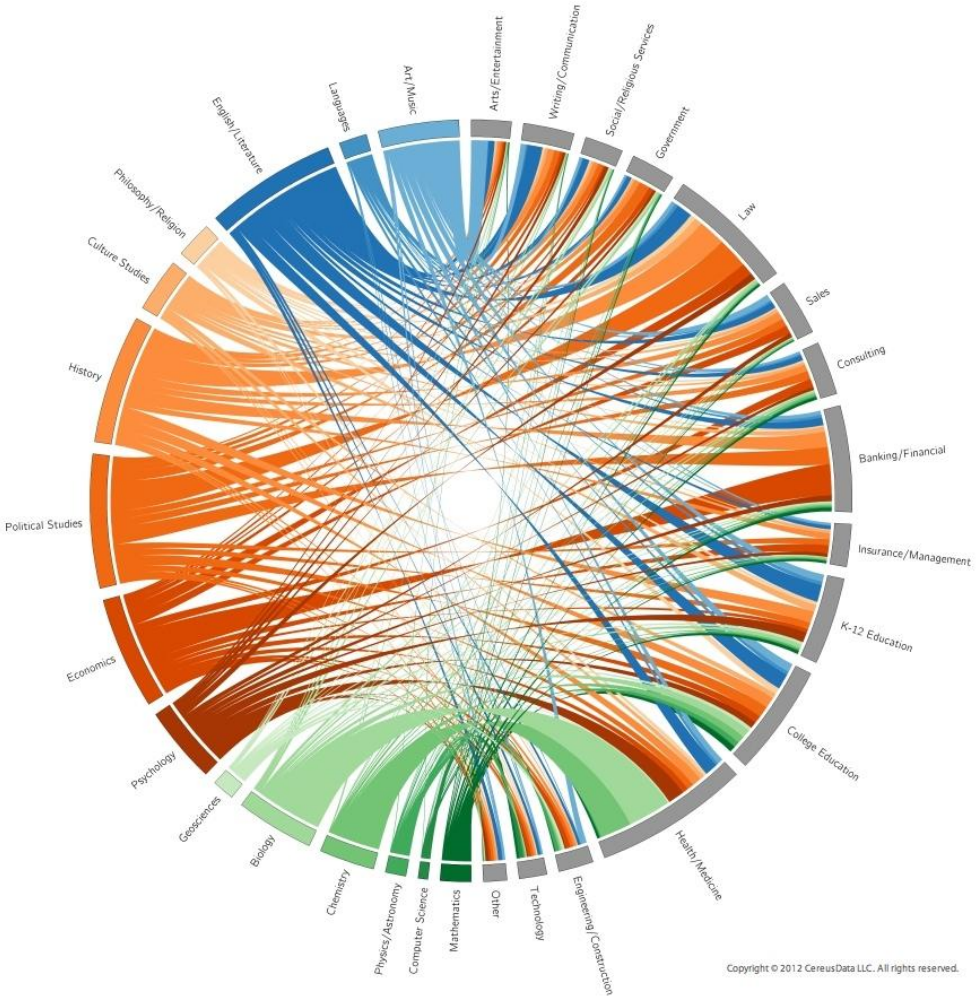
Exploration now can help, but there's no way to know all of the possibilities

Colleges want you to explore *there*

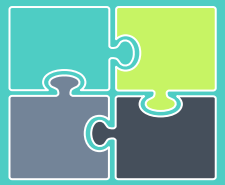
Shown: about 20% of the majors available at Montana State

People with the same major go into very different careers

People in the same career often had different majors



See: [Visualizing Majors & Careers](), Williams College



3.

Personal Fit

Note: fit is important, but it's not true that there is only one college that will work for you!

College Fit has three components



WHY FIT? *ENGAGEMENT* MATTERS MOST

A good "fit" is a college where a student will be engaged — in class and out — by what the college has to offer.

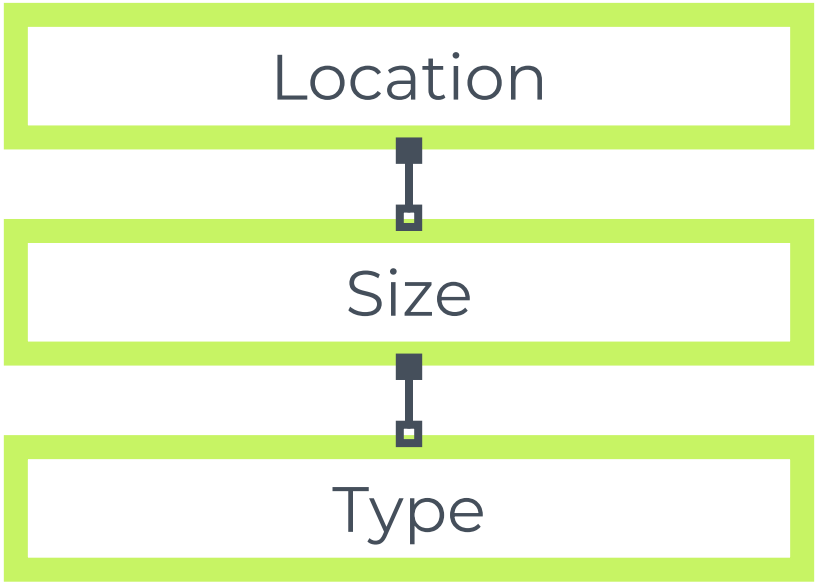
Fit Over Rankings, *Challenge Success* 2018

