



College Fit: Personalizing the College Search, Application, and Enrollment Process

Advancing College Readiness through Effective Programming
2015 NCCEP/GEAR UP Capacity Building Workshop

“Five Keys to Success in the Student-Centered, College-Going Process”

with

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Every year, more than two million students begin college in the USA.

Barely half will ever finish.

It doesn't have to be that way.

Focus on intentionality:
“College by design, not default.”

Keys to Success in the Student-Centered, College-Going Process

1. Know yourself
2. Know what you are getting into
3. Make good choices
4. Tell your story
5. Believe in yourself

**In order to
know themselves,
students need to be coached to
engage in self-discovery.**

**They need to find
direction and discover
their voices.**

Help students identify their priorities:

- ▲ Why do you want to go to college?
- ▲ How would you define a “good education”?
- ▲ What are three things you want to accomplish by the time you graduate from college?

With priorities in mind, get students to focus on finding “fit” as they look at colleges.

The ***best college fit*** will provide a:

- ▲ Program of study to meet the student’s needs
- ▲ Style of instruction consistent with the way the student likes to learn
- ▲ Level of academic rigor commensurate with the student’s ability *and* preparation
- ▲ Community that feels like home

And the best college fit will ...

... be the place that values
the student for what s/he has to offer.

**Prospective college applicants
need to
*know what they are getting into ...***

**It starts with
the competition.**

The Pyramid of Selectivity

Most Highly Selective (1/8)

Highly Selective (1/4)

Selective (1/2)

Somewhat Selective (6/8)

The Enrollment Model

Applications 8,000

Acceptances 2,000

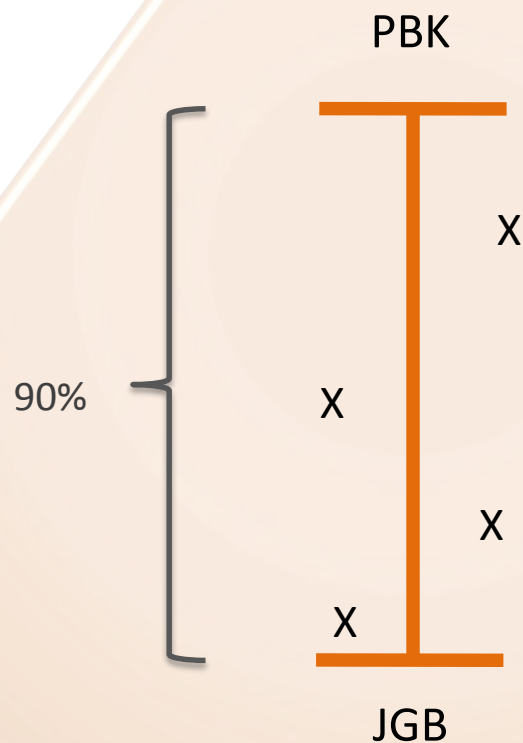
Enrollment 500

90%

Selectivity

Yield

The Competitive Playing Field



Admission officers will ask
three basic questions
of each candidate ...

Question #1: Can you do the work?

- ▲ Courses
- ▲ Grades
- ▲ Scores

Question #2:

If we admit you, what do we get?

- ▲ Talent
- ▲ Perspective
- ▲ Leadership
- ▲ Diversity

Question #3:
If we admit you,
what is the likelihood that you will enroll?

- ▲ Demonstrate interest
- ▲ Visit college campuses
- ▲ Build relationships

Colleges are businesses!

The decision to admit a student—or not ...

The decision to give financial aid of any sort—or not ...

... is a **BUSINESS DECISION!**

Five Sources of College Funding

- \$ Student's family
- \$ Federal government
- \$ State government
- Institution
- \$ Community-based scholarships

Expected Family Contribution

Family's Income & Assets

— Family's Cost of Living

Expected Family Contribution (EFC)

Inside Differential Need Analysis

FAFSA vs. CSS Profile

- ▲ FAFSA
- ▲ CSS Profile
- ▲ Net Price Calculators

Students need to be reminded that
every day
they make choices
that will have a bearing on how they live
the next day!

The big things, the little things ...

They all add up!

Urge students to invest in themselves—

To choose self-enrichment over
college credentialing

Urge students to choose courses
that make sense to them—

And to do as well as they can in
those courses

Urge students to engage in the process!

One of the biggest mistakes students make as they approach the college-going process is they let it happen to them ...

They don't make it happen for them!

Urge students to put themselves into competition at colleges that are good fits—

places where they will be valued
for what they have to offer

Students need to use every part of the application to *tell their stories ...*

to create a clear picture of the person who is to be considered for admission!

Hotspots on the Application *and possible “hooks”*

- ▲ Geographic point of origin
- ▲ Academic interest/possible major
- ▲ Ethnic background
- ▲ Family background
- ▲ Academic honors/Extracurricular activities
- ▲ Personal statement
- ▲ Transcript

Keys to Telling “the Story”

- ▲ Be distinctive with the personal statement
- ▲ Take advantage of opportunities to interview
- ▲ Make sure the people who write letters of recommendation are well-informed

**To be successful,
students need to
*believe in themselves!***

To receive more information about the
college planning process
contact Peter at
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