

GENERAL INFORMATION

Your college search is a very difficult and overwhelming process making it a necessity to be educated in order to take a proactive approach to the process. It is important that you research your options, know which questions to ask and take the time to find the school or soccer program that is the best fit for you. If and when you are successful, it can save you money and put you on a fast track to a rewarding career path as well as an enjoyable college or college soccer experience. Below are some categories to always consider when researching schools.

Location & Size of School

The school location and student population may heavily influence your college choice. Each location will offer a unique set of opportunities and experiences. Do you want the offerings of a large city or are you more comfortable in a rural environment? What resources will you need to access (e.g. transportation, museums, prospective employers, industry and nature)? Take the time to consider what makes you happy now, what opportunities you want in the future and how population density and surroundings may influence your overall happiness at that institution. Also, consider the size of the student population and average class sizes. Do you need a smaller class setting with more individualized attention? Will you get overwhelmed with large lecture halls of 100+ students? Know your limitations and what type of learning environment is best for you and your success.

Academics

If you are seeking a particular major you may severely limit your college choices. Keep in mind that nationwide, approximately 50% of college students change majors at least once before college graduation. Try to find a school that has several areas of potential interest. If you do have a major in mind, make sure to compare the prospective program to other schools. Consider the reputation of the program and record of job placement or acceptance into graduate programs. Ask what the 4 year graduation rates are. Take the time to meet with a representative from that program to answer any questions that you may have. Understand ALL academic requirements to gain acceptance to each school. If you are being recruited by a particular school, that athletic program may have some influence in assisting in your acceptance, but for the most part schools have little leeway. The reality is that better grades, harder classes, better class rank and better standardized test scores will provide you more college choices, so study!

Financial

You can quite easily find the overall costs of attendance (COA) for schools by looking online. If you are in contact with a prospective soccer program, find out what the qualifications are for academic and athletic money from the institution. Soccer scholarships are limited and coaches will utilize any and all means to assist families in the financial

arena. The costs of a college degree are continually rising and vary greatly. If money is a concern, evaluate all potential areas to gain financial assistance. Know that changing majors, transferring to another school and/or extending graduation after 4 years may increase your costs.

Athletic Standards

What level of play are you most suited for? How much college soccer have you watched whether on TV or live on a college campus? The more college soccer you see the better you will be informed of where you can play! Pay attention to the style of play of the school and how it fits in with your style. Pay attention to the recruiting class size and recruiting needs of the school. Do they need someone in your position or do they intend on playing you somewhere else on the field? Being versatile and having a good overall understanding of the game will afford you additional opportunities. Understanding the roles and responsibilities of ALL positions will open up more doors for you. A coach may recruit you for the position that they see you playing or for a position that they feel will help their program. You may play a certain position your first year or for a few years and then be moved to an alternate position. If you are not versatile and able to adapt to a new position you will find yourself not playing at all! Do you want to attend a school and sit for a year or two or do you want to attend a school and be an immediate impact? Know the system, learn your opportunities and come prepared to play.