

Introduction

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

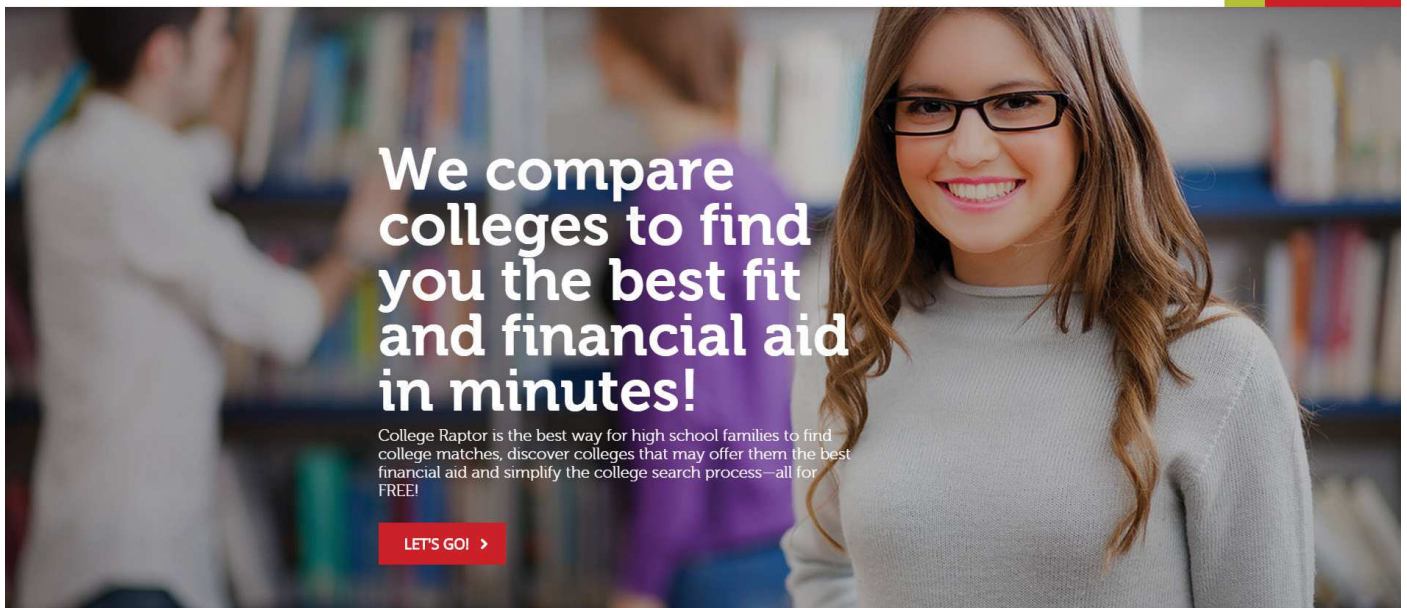
College Raptor is a one-of-a-kind college search and matching platform that helps students and families discover their best college options. At its core is the first universal net price calculator, which estimates the net price for any 4-year college in the U.S. It's also a one-stop-shop for all kinds of admissions and academic information about every college, including estimated admissions odds, graduation rates and more.



[HOME](#) [RANKINGS](#) [MAJORS](#) [COLLEGE SEARCH](#) [BLOG](#) [COLLEGE GUIDE](#)



[Login](#) [Sign Up](#)



Our matching platform can be a game-changer for many students and families who often discover college options that are much more affordable than they expected.

The site can be used in just minutes and requires only a basic level of information about the student's grades, test scores, college preferences and family finances.

We recommend that all students create an account to save their information and college match list.

College Raptor is free to use.




Creating an Account

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

Creating an account on College Raptor is quick and simple. Users can choose to either log in using their Facebook or Twitter accounts (one-click registration) or use our form to provide a name and email directly.

Create a New Account

Create a College Raptor account – it's free!

First Name	<input type="text"/>	OR	f Login with Facebook
User Name (This will be public)	<input type="text"/>		t Login with Twitter
Email	<input type="text"/>		
Password	<input type="password"/>		
Confirm Password	<input type="password"/>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign-up for our newsletter			
Check the box below if you're not a robot.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I'm not a robot  reCAPTCHA Privacy - Terms			
Legal Information			
By signing up, I agree to the College Raptor Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy and understand that College Raptor makes no guarantees about the validity of the information provided.			
<input type="checkbox"/> I agree to the Terms & Conditions and Privacy Policy .			
<input type="button" value="REGISTER"/>			

We encourage all users to create a free account, as this will allow them to save all of their account settings and keep track of their college list, which they can access later.