The Gallup-Purdue studies mentioned above show a strong connection between certain forms of engagement in college and future job satisfaction and well-being. They report six key college experiences that have an impact on how fulfilled employees feel at work and whether they are thriving in life after college:

1. **TAKING A COURSE** with a professor who makes learning exciting.
2. **WORKING WITH PROFESSORS** who care about students personally.
3. **FINDING A MENTOR** who encourages students to pursue personal goals.
4. **WORKING ON A PROJECT** across several semesters.
5. **PARTICIPATING IN AN INTERNSHIP** that applies classroom learning.
6. **BEING ACTIVE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.**

(Gallup Inc., 2014)

For Personal Fit, people often start with:



Where to go?



Consider:

- Climate
- Setting–but don't be too dismissive of small towns/suburbs!

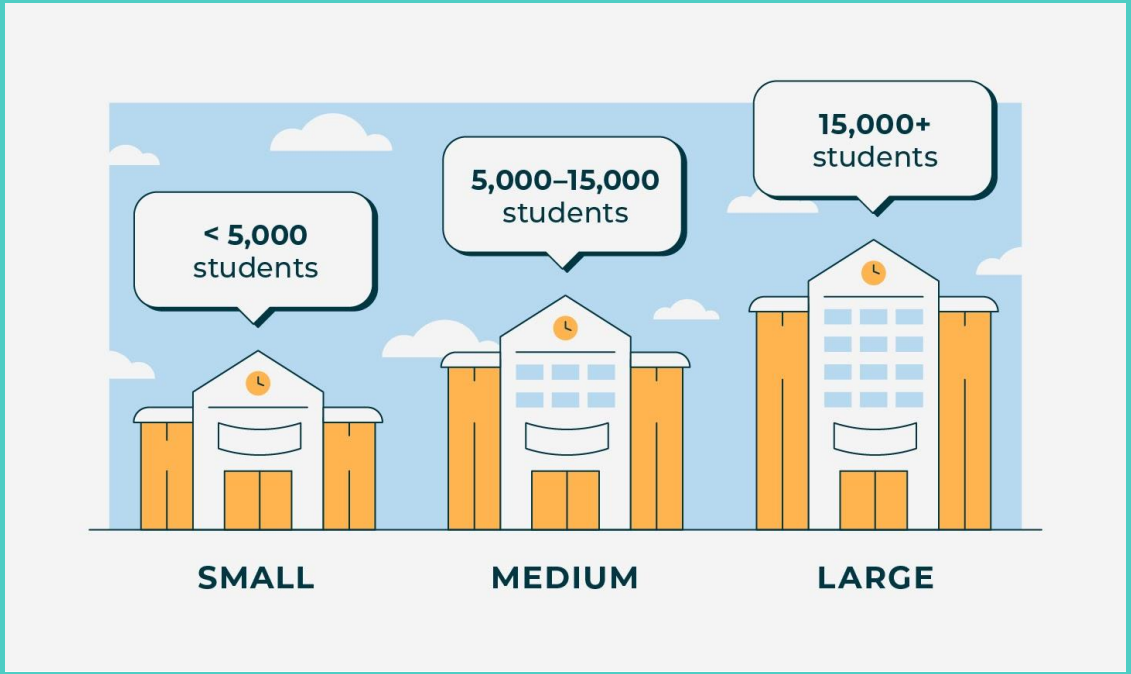
All college sizes have advantages

People often overestimate its importance

A small college *isn't* like high school

A big university won't necessarily be impersonal

Don't exclude a size without gaining some experience/ knowledge



College Type by Funding & Location

IN-STATE PUBLIC

UWs, WSU, Western, Central, Eastern

IN-STATE PRIVATE

Gonzaga, Pacific Lutheran, SPU, Seattle U, UPS, Whitman, Whitworth

In state/ out of state tuition varies *only* with PUBLIC colleges



Oregon State, U of Oregon, Boise State, U of Idaho, UC & Cal State...100s of others

OUT OF STATE PUBLIC

Thousands of colleges!

OUT OF STATE PRIVATE

HOWEVER, we suggest that you



Focus on YOU

Use tools to help you explore WHY you want to go to college and what qualities will make a college work for you

Consider Individual Factors

- How you learn best
- What kind of people you want to be around
- What amenities *really* matter
- And other questions that take time & reflection
- Go inward–this will also help with your essays!



