



Jesuit High School Counseling Newsletter – September 2018

Greetings, and welcome to a new school year!

For families new to Jesuit High School this year, the counseling team would like to extend a warm welcome. We trust that your son's first few weeks at Jesuit have been enjoyable, challenging, and fun. As you might have inferred, we send out a newsletter periodically throughout the academic year, with this being the first installment for the 2018-2019 school year.

For returning families, welcome back!

We are excited to continue working with your sons this fall, and we have hit the ground running across the board here in the counseling center. If you have found yourself on campus the past few weeks, you may have noticed that the counseling team has settled in to the incredible Daigle Family Counseling Center, located in the south wing of Gonzmart Hall.

In addition to our new space, we have also added a new component to our team: we are excited to introduce **Mr. Chris Poyzer** as our new Resource Counselor. If you have not had a chance yet to meet Mr. Poyzer, he brings a wealth of experience in social work and secondary education counseling, and is an excellent resource for our students dealing with learning difficulties, stress management, mental health, organizational skills, and a host of other topics. Mr. Poyzer is more than happy to speak with parents at any time—if you have questions about how your son can take advantage of his presence on campus, please reach out to the Counseling Center at (813) 877-5344 ext. 520.

In this edition of the Counseling Newsletter, in addition to the Table of Contents below, we are excited to share three articles with you.

The first article, a post from Georgia Tech's Director of admissions, Rick Clark, tackles the issue of "the college conversation" that families of juniors and seniors (and some underclassmen) encounter regularly. Mr. Clark's advice is simple: find time to discuss college, and also set aside time to NOT talk about college, no matter how difficult that is.

The second article comes from a college professor who values the uncertain nature of outdoors and overseas experiences for college students. We like Professor Heying's caring, challenging approach to student formation, and feel that her philosophy resonates nicely with the Jesuit idea of *cura personalis*, especially out in the natural world.

The third article is a very recent piece by Mr. Willard Dix, which breaks down the ranking systems of ten websites that rank colleges and universities. We know it's hard to assess quality without consulting rankings, but if you've been to our presentations, you also know that we rarely reference rankings when advising your sons—Mr. Dix provides interesting insights about ten of the most common sites used to rank colleges, and allows you to decide what's important.

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As always, please let us know how we can better serve you and your sons as this academic year continues.

Warm regards,

Jesuit Counseling Department

Upcoming Events

“Discover Duke” - **Duke University** admissions information night
 Wednesday, September 12, 2018 at 7:00 PM
 Tampa Westshore Marriott, 1001 N. Westshore Blvd., Tampa, FL, 33607

Bay Area Independent Schools College Fair (over 125 colleges & universities in attendance)
 Sunday, September 23, 2018 at 1:00 – 3:00 PM
 St. Pete Coliseum, 535 Fourth Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701
 There is no registration required to attend this fair. Open to students of all grade levels (please see below for more info).

Fordham University admissions information night
 Wednesday, September 26, 2018 at 7:00 PM
 Jesuit High School MPR – please note: this event is open to the public.

Harvard, Princeton, UVA, Wellesley, and Yale admissions information night
 Tuesday, October 2, 2018 at 7:00 PM
 Tampa Westshore Marriott, 1001 N. Westshore Blvd., Tampa, FL, 33607

Notre Dame “ND On the Road” admissions information night
 Thursday, October 11 at 7:00 PM
 Jesuit High School MPR – please note: this event is open to the public.

Scholarship Opportunities

The scholarships listed below do not encompass all available scholarships —they are merely a comprehensive list of every scholarship of which we have been made aware.

Please note: for any scholarship where counselors need to complete a recommendation form or letter, we ask for three weeks’ notification to allow us ample time to complete the recommendation.

Students can find additional scholarship opportunities on the websites listed at the end of this section.

