

# You're Graduating, Now What?

**Congratulations on your upcoming accomplishment!** This handout is an excellent tool that we believe will help you and your parents to navigate some of the most difficult questions that come with picking a college.

This handout to help you work through some questions you may have as you prepare to choose the college you will be attending.



## What is Higher Education?

Higher education is any kind of continued training after you complete high school. It can be a 2-year community college, 4-year university, or trade school. It can be public or private, for-profit or not-for-profit.



### Examples of a Community College:

Hill College, Tarrant County College & Navarro College

### Programs offered:

Certificates, Associate Degrees, and credits for transfer to a 4-year university.

### Examples of a private, not-for-profit, 4-year University:

Texas Christian University or Texas Wesleyan University

### Programs offered:

Bachelor's Degrees and Graduate Degree Programs

### Examples of a public, not-for-profit, 4-year University:

Tarleton State University or University of Texas at Arlington

### Programs offered:

Certificates, Bachelor's Degrees, and Graduate Degree Programs

### Examples of private, for-profit University:

Art institute of Dallas, ITT Tech, or Sail University

\*\*\*These schools are typically not accredited and very expensive\*\*\*

### Programs offered:

Certificate Programs

# What is a Best Fit College?

## Safety College

Your class rank and test scores are well above the average for the school.

## Best Fit College

Your class rank and test scores are at or above average for the school.

## Reach College

Your class rank and test scores are below the average for the school.

## Four Factors of Fit

Each College and University is unique - like you. Below are some questions to ask as you consider what school you will attend.

### Academic Match

#### SAT/ACT scores and GPA:

How do your SAT/ACT scores and GPA compare to those of enrolled students?

#### Graduation and Retention Rates:

Do most students return after their freshman year? Do most students graduate on time?

#### Major:

Does the college offer a wide variety of majors? Does it offer the major(s) that interest you?



### Personal Preferences

#### Campus Size:

How many students are at this college? Do you want a small or a big college?

#### Campus Location:

Is the campus in a rural, suburban, or urban setting?

#### Campus Life:

What student activities are available at the college? Do you want to live on campus or off campus?



### Institutional Offerings

#### Resources:

What does the college provide in terms of the latest technology, lab facilities, and libraries?

What is the faculty/ student ratio?

#### Campus Resource Services:

What campus support services are available? Are there writing and math labs?



### Affordability

#### Actual Cost:

How much do you want to pay for school? How does their cost compare to others?

#### Financial Aid:

How much did the school award in financial aid the previous year? For example, the average full-time college student in 2018-2019 received \$15,210 to pay for college. \$9,520 of this came from grants, \$4,410 in federal loans and \$1,280 in tax credits & Federal Work-Study.

#### Scholarships:

What scholarships does the school offer? Are there department specific (i.e. Accounting, Math, or Education) scholarships available?

# College Fit

- 1) List 5 colleges you are considering. If you don't have any colleges on your list, ask your Upward Bound Program Coordinator to help identify some possible schools or look at schools that offer free tuition, (see handout).
- 2) Research your schools and fill in the chart below.

	College 1	College 2	College 3	College 4	College 5
Is my major offered?					
Is it public or private?					
Am I ok with the distance from home?					
Do I like the size of school?					
Am I comfortable with the demographic make-up of the school?					
What is the cost of attendance per year?					
What is the average amount of financial aid students receive per year?					
When is the application deadline?					
What are the GPA requirements?					
What are the SAT/ACT requirements?					
Is this a Safety, Best Fit, or Reach School for me? (see Factors of Fit)					
<b>Overall Good Fit for me?</b>	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N	Y/N

- 3) After you have entered the information, decide if your schools are a good overall fit.
  - How did your results compare to your expectations? Any surprises?
  - Do the results reinforce your original thoughts, or open up a new college opportunity to consider?
  - Keep in mind that this exercise is to help guide you in the decision making process. It is not an absolute test in choosing which college you should attend.

# College Tracks

Cost to attend a University, Community College, or the Combination of Both.

	<b>Track A</b> 4 years at a University	<b>Track B</b> 2 years at CC + 2 years at a University	<b>Track C</b> 2 years at Community College
<b>Approach</b>	Straight to University after Graduating High School	Complete Core Courses & Transfer to a University	Complete an Associate's or Technical Degree or Certifications
<b>Examples</b>	Tarleton	Hill College + Tarleton	Hill College

## What each track will cost you?

\*These Are All Based on State Averages for Public Universities and Community Colleges in TX

<b>*Average Tuition for 4 years</b>	\$43,296 (4 years)	\$29,700 (2 years @ each)	\$8,052 (2 Years)
<b>*Average for Books and Supplies</b>	*\$4,976 (4 years)	*\$5,788 (2 years @ each)	*\$3,300 (2 years)
<b>*Housing &amp; Meal Plan Average for 4 years</b>	\$38,240	\$19,120 (2 years at University)	\$0 if you choose to live off campus

## Financial Aid Available to Help Pay for School

<b>Maximum Pell Grant</b>	\$6,195 (Total for 2 semesters, changes every year based on family income.)		
<b>Financial Aid</b>	Every student's eligibility for Federal Student Aid will be different. Students will use FAFSA to qualify for Federal Aid, Loans, etc. Students are also encouraged to apply for local, state, and institutional grants and scholarships.		
<b>4 year Total after Pell Grant</b>	\$61,732	\$29,828	Max Pell would cover all cost!
<b>*Yearly Out-of-Pocket Cost (can be covered by financial aid)</b>	\$15,430	\$7,457	\$0

# College Checklist

ITEMS	COMPLETED
Research at least ten colleges and universities. You should research the following about each: cost of tuition, room & board options, degrees offered, population size, diversity statistics, scholarship programs, deadlines for admission and financial aid, testing requirements, etc.	
Sign up to take the SAT (fee waivers provided by UB) & ACT (fee waivers provided by counselors).	
Identify prospective colleges with early application deadlines and apply. Secure recommendation letters from teachers, school administration, clergy, employers, UB staff, etc.	
Prepare for the SAT & ACT by attending our workshops and taking practice tests.	
Write your essay drafts for scholarship applications and have them reviewed.	
Write your essays for college applications and have them reviewed.	
Narrow your prospective colleges, visit them, and apply to at least 5.	
Complete your FAFSA application.	
Complete ALL of your college applications (send in preliminary transcripts, test scores, and application fee waivers).	



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