



Navigating Your College Choice

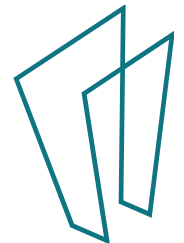
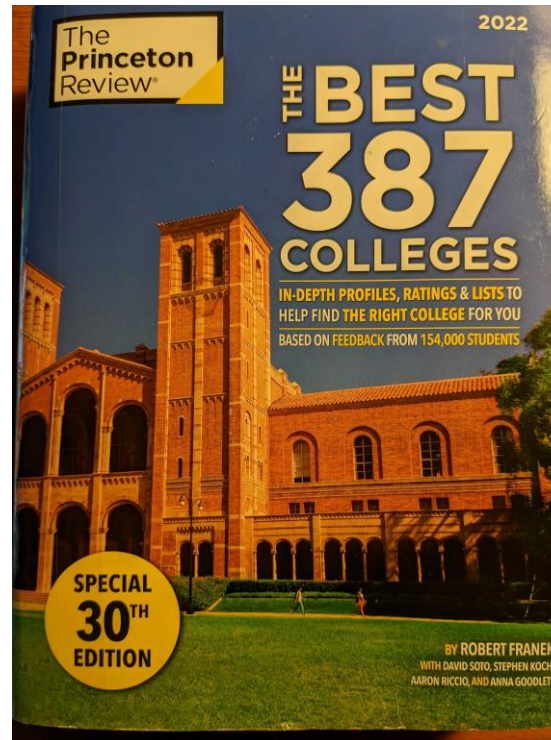
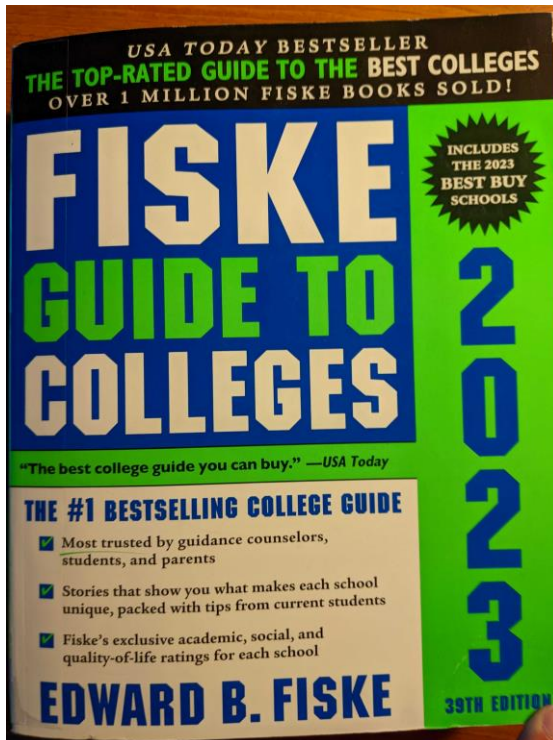
Perry Nelson
Information & Research Librarian

What do you care about?

- “Can” you get in?
- Location
 - Specific place?
 - In Illinois vs. anywhere but Illinois?
 - City vs. rural?
- Size
 - Class size as well as overall school size, though these are related.
- Money
 - Check out the Get That Scholarship event next Tuesday, November 15, at 6:30.
- Specific programs/majors/sports
- Vibes.



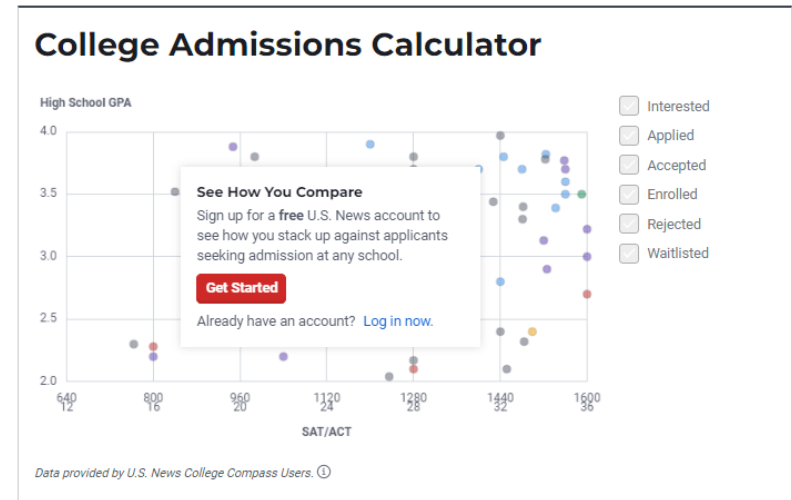
Discovery Resources



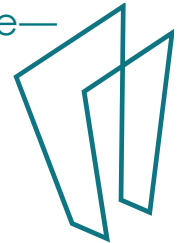
U.S. News

Will You Get Into University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign?

This free college acceptance calculator plots your test scores and GPA against other students' data to give you an idea of how you stack up as an applicant.