Creating an account also enables new features for a user, including adding and removing schools or majors from their preferred lists, using our what-if planning tool and full access to all data and



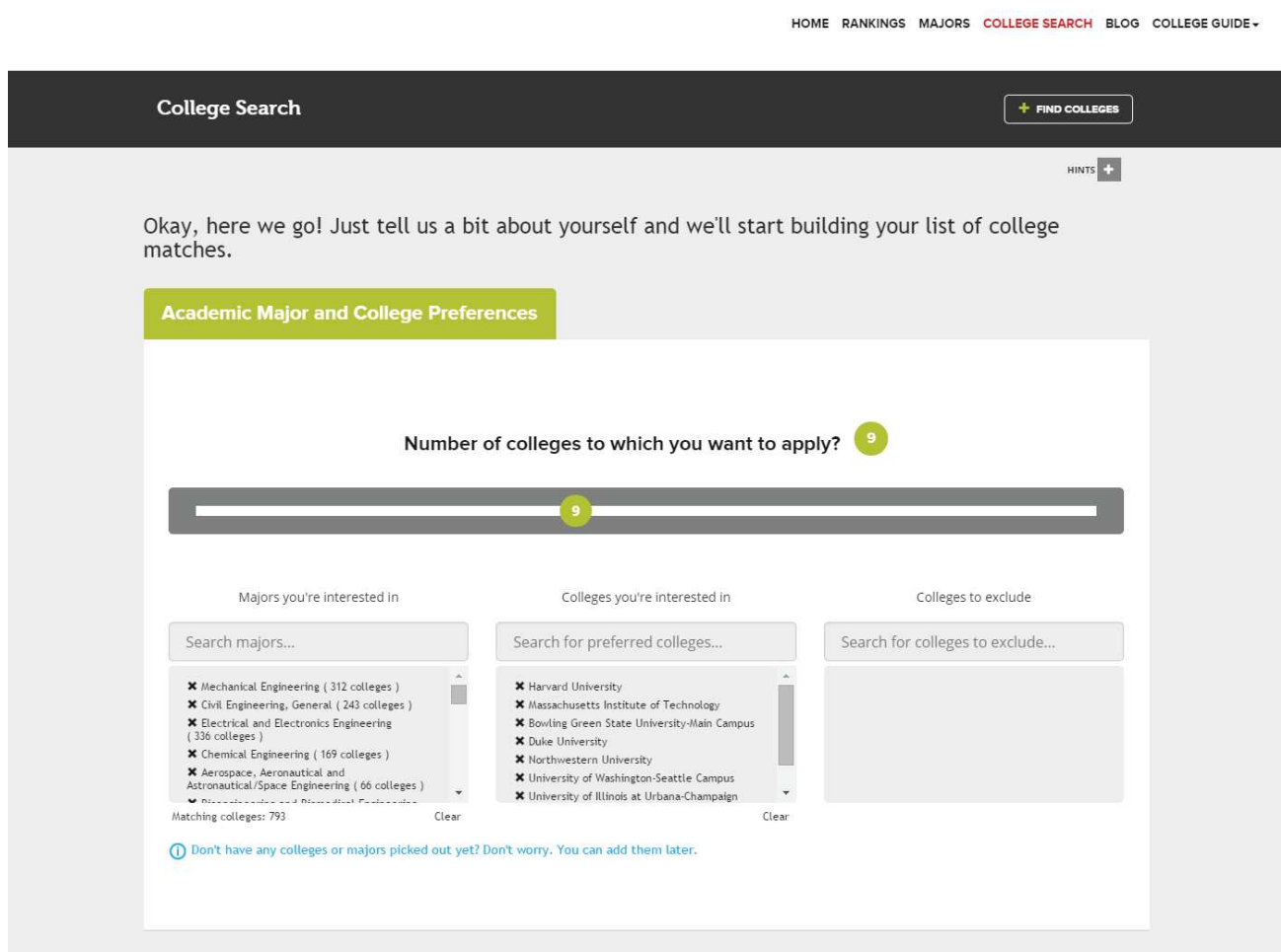
Using the College Match Tool

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

The core functionality of College Raptor is the college match search. You can access this any time by clicking “College Search” at the top of any page.



Once you’ve accessed the college match, you’ll see the “Quick” calculator by default. This view usually takes a user about two minutes to complete and they’ll only need information like grades, test scores, and a basic idea of their family’s income and assets.



