



Workshop: Building financial fit and affordability into your school list

Affordability and cost play a part in the college selection process for most families. Understanding whether a college is a financial fit early in the evaluation process creates a more balanced school list and increases a student's future options. Students and families have questions at the start of this process.

- How do we know the types of financial assistance we qualify for at each school?
- Where do we find information about a college's financial aid policy?
- What are reliable resources to estimate financial aid awards?

This workshop for juniors and their families answers these questions and provides guidance on how to research your financial fit for any college using easily accessible data and other online resources. With this information, you can include financial fit as a component of your list-building process .

Topics Covered

How colleges determine your financial need

- Review of Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and Demonstrated Need

Understanding your financial fit

- What is financial fit
- How college financial aid policies fit each family's financial circumstances
- Need-based versus merit-based financial fit

Learning about colleges' financial aid policies

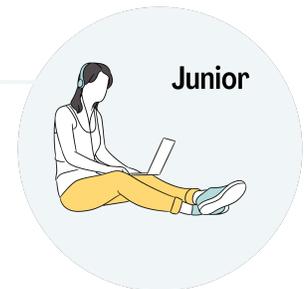
- Need-based aid – how colleges meet need or gap need
- Merit-based aid – how colleges award merit aid

How to use data and resources to research colleges need-based aid policies and practices

How to use data and resources to research colleges merit-based aid policies and practices

Putting it all together

- Incorporating college financial fit into your list building



Resources

- ⇒ **Guide to using college data:** visual guide of how to use data to understand college financial aid policies.
- ⇒ **College Common Data Set (CDS) spreadsheet:** List of 400+ colleges with key data points on need-based and merit-based awards.
- ⇒ **Financial fit analysis workbooks for need-based and merit-based aid:** interactive worksheets that allow families to explore colleges that match to their financial fit .