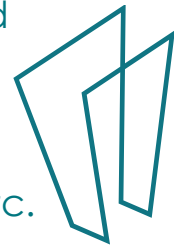
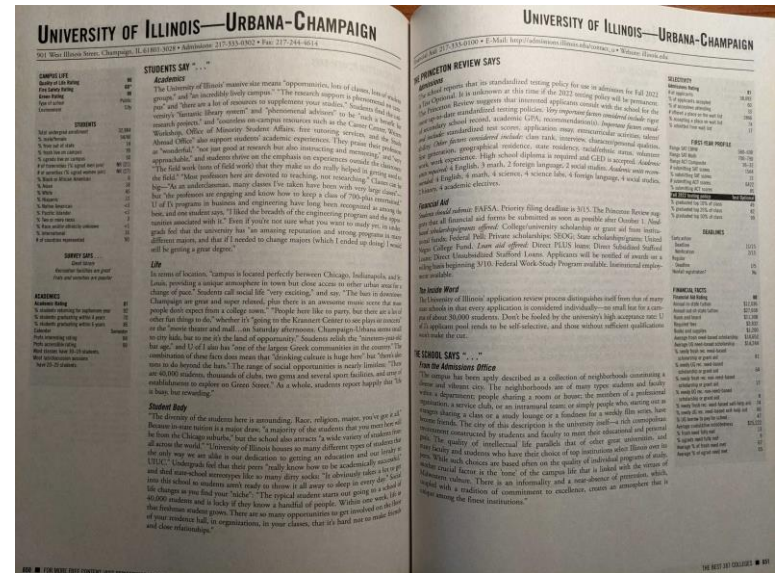


- <https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges>
- Very accessible and highly reputable.
- Focused on facts, figures, numbers, etc., and very good and accurate on all of those.
- Useful lists and good filtering options when searching.
- Has a widget that will compare GPA and test scores to other applicants.
- Not as useful for telling you what going to the school will actually be like—good to get data points, not something to make decisions based on.



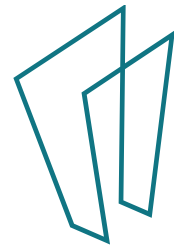
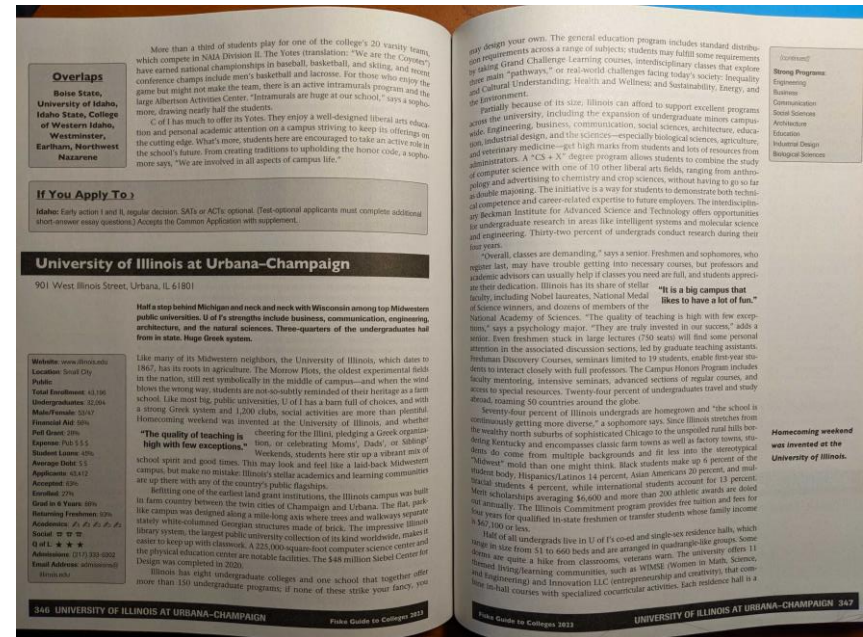
Princeton Review

- Really, really good indexing and lists.
 - Lists of schools by major
 - Lists of schools best for different, less commonly considered things, including cafeteria food, professor accessibility, and experiences for marginalized groups.
- Good mix of numbers and vibes.
 - Numbers include application stats (percent accepted, scores and GPAs), but also student ratios—gender, race, international, how many graduate.
- Really good information about how Admissions works at that school, including what they look at on your application, what they prioritize, etc.



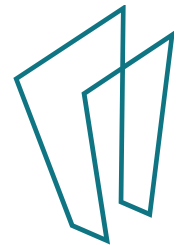
Fiske

- Not as many lists as U.S. News or the Princeton, so it can be hard to use this for identifying schools you haven't heard of.
 - Does have more unusual lists like disability support and strength in many pre-professional areas.
- Has numbers, but the focus is more on what it's like to be there and the experiences students have.
- Not necessarily a good first stop, but good as a place for more information.



School-Provided Info

- Website, promotional materials
- School visits
 - Attend classes
 - Tours
 - Overnight visits
- If your school has college counselors, please do go talk to them.



Applying This Knowledge To Applications

- Different schools weight different aspects of your application differently.
- Common Application: general sections vs. school-specific sections.
- “Why this school?”
 - This is where the research is important.
 - Go to the school’s website! What do they highlight, and how can you pretend that matters to you?
 - Things to not say:
 - “It has a good program in X major.”
 - “I’ve been dreaming of going here all my life.” (Unless it’s true and you have a *really* good reason.)
 - Anything vague or that probably applies to a lot of schools.
 - Stretching the truth is okay.



Thank You

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