Wendy’s High School Heisman

90 state winners receive a \$500 scholarship, eight national finalists receive a \$1,000 scholarship, two national winners receive a \$5,000 scholarship along with national honor and recognition during ESPN’s telecast of the college Heisman Memorial Trophy presentation. GPA of 3.0 or better, participation in at least one school-sponsored sport, and demonstrated leadership at school and in the community. Deadline is October 17, 2018

More info at <https://www.wendyshighschoolheisman.com/>

Horatio Alger Association Scholarship

Students must be a full-time senior at a U.S. high school, exhibit a strong commitment to pursue and complete a bachelor's degree at a four-year U.S. college or university, demonstrate critical financial need (adjusted gross family income of \$55,000 or lower is required), be involved in extracurricular and community service activities, display integrity and perseverance in overcoming adversity, and be a U.S. citizen. Awards are between \$6,000 and \$25,000 per student. Deadline is October 25, 2018. More info at <http://scholars.horatioalger.org>

Prudential Spirit of Community Awards

Students first apply to be nominated by Jesuit High School as a Local Honoree. If nominated by Jesuit, student will then compete for recognition as a state-level honoree. School's honoree will receive the President's Volunteer Service Award, and state-level honorees receive an award of \$1,000 or more, as well as an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. in Spring 2019. Deadline is November 6, 2018. More info at <http://spirit.prudential.com>

Tony Jannus Distinguished Aviation Society Essay Contest

Students must EITHER write an essay of 1,000 to 1,500 words OR prepare a 3 to 5 minute video, in response to a prompt regarding the landing on the Hudson River (in New York City) by Captain Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger of US Airways Flight 1549, and specifically how that event and other similar events or individuals have impacted the perception of commercial aviation safety both from a traveling public and a personal perspective. Deadline is October 26, 2018, and winners are announced at press conference on December 13. More info at www.tonyjannus.com

Spectrum Bay News 9 Project Weather Scholarship

Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4-point scale. Scholarship is a one-time award given to one student attending high school in each of a number of Florida counties (awarded to one student from Hillsborough County). Award is \$1,000, and the check will be presented by a Spectrum Bay News 9 meteorologist at the Spectrum Bay News 9 studios. All entries must be postmarked by January 7, 2019. More info at <http://www.baynews9.com>

SunTrust Off to College Scholarship Sweepstakes - Throughout the year, once every two weeks, two \$500 scholarship winners will be chosen at random. Students can enter online once during EACH entry period—not just once! Open to ALL seniors—no minimum GPA and no requirements to demonstrate family's financial need.

Two winners will be randomly chosen once every two weeks beginning at the end of October 2017, until May 2018. Enter **now and throughout the year** at www.suntrust.com/offtocollege

H&R Block Budget Challenge - Through this free program, students encounter real-world personal budgeting situations through an online simulation and accompanying lesson plans. Students can win one of ten \$20,000 college scholarships. There are several cycles for this simulation, so check the website to see when you'd like to participate.

Deadline is **ongoing**. More info at <http://www.hrblockdollarsandsense.com/budget-challenge-landing-page/>

Raise.me Micro-Scholarships - Varied amounts for students grades 9-12. This is a way to discover colleges and earn scholarships for your academic and extracurricular achievements throughout high school. Even freshmen can start.

Deadline is **ongoing**. <https://www.raise.me/>

Scholarship Websites – recommended sites to search for scholarships.

- Fastweb.com
- CollegeXpress.com
- Collegedata.com
- Bigfuture.collegeboard.org
- AIE.org
- Chegg.com/scholarships
- Myscholly.com
- Cappex.com/scholarships

Standardized Test Registration Info

Please note that tests offered at Jesuit High School are marked with three asterisks (***)

SAT DATES AND DEADLINES - Students may register online at www.collegeboard.org.

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Deadline</u> (with late fee)
October 6, 2018***	(September 6, 2018)	September 24, 2018
November 3, 2018***	October 3, 2018	October 21, 2018
December 1, 2018	November 1, 2018	November 19, 2018
March 9, 2019***	February 8, 2019	February 26, 2019
May 4, 2019	April 4, 2019	April 22, 2019
June 1, 2019	May 1, 2019	May 19, 2019

ACT DATES AND DEADLINES - Students may register online at www.actstudent.org.