Use the Personal Fit tools on the College Fit page & the suggested activities

SLOW DOWN and do some personal reflection

What do you want college to do for you? Here are 12 suggested reasons why you might want to attend college.

1. To learn about different cultures, peoples, backgrounds, etc.
2. To expand my potential lifetime earnings
3. To learn essential life skills so that I can be a better parent and citizen
4. To find a vocational direction in life
5. To gain more independence and a greater sense of freedom
6. To create long-lasting relationships and professional connections
7. To have a fresh start where no one knows me
8. To gain new skills and experiences
9. To enable me to receive a degree from a high-quality school
10. To explore the U.S. and perhaps the world
11. To take advantage of college life: spectator sports, clubs, activities, etc.
12. To get the best education possible at a reasonable cost

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Lean Toward Disagree	Disagree
1. It takes a whole lot of effort to achieve important goals.				
2. My parents don't have to remind me to study or do my homework.				
3. I usually manage to complete everything on my daily "to-do" list.				
4. School is fun.				
5. I want to organize myself so I have time for both homework and for out-of-class activities.				
6. I let others know ahead of time when I have a really busy day and can't be disturbed.				
7. I normally am enthused about the classes I am taking.				
8. I'm excited for my college years to begin.				

Exercises in Self-Reflection for Personal Fit in Jr. AFC Packet



College Admission is:

A personal journey. This is your search, so own it.

An invitation to explore identity and purpose. This will not happen overnight.

–Brennan Barnard A Letter to College Applicants *Forbes*

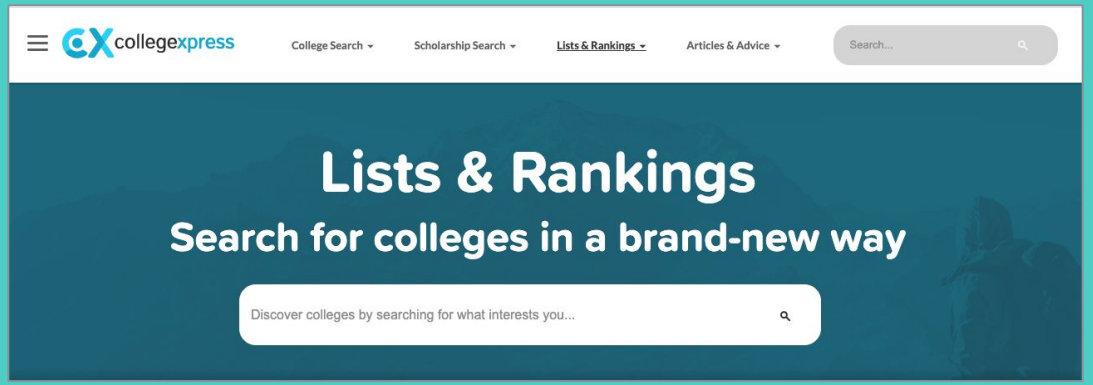
What to Do Now (1 of 3)

- Be open-minded!
- Recommended Activities:
  - Figure out *why* you want to go to college/ what you aim to get out of it
  - Figure out *your* priorities
  - Do self-reflection
- Work through *Personal Fit* section on Jrs. Aiming for College Materials & Activities
- Take a few *weeks* to do these things



What to Do (2 of 3)

- **After** you reflect, use *College Search Tools* (#3 in packet)
- Use Scoir (access via Classlink)
- At least once, use CollegeXpress to look up by personal and/or wacky factors



What to Do (3 of 3) When you get to particular colleges (don't rush!), use the *College List Worksheet*

It's in the packet!

Research Colleges **To save your own version, click File above then select Make a Copy.**	**Personal Fit** *College characteristics that not only meet your personal preferences for location, size, major, but that truly stand out and fit YOU*			**Engagement** *"The students who benefit the most from college are those who are most engaged in their academics and campus communities, taking advantage of the opportunities and resources their particular institution provides. Engagement is the key." Fit Over Rankings Report*					
SHOREWOOD COLLEGE & CAREER LIST WORKSHEET	**Setting trait** I'm excited about	**Academic trait** I'm excited about	**Social trait** I'm excited about	**Taking a Course** that makes learning exciting	**Working with Professors** who care about students personally	**Finding a Mentor**	**Working on a Project** across several semesters	**Participating in an Internship** that relates to classroom learning	**Active in Extracurricular Activities**
Colleges You are Thinking About									
Example: Gonzaga University	sun & snow	Political Science major/ small	dorms, emphasis on service	Politics & Food!	seems like it; need to research	probably--Dr. SBT's course on Hunger	Directed study option	yes--DC semster program	political clubs, intramural



BE RECEPTIVE TO

- New information
- Unfamiliar locations, names, ideas, possibilities

You’ve got this!

Look at how much you have learned & been through thus far!

You have an exciting 18 months ahead of you.



Photo by Maddy Strasser