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Exercise 5.1A | Your College Choice

In this exercise, you will analyze and determine what characteristics of a college/university are most appealing to your individual needs. This worksheet will help you discover the best college for you based on what you value and consider most important.

**Part 1–Researching Your Options**

Table 1

For this activity, consider what you have learned about college culture so far. Use the table below to help you decide what cultural factors of a college campus you prefer. **Select one of the factors listed on each row. You can highlight or use an X to show which you are choosing.**

**Types of Colleges or Universities**

| X | **Large university** | **Small college** |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| X | **Public** | **Private** |  |
| X | **Co-ed** | **Men’s/women’s** |  |
| X | **Traditional** | **Online/evening** |  |
| X | **Big metropolitan location** | **Small town location** |  |
| X | **Ethnically diverse** | **Minority serving** |  |
| X | **In-state** | **Out-of-state** |  |

TABLE 2

**Use the table to list and rank the factors related to your personal college needs** (1 is most important to you and 7 is least important). You can refer back to the questions in this chapter to think through each category.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Factors | Rank |
| **Cost** | 1. Location |
| **Location** | 2. Campus life |
| **Major/Program** | 3. Cost |
| **Size** | 4. Major/ Program |
| **Faculty/student support** | 5. Size |
| **Campus life** | 6. Faculty/Student support |
| **Housing** | 7. Housing |

Based on the preferences you selected in Tables 1 and 2, you should have a general idea of what you are looking for in a transfer college. If needed, visit [**www.collegeboard.org**](http://www.collegeboard.org) to explore a more detailed search of the different colleges/universities that meet your needs as transfer options.

**List 2-3 universities that you would consider attending below. There is space for 3 in the exercise, but you must have at least 2 to compare in Table 3.**

1. University of North Carolina at Charlotte
2. Johnson C. Smith University
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Table 3

Now you should continue your research by visiting the university websites for each of your choices. In the table below, enter your score on a scale of 1–5 (5 being the best fit and 1 being no fit) to judge each feature for each school listed. Consider each feature by asking yourself, “Am I comfortable with this feature of the school?” or “Do I like this feature of the school?” When evaluating information, such as “Is my major offered?” enter a 5 for yes and 1 for no.

**Notes:**

1. **There is space for 2-3 colleges in this exercise. You must have at least 2 to compare in Table 3.**
2. **For this exercise you have a choice to either score 1-5 as noted above OR use the column to record the research you discovered about that specific topic.**
3. **For #11 and 12 below, fill in another personal quality that you must have on your campus: (Examples would be fraternity/sorority, has a learning community I am interested in, has great food options, etc.)**

| Sample Qualities: | College A | College B | College C |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| University Name:  University of North Carolina at Charlotte  Johnson C. Smith University | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Solid reputation for my major or program | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Distance from home | 5 | 4 |  |
| 1. Campus size | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Diversity/ethnic makeup | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Average # of years to graduate | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. City/town size and makeup | 5 | 4 |  |
| 1. Cost | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Reputable faculty and research opportunities | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. Career preparation/internships/job market network | 5 | 5 |  |
| 1. What do my instincts tell me? | 5 | 4 |  |
| 1. Personal Quality #1:   Location | 5 | 4 |  |
| 1. Personal Quality #2:   cost | 5 | 5 |  |
| Total School Value: | 65 | 61 |  |

**Based on your findings, rank your top 2-3 university choices.**

1. University of North Carolina at Charlotte
2. Johnson C. Smith University
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part 2–Summarizing Your College Decision**

**Now that you have identified your top school, write a two-paragraph summary about this decision. What is your top university choice and why is it the best choice for you academically, socially, geographically, and culturally? You may need to do additional research on the university website. Make sure you use the information collected in Tables 1–3 to explain your choice.**

**Note: Keep in mind that this exercise is to help guide you in the decision-making process. It is not an absolute test for choosing which college you should attend.**

My choosing the University of North Carolina at Charlotte represents a major decision that corresponds perfectly with my academic ambitions and personal growth objectives. Academically, University of North Carolina at Charlotte offers a diverse range of programs, particularly strong in the field I am keen to explore, such as business administration. The University’s devotion to research and innovation provides plenty of opportunities for hands-on learning and collaboration with esteemed faculty. Socially, University of North Carolina at Charlotte lively campus life and diverse student body promise a rich, inclusive environment where I can engage with individuals from various backgrounds, fostering a broader outlook and enhancing my interpersonal skills.

Geographically, Charlotte location offer a blend of urban excitement and natural beauty. The city’s thriving job market and proximity to major industries create excellent internship and career prospects. Culturally, Charlotte is a melting pot, with a vibrant art scene, diverse culinary experiences, and numerous cultural festivals that reflect its rich heritage and multicultural population. This energetic environment will allow me to broaden my horizons, develop a global mindset, and contribute to a diverse and thriving community. Overall, University of North Carolina at Charlotte is not just a place to earn a degree but a place to grow as an individual, prepare for a successful future, and make a meaningful impact on the world.