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration Deadline</u>	<u>Late Deadline</u> (with late fee)
October 27, 2018***	September 21, 2018	October 5, 2018
December 8, 2018	November 2, 2018	November 16, 2018
February 9, 2019***	January 11, 2019	January 18, 2019
April 13, 2019***	March 8, 2019	March 23, 2019
June 8, 2019	May 3, 2019	May 17, 2019
July 13, 2019	June 14, 2019	June 21, 2019

Standardized Test Preparation Services

Although we as a counseling department have no specific partnership with any one individual or organization, over time we have received names of both individual tutors and independent test preparation companies who have worked previously with Jesuit students.

No one test prep service will be the perfect solution for all of our students—just as each student is unique, so is each student’s best approach to test preparation. Given this diversity of learning styles, we share here a list of some of the names and companies we have heard from Jesuit students and parents. Again, please note—these are not recommendations, but simply names we have heard associated with positive results.

Individual Tutors:

José Noboa
(813) 326-3084

Sandy Christopher
(813) 766-3563

Dan Roeder – Select Choice
(727) 230-9031
Office@SelectC.com

Kingsley Reeves
Cell: (813) 943-3146
reeves@usf.edu

Mary Wharton Schroeder
(813) 253-3186
www.tampasatprep.com

Evan Jones
(ACT Math & Science, SAT Math)
(813) 785-3390
Evancjones1@gmail.com

Jan Gentry
(ACT English, SAT English)
(727) 510-5646

Test Preparation Centers:

Myers
1534 W Village Dr, Tampa
(813) 966-9377

Disciplined Minds
715 W Platt St., Tampa
(813) 254-5437

Knowledge Points
Riverview · (813) 671-1919
Valrico · (813) 689-7212
Land O Lakes · (813) 909-0781

Advanced Learning Centers
St. Petersburg - (727) 381-9722

Huntington Learning Centers
(813) 908-1000

Online/Skype Services:

ACT Academy- Free
academy.act.org/

[Khan Academy](https://www.khanacademy.org/)—free!

Drew Valins
[Satellite Test Prep](#)

Revolution Prep
(813) 417-6560 or (813) 280-0447

Compass Education Group (one-on-one remote tutoring)
<https://www.compassprep.com/>

Magoosh—(relatively) cheap!
[Magoosh SAT prep](#)
[Magoosh ACT prep](#)

[Kaplan Test Prep](#)

Information regarding the upcoming Bay Area Independent Schools Fair

Bay Area Independent Schools Fair

Sunday, September 23, 2018 at 1:00 PM

St. Pete Coliseum, 535 Fourth Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701

There is no registration required to attend this fair. Parking is limited at the venue, but is available in surrounding neighborhoods.

Admissions representatives from over 100 schools will gather at the St. Pete Coliseum to speak with high school students (future applicants!) from independent high schools from around the Tampa Bay area. This fair is intended for current sophomores, juniors, and seniors as a low-pressure, conversational way to learn more about colleges and universities from their admissions representatives. Even if a student is not interested in attending many of these schools, attending the fair is excellent practice for speaking with college representatives, which is an important part of the admissions process in a student's senior year. Freshmen are also welcome to attend if they wish to learn more about the college admissions process. The following schools and programs will have representatives in attendance:

American University	Fordham University	Muhlenberg College
Auburn University	Franklin University Switzerland	New College of Florida
Belmont Abbey College	Full Sail University	New York University
Belmont University	Furman University	Northeastern University
Berry College	George Mason University	Oberlin College
Brandeis University	George Washington University	Occidental College
Bucknell University	Georgia Tech	Oglethorpe University
Butler University	High Point University	Outward Bound
Case Western Reserve University	IE University	Princeton University
Clemson University	Johnson and Wales University	Purdue University
Colgate University	Lafayette College	Queens University of Charlotte
College of Charleston	Lander University	Regis College
Curry College	Lawrence University	Rhodes College
Davidson College	Lees-McRae College	Rider University
DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY	Les Roches International School of	Ringling College of Art and Design
Earlham College	Hotel Management	Roanoke College
Eckerd College	Loyola University Chicago	Roger Williams University
Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne	Loyola University New Orleans	Rollins College
Elon University	Lynn University	Sacred Heart University
Emerson College	Marist College	Saint Anselm College
Fairfield University	Marquette University	Saint Leo University
Flagler College	Marymount Manhattan College	Saint Mary's College
Florida Atlantic University	Massachusetts College of	Saint Michael's College
Florida Gulf Coast University	Pharmacy and Health Sciences	Samford University
Florida Institute of Technology	Massachusetts Maritime Academy	Savannah College of Art and
Florida International University	Mercer University	Design
Florida Polytechnic University	Miami University	Schiller International University
Florida Southern College	Middlebury College	Seton Hall University
Florida State University	Mount Holyoke College	Southern Methodist University