Using the College Match Tool

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

How important is cost?

Selecting how important the cost of college is to the student will determine how we score and order the student's college matches.

If a student is concerned about the cost of college – by either selecting “A lot” or “Somewhat” – then, the student's estimated net price will be factored into the Overall Match score for each school.

HOW IMPORTANT IS COLLEGE COST TO YOU WHEN DECIDING WHICH COLLEGES TO APPLY TO?

- Not at All Important** - I will not apply for financial aid. Sort colleges by the best matches for me.
- Somewhat Important** - Show me colleges that are good matches, but are more affordable for me.
- Very Important** - Sort colleges by my expected annual cost.

How much financial information can you provide?

Please select the amount of financial data you will provide. ?

STUDENTS AND FAMILY INFORMATION

Limited ▼

- None
- Limited
- Full

By default, College Raptor will ask for a “limited” amount of basic financial information to calculate the student's estimated net price.

If the user is interested in getting the most accurate estimate possible, they can select to input “full” financial data—but, this does require FAFSA-level detail of income and assets.

Selecting “Full” will put the user into a new product flow, where they will work through inputting about 7 pages of financial information. This will take about 15-20 minutes if the student has all of their necessary tax documents on hand.

If the user has no idea at all about income, they can select to input “None”, but it's generally advisable that they should estimate or guess their family income rather than select this option, as a best-guess will likely yield more accurate results than providing no information at all.



Using the College Match Tool

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

How much can the family afford?

Included on our cost calculations are formulas for calculating a family's Expected Family Contribution (EFC). While these are critical for estimating net price, we know that the EFC often does not line up with a family's actual ability to pay out-of-pocket.

We include this question as a way to calculate how much the student and their family actually intend to pay for out of pocket.

The student's selection here will not impact their net price estimate or their college matches, but it will be used in how we calculate student loan debt, estimated payments, etc.

How much do the student and family plan to pay out of pocket for college? (Per year)

\$4,500

i This won't impact your results. It's only used to calculate loan and debt estimates.

Ready to go!

After the user has put in all of their information, simply hit "Find Colleges" to run the match search!

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Parent's total income

\$90,000

Student's total income

\$0

Parent's total assets

\$0

Student's total assets

\$0

How much do the student and family plan to pay out of pocket for college? (Per year)

\$4,500

i This won't impact your results. It's only used to calculate loan and debt estimates.

FIND COLLEGES >



College Costs

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

One of College Raptor's biggest strengths is our ability to estimate the net price for any 4-year college in the U.S., based on the students financial and academic information.

Selected	College Name	Overall Match	Match Category	Sticker Price	Your Est. Net Price	Total Debt	Hide	Request Info
★	Berea College	98	Match	\$34,170	\$10,470	📊 \$	✖	✉
★	Washington and Lee University	69	Huge Reach	\$62,106	\$12,506	📊 \$	✖	✉
★	College of Staten Island CUNY (in-state)	77	Safety	\$30,209	\$12,509	📊 \$	✖	✉
★	Buffalo State SUNY (in-state)	63	Safety	\$13,155	\$13,155	📊 \$	✖	✉
★	Lyon College	97	Near Safety	\$35,227	\$14,827	📊 \$	✖	✉

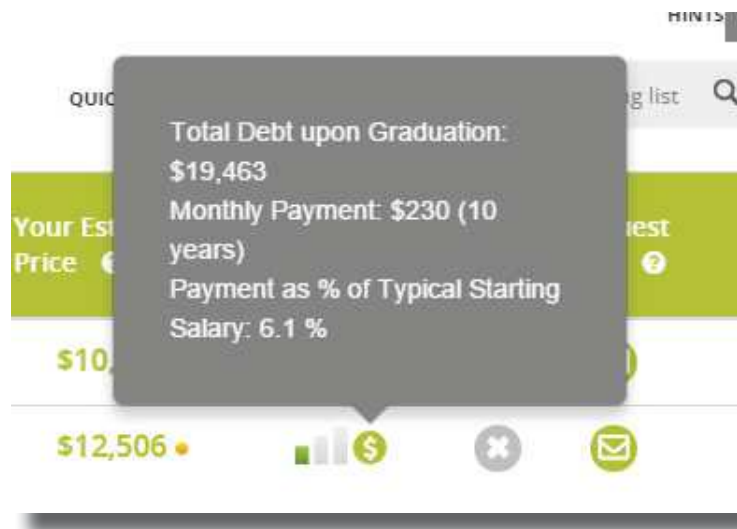
Many times, this can dramatically change the way that students consider colleges--using our site may be the first time that they see that many "expensive" colleges might be much more affordable for them.

All net prices shown are per year and include all associated costs--tuition, room and board, books, travel expenses, etc.

Debt burden

Based on the estimated net price and the family's indicated out-of-pocket contribution, we calculate how much student loan debt the student and family will incur over 4-years of college.

We provide an indicator that incorporates this number into a single graphical representation of "Green", "Yellow" or "Red" levels of debt.



If the user hovers their mouse over this indicator, they can get detailed information about their debt calculations, including an estimated monthly payment based on 10-year loans.



College Costs

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

The accuracy of our estimates

College Raptor has hundreds of thousands of proprietary data models that we use to estimate a student's net price at any given college.

We indicate our anticipated accuracy of each estimate based on how much data we have about each school. You can see this accuracy indicator as a small colored dot next to each net price.

Hovering your mouse over this dot will provide more detailed information about the accuracy.

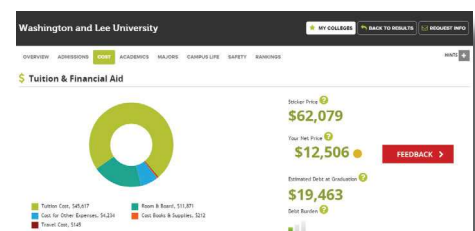
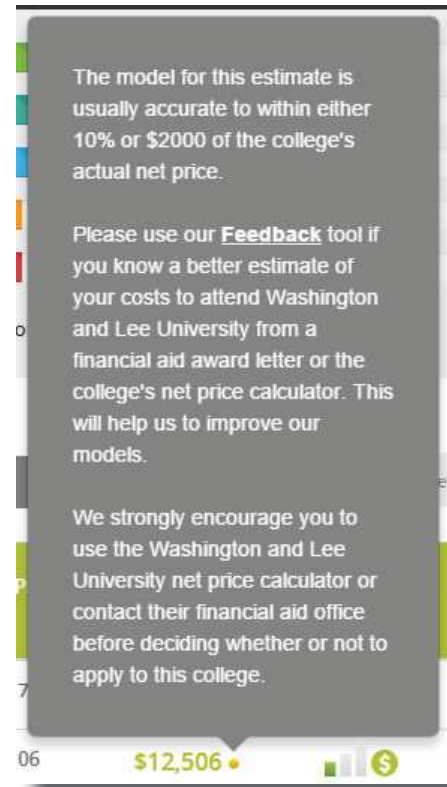
Although this is our estimated level of accuracy, our estimate may in fact be closer than anticipated, depending on how accurate any certain model is at predicting the net price.

Our recommendation is that College Raptor is used as a starting point for net price estimates. Students should refer to the college's official net price calculator before making any final decisions about where to apply based on these figures.

Providing feedback

Our entire system is created to learn and adapt based on new available data. A big part of the accuracy of our estimates depends on students providing us with data about their official net price estimates from a college's net price calculator or their official award letters.

Whenever possible, we encourage students to use the college's official net price calculator and report the results or provide award letter information using our feedback tool for each college.



Match Scores

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

College Raptor generates two unique match scores for every college based on the information provided by the student. Each of these match scores is a scaled number on a scale of 1-100.

Academic Match

A student's Academic Match at a college is based strictly on their academic information. This score represents how closely the student matches that institution's academic profile, based on test scores and GPA.

This score also includes any preferred majors that the student has entered, so colleges with strong academic programs in those fields will have a higher score than those with smaller or no program for those majors.



College Name	Academic Match
Skidmore College	91
Lyon College	88
Berea College	88

Overall Match

Overall Match score includes the same factors as Academic Match, but also factors in estimated net price -- which is weighted in importance, based on the the student's selection of how important cost is in their college decision -- and the location and cultural preferences that the student selected.



College Name	Overall Match
Berea College	98

We recommend using Overall Match as a comprehensive score that indicates how well the school fits the needs of the student.



My College List

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

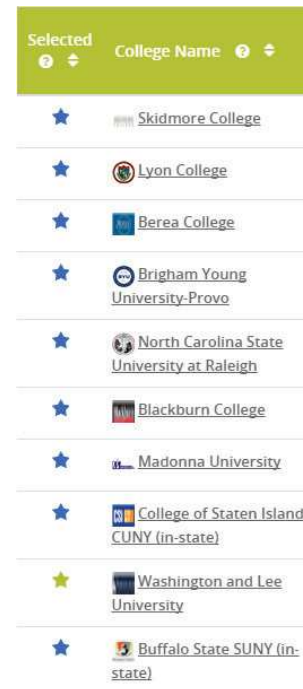
College Raptor will automatically suggest the selected number of college matches based on the student's inputs.

My Colleges

“My Colleges” is a student's list of colleges that they are considering, either those automatically selected by our platform, or those selected by the student.

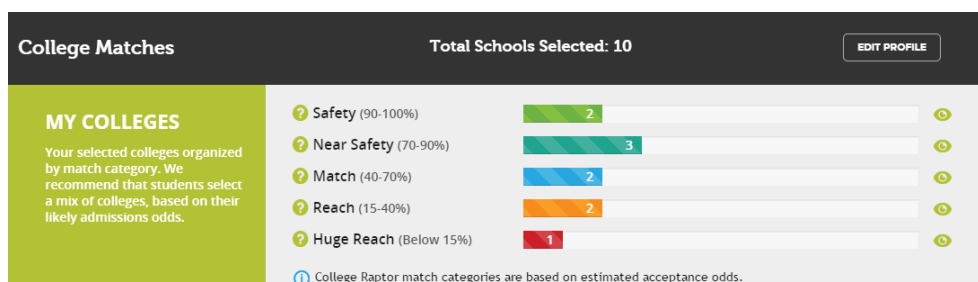
Colleges can be added or removed from the “My Colleges” list by toggling the star icon from the results page, institutional details pages, majors pages, or rankings pages.

Note that these stars are color-coded to indicate if the selections were suggested by College Raptor or selected by the user.



Match Categories

Part of this selection is looks at a student's estimated admissions odds and to help them build a balance list of college options--from “Safety” or safer schools where they are almost certain to be admitted, to “Huge Reach” or highly selective schools where they may not be accepted.



There is no default number of colleges that we select per category, but our engine will usually recommend at least one for each level and generally recommends at least two “Safety” schools.

As an advisor, we recommend that you help students understand the importance of building a balanced list such as this when putting together their list of schools which they plan to apply.



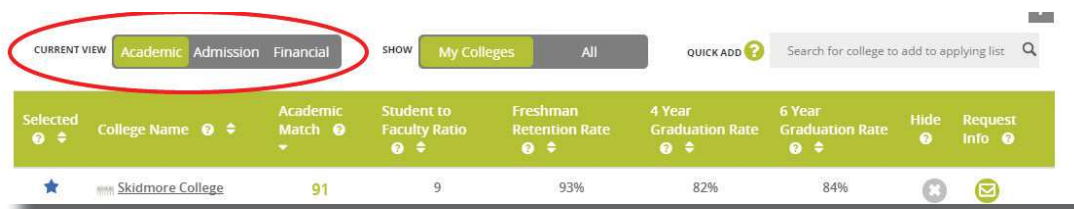
Options & Configurations

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

College Raptor offers a number of different views and configurations that allow the student to quickly and easily compare colleges based on the factors that are most important to them, and to also organize and view their colleges in a single list.

List views

From the search results page, a student can toggle between three views: Financial, Academic, and Admission.



Each view will display unique information about each college, allowing the student to easily compare schools based on a variety of factors.

The user's default view will be based on their selections from the beginning. Most users will default to the Financial View, which will show them their estimated net price and debt information. Once a view is changed by the user, it should be set and the user should be able to return to their results and still see the same view.

In addition, users can sort these views by any of the columns being displayed, either in ascending or descending view.

My Colleges view



If a student wants to hide all of the colleges that were in their results other than the schools they have added to their “My Colleges” list, they can simply toggle the “My Colleges” feature to filter out all of the other schools.



College Details and Information


GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

College Raptor contains a wealth of information on every college and university in the country.

University of Washington-Seattle Campus ★ ADD TO MY COLLEGES ✉ REQUEST INFO

OVERVIEW ADMISSIONS COST ACADEMICS MAJORS CAMPUS LIFE SAFETY RANKINGS HINTS +

Campus Overview



- College type**
Public, 4-year or above
- Carnegie classification**
Doctoral/Research Universities--Extensive
- Web Urls**
www.washington.edu
- Net Price Calculator**
- Locale**
City: Large
- Highest degree offered**
Doctor's degree
- Academic calendar**
Quarter
- Religious affiliation**
Not applicable

Most of our data is self-reported by the colleges and comes from the IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) database. Students can click on an institution's name from their list to access the "Details" pages.

Information about the college is broken down into different categories: Overview, Admissions, Cost, Academics, etc. Students can navigate each of these pages to learn more about the school and to see how they compare to other students at the institution.



Requesting Information from Colleges

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

Users can request information from colleges by clicking on the “Request Info” links in either one of the list views, or from the college’s institutional pages.

The screenshot displays the College Raptor interface. At the top, there is a table with columns for 'Selected', 'College Name', 'Academic Match', 'Student to Faculty Ratio', 'Freshman Retention Rate', '4 Year Graduation Rate', '6 Year Graduation Rate', 'Hide', and 'Request Info'. The 'Request Info' column contains green envelope icons. A red circle highlights these icons in the table. Below the table, a detailed view for 'Skidmore College' is shown. In this view, a red circle highlights the 'REQUEST INFO' button. The detailed view includes a 'Campus Overview' section with the following information:

- College type:** Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above
- Carnegie classification:** Baccalaureate Colleges--Liberal Arts
- Web Urls:** www.skidmore.edu/
- Net Price Calculator:** [Net Price Calculator](#)
- Locale:** Suburb: Small
- Highest degree offered:** Master's degree
- Academic calendar:** Semester
- Religious affiliation:** Not applicable

This request will be emailed to the college’s admissions office, along with details that the student provided to College Raptor and requests that we include.

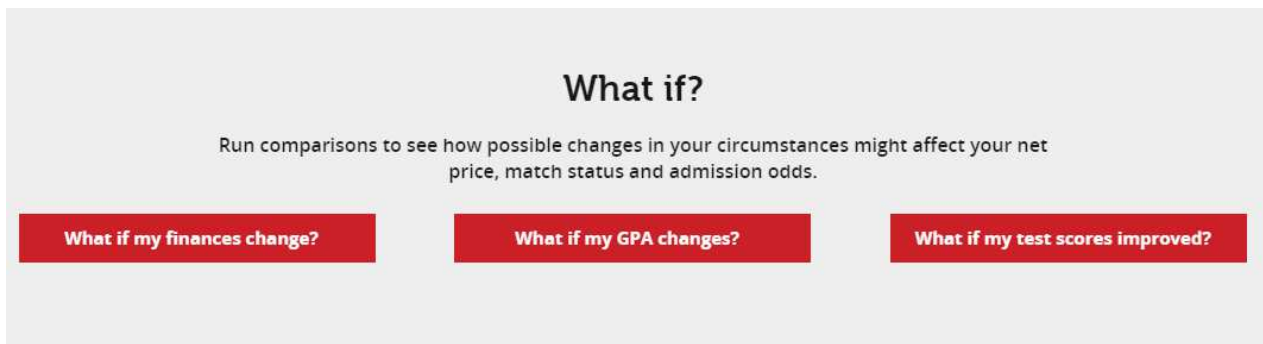
College Raptor can’t guarantee that the college will follow up with individual students, so we recommend that if a student has not heard from the college within two weeks, they should contact them directly.



What-If Planning Tool

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

After a student gets their college matches, they can use the “what-if” tool to see how admissions chances and net prices would change if their finances, GPA, or test scores were to change.



This tool can be used as a way to plan and set goals for the student. They can see how raising their GPA or test scores can boost their admissions odds, using the “Academic What-If”.

The “Financial What-If” lets families see how changes in their income -- or changes in their family -- would impact their estimated net price.

In the future, we will tie these features together to show how increasing grades and test scores can not only boost admissions chances, but also net the student increased merit aid from some schools.

Original Profile

ACT Composite: **25**

Updated Profile

ACT Composite: **28**

[< Go back to my original results](#)

SHOW My Colleges All QUICK ADD ? Search for college to add to applying list

Fave	College Name	Acceptance Average	Your Acceptance Odds	New Acceptance Odds
★	Lafayette College	34%	15%	29%
★	Denison University	46%	16%	43%
★	Dickinson College	44%	17%	38%
★	Trinity College	32%	18%	35%
★	Skidmore College	35%	25%	41%



Exploring College Majors

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

College Raptor has lots of information on different college majors and programs.

Users can explore different specific majors within programs, and then dive into each major to see which colleges have the most students graduating with a degree in those studies. They can add majors to their list of interests to improve their college matches based on which colleges have the largest programs for the ones they select.

Students can view majors information for bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees as well using the drop down menu above the table which lists the degrees.

All majors data is based on degree completion numbers reported by colleges and universities, collected from the IPEDS database.