St. John's University
St. Thomas University
Stetson University
Stonehill College
Suffolk University
Sweet Briar College
The Catholic University of America
The Citadel
The Ohio State University
The University of Alabama
The University of Mississippi
The University of Tampa
Towson University
Tulane University
University of Alabama at Birmingham
University of California San Diego

University of Central Florida-Duke Energy Welcome Center
University of Chicago
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Denver
University of Florida - Office of Admissions
University of Georgia
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Maryland
University of Michigan
University of New Haven
University of North Florida
University of Notre Dame
University of Rochester
University of South Florida

University of Tennessee
University of the South
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of West Florida
Valdosta State University
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Wagner College
Wake Forest University
Warren Wilson College
Webber International University
Wellesley College
Westminster College
Wilkes Honors College of FAU
Wofford College
Xavier University

Articles of Interest

Article 1: Navigating College Admissions: An Un-Romantic Solution

Rick Clark, Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Georgia Tech

October 11, 2016

I distinctly remember growing up and watching my parents have “Sunday night meetings.” They would bring their calendars (yep, hard copy with pencils) to the kitchen after we’d cleared the table to discuss the week ahead. When we were little, my sister and I really didn’t understand what they were doing. We were just glad they were occupied so we could pick whatever TV show we wanted to watch. In high school, I distinctly recall coming into the kitchen for a snack during study break, witnessing these logistical negotiations, and thinking, “If this is marriage, count me out.”

Now, however, I’m willing to concede the beauty and brilliance of the “Sunday night meeting,” because allocating that time allowed freedom. See, once they’d nailed down their own work schedules for the week and decided who was going to drive me and my sister to the games or performances or events, they didn’t have to talk about the details again. Listen, it still doesn’t sound romantic, but it gave them the rest of their week to talk about other things (presumably some of that was romantic, but these are my parents, and this is a family blog).

Application (no pun intended) to the Admission Process

As I watch more of my neighbors and friends with kids in high school (particularly during junior and senior year), it is clear that dispersed conversations and questions about scholarships, deadlines, essays, or plans to visit colleges often become a swirling, all-consuming mess. More importantly, they create unnecessary tension and division. Students feel like every time they come downstairs for a meal the “college talk” begins. Parents feel like their intelligent offspring has somehow lost the ability to string consecutive words together or convey ideas in multi-syllabic words.

Quick Quiz

Parents: Are you bringing up college options, deadlines, or test dates at a variety of unchecked times and days throughout the week?

Students: Test yourself: Do you frequently answer your parents' sequential questions about college with: "Good," "Okay," "No," "Huh?" Do you pretend like your phone is ringing and head for the car when mom asks, "Have you asked Mrs. Johnson for that rec yet?"

If the answer to any of these questions is "Yes," I want to strongly encourage the implementation of the "Sunday Night Meeting." Not necessarily on Sunday, but one consolidated time each week when college is on the proverbial— and perhaps literal— table.

Parents: You GET TO BRING brochures you've noticed in the mail. This is YOUR TIME to say, "Hey, look honey, the leaves are turning in South Bend. Isn't it pretty?" You GET TO ASK, "Have you written your supplemental essays for SMU?" Or "Do you still want to take that trip to Maine to look at schools in November?" THIS IS YOUR TIME FOR: "Did you get your ACT results back?" Or "Is the University of Wisconsin psychology program highly ranked?" It's all free game.