The screenshot displays two main sections of the College Raptor interface. The top section, titled 'Top College Majors', features a donut chart and summary statistics for all bachelors degrees in 2013: Total Students (1,863,270), Total Males (795,821), and Total Females (1,067,449). A dropdown menu is set to 'Bachelors degree'. Below this is a table of majors with columns for Major, Students, Females, and Males. The bottom section, titled 'Largest Economics, General Bachelors degree Programs in 2013', shows a breadcrumb trail: Majors > Social Sciences > Economics > Economics, General. It includes another donut chart and summary statistics: Total Students (26,889), Total Males (18,802 (70%)), and Total Females (8,087 (30%)). Below this is a table listing colleges with columns for College Name, Students, % of School, Female, Male, and Request Info.

Major	Students	Females	Males
Business, Management, Marketing, And Related Support Services	365,547	176,003 (48%)	189,544 (52%)
Health Professions And Related Programs	185,405	156,199 (84%)	29,206 (16%)
Social Sciences	144,344	74,314 (51%)	70,030 (49%)
Psychology	115,569	88,487 (77%)	27,082 (23%)

Fave	College Name	Students	% of School	Female	Male	Request Info
★	University of California-San Diego	509 (1.9%)	8.0%	212 (42%)	297 (58%)	✉
★	University of California-Berkeley	450 (1.7%)	5.8%	192 (43%)	258 (57%)	✉
★	University of California-Davis	445 (1.7%)	6.3%	153 (34%)	292 (66%)	✉
★	New York University	390 (1.5%)	7.3%	185 (47%)	205 (53%)	✉
★	University of Wisconsin-Madison	386 (1.4%)	5.8%	92 (24%)	294 (76%)	✉



College Rankings

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

Our site has a number of rankings that are generated by College Raptor.

We rank colleges both on objective measures -- such as schools with the largest endowment, most profitable sports programs and largest campuses -- as well as have an Overall Ranking that is based on a number of different factors.

Overall Ranking

Overall Ranking for 2012 vs. 2013

Our overall rankings provide a complete look at each institution, ranking them factors like acceptance rate, graduation rate, student-to-faculty ratio, endowment per student, overall campus diversity and student loan default rate.

Rankings > Overall Ranking

Filter by: [Conference](#) | [Control](#) | [Region](#) | [State](#)

Fave	School Name	Rank	Prior Rank	Scaled Score	Prior Scaled Score	Request Info
★	Princeton University	1	1	100.0	100.0	✉
★	Harvard University	2	2	99.4 ↓ (0.2%)	99.6	✉
★	Yale University	3	3	98.2 ↑ (1.2%)	97.0	✉
★	Stanford University	4	4	94.1 ↑ (1.9%)	92.3	✉
★	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	5 ↑	6	93.0 ↑ (1.3%)	91.7	✉

Middle Class Affordability Rankings™

In addition, we have Middle Class Affordability Rankings™, which are based on an “average” net price for a middle-class family. These rankings are broken down by state, and also by major, and a combination of each.

All of these rankings can be accessed through the “Majors” link at the top of the page.

Most Affordable Colleges for Social Sciences, General, Social Sciences, Other Majors in Iowa

Rankings > Colleges by Major > Social Sciences

Social Sciences Majors Middle Class Affordability Rankings™

Considering a degree in Social Sciences?

These rankings show the most affordable colleges for Social Sciences majors who live in Iowa. Rankings are calculated by estimating the net price at every college offering Social Sciences degrees for a “typical” middle class family living in the state of Iowa.

Note: Net price is the actual cost of the school paid by the student and family, after factoring in merit and grant aid from the college federal programs and work study. The net prices displayed in these rankings are College Raptor’s estimates.

“Typical” Middle Class Family

Used in the net price estimates shown below



Most Affordable Colleges for Iowa Residents

Rankings > Colleges by State > Iowa

State of Iowa Middle Class Affordability Rankings™

Which colleges are most affordable for Iowa residents? The answer may surprise you. These rankings of the most affordable colleges for Iowa residents are based on the estimated net price for a “typical” middle class family living in the state of Iowa.

Note: Net price is the actual cost of the school paid by the student and family, after factoring in merit and grant aid from the college federal programs and work study. The net prices displayed in these rankings are College Raptor’s estimates.

“Typical” Middle Class Family

Used in the net price estimates shown below



SIGN UP TO SEE YOUR EST. NET PRICE >

Rank	College Name	Typical Net Price	Sticker Price	% Savings	# Undergrads	Est. Median SAT	Acceptance Rate
1	Grinnell College	\$10,600	\$51,100	79%	1,721	2,062	35.06%
2	Cornell College	\$11,300	\$44,200	75%	1,125	1,745	64.11%
3	Graceland University-Lamoni	\$14,700	\$36,700	60%	1,559	1,360	50.18%



College Guide and Content Resources

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

Many articles on various college admissions, financial aid and college search questions can be found under our “College Guide” section.

These articles are all written and reviewed by reputable college admissions and financial aid professionals and professional college counselors. They can be a great resource for finding information on specific topics.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid and Unique Family Circumstances: How to Let Colleges Know About Your Financial Situation

Published by Lynell Engelmeyer

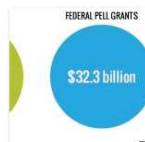


The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the federal government's attempt to put every American family on a level playing field in an effort to award aid fairly. What happens, however, when the FAFSA does not adequately allow you to express your family's unique financial circumstances? For example, the FAFSA asks you to submit ...

[Read more](#) [Edit](#)

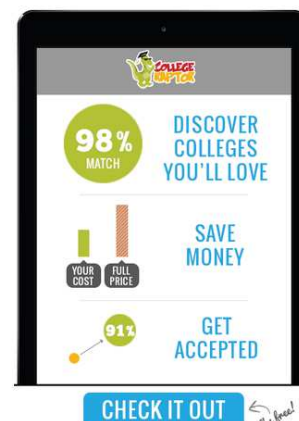
Where Does Financial Aid Come From?

Published by Lynell Engelmeyer



Once you hit send on those financial aid applications, what happens next? Money doesn't suddenly fall onto your doorstep, so where does it come from? In being a good consumer, it is good to know this information. Where do financial aid dollars come from? There are 4 primary sources of financial aid ...

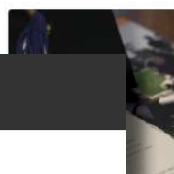
[Read more](#) [Edit](#)



College Raptor Myths about college

College Myth: Colleges Only Care About GPA and Test Scores

Published by Olivia Pittman



GPA and test scores are the most quantifiable aspects of a college application. This makes them easy to compare—and may explain why applicants tend to place so much emphasis on them. While these ARE important, they're not the only things that colleges consider when reviewing your application. In fact, just consider that many schools will receive thousands ...

College Myth: Colleges Are Only Looking for One Type of Student

Published by Olivia Pittman



A common misconception is that colleges only accept students who fit a certain profile. Similarly, some students convince themselves that individual colleges prefer students with very particular skill sets. In reality, colleges seek to build diverse and interesting classes. Part of higher education is familiarizing yourself with the world at large. This involves getting to know ...

College Raptor College questions

Where Should I Start my College Search?

Published by Olivia Pittman



So you know you want to go to college, but how do you start searching for the right school(s)? The most important part of finding a college where you'll be happy is recognizing at least some of what you want. As a teenager, it can be difficult to know exactly what you're looking for in ...

[Read more](#) [Edit](#)

How Do I Know if a College is a Good Fit?

Published by Olivia Pittman



There is a college out there for nearly everyone. The most important part of finding the right college is determining if a school fits you. A college that's a good fit should have the following characteristics. 1. The college matches you academically You want to be challenged in college, but being in over your head ...

[Read more](#) [Edit](#)



Additional Details

GETTING STARTED WITH COLLEGE RAPTOR

Mobile Usage

The full College Raptor is site is a responsive design.

This means that the site can be used from any device and should scale to the screen and be easy to see and use from phones, tablets, or computers.

Counselor Resources

We have created and will continue to update a number of resources for counselors. These can accessed at any time by visiting CollegeRaptor.com/Counselors.

Data Privacy and Security

Our service doesn't require users to provide any identifying data other than that which is used to estimate and provide college price and academic fit estimates and/or obtained through regular use of the College Raptor Web Site.

In the case where a user has provided their personal data, no identifying information will be disclosed to third parties without the user's consent. We do reserve the right to use non-identifying information, in aggregate and on an anonymous basis, for the purposes of targeting advertising and/or marketing messages to users of College Raptor.

Reporting Bugs or Problems

We welcome feedback as to errors or suggestions for how we can make our platform better or more accurate. If you identify a bug, error or information that you believe to be inaccurate on College Raptor, please contact us.

Bug and error reports about College Raptor should be sent to: feedback@collegeraptor.com.

It is often helpful if bug reports include a screenshot and description of the identified issue.