Students: You DON'T GET TO BRING your cell phone or really crunchy snacks. You DON'T GET to look at your shoes more than three times or for beyond six seconds. You have to FULLY ENGAGE in this conversation. I'm not going to be super obnoxious and give you a link to the definition of conversation or discussion in the dictionary, because you know what that looks like. ONE time a week... for *only* two hours (1/12 of that day!). *You got this!*

Outside of the "Sunday night meeting," however, **college talk is banned.** Mom, dad: You drive past a car with a Princeton or Michigan State sticker. Not a peep. Sean next door gets accepted to Auburn or Colorado College, send a text in congratulations or post something online. Mute button is on at home.

Now, I get that it's college football season. I have no problem with passionate support of your alma mater or understandable vitriol for your opponent. But that can't transition to, "You're not really going to apply there are you?" Or "Look at their fans. They just don't look smart..."

Two Important Truths

1. The reason your parents are bringing up college, asking you questions, and expressing their opinions is partly because they're not convinced you are on it. If you answer their questions, show you have a plan, and demonstrate that you are making progress on applications and working towards deadlines, you'll dramatically diminish the seemingly incessant nagging.
2. It's not nagging! It's love. "Sunday night meetings" are not romantic. They weren't then, and still aren't now. But they are rooted in love. The time your parents take, the questions they ask, their desire to see things taken care of is absolutely grounded in deep affection. They know you're going to head off to college in the next year or two. There is some fear in that, and a lot of excitement. Every now and then they can't believe you're taking AP Biology or standing at over 6 feet tall. Somehow carpool lines and tricycles don't seem like that long ago. Give 'em a break. Fear, excitement, love— these all warrant you being fully engaged. Two hours a week (**1.1% of your week!**): Answer the questions; look them in the eye; put down your phone—and every now and then, how about a hug?

Article 2: Nature Is Risky. That's Why Students Need It.

By Heather E. Heying, evolutionary biologist and a former professor at Evergreen State College.
April 30, 2018

Nature is unscripted and hard to predict. Having recently discovered this reality, Penn State has decided that its 98-year-old, student-led Outing Club shall no longer be allowed to go on outings. Citing the high risk of remote environments and poor cellphone service, the university is recommending that the club restrict its offerings to films and speakers. Students are being funneled into engaging only in previously vetted human constructions.

The students of the Outing Club are fighting back — and good for them. Driven to explore both nature and risk, they are well on their way to adulthood, which means knowing how to resist injunctions that are more protection against future lawsuits than they are in service of the students themselves.

Not so long ago universities took on the authority of parents, in loco parentis. Now that many modern parents have absolved themselves of the responsibility of raising mature, bold, responsible adults, it seems universities have followed suit. At Penn State, the Outing Club wasn't the only one on the chopping block — caving and scuba diving are reportedly out as well.

In my 15 years as a professor at Evergreen State College, I led field trips to Panama and Ecuador that sometimes lasted months. My students and I explored archipelagos and jungles, coral reefs and colonial cities. And I experienced and heard tell of many dangerous situations.

On one trip alone, in 2016, which my husband and fellow professor Bret Weinstein and I led together with 30 undergraduates (and our own two children), there were life-threatening emergencies involving a tree fall in the Amazon, a boat accident in Galápagos and, later, a serious earthquake in coastal Ecuador. Everyone made it home, but why take such risks? Is studying the politics of land use, the cultures of early Americans or territoriality in butterflies worth it?

Over the course of several trips, I saw students rise to challenges in ways that they simply could not at home. I purposefully sought out field sites that were remote not just because nature is more interesting and intact in such places — more lianas climbing their way up to the light, more vine snakes mimicking those same lianas — but also because encountering nature in its least disturbed state often comes at the “cost” of having no connection to the outside world. Far from the virtual eyes that document our every move, people are revealed, to themselves and to others.

In the field, I watched students descend into their own darkness, depression gripping them, and I watched as they emerged from it, stronger and more grounded. Romantic ideas of the jungle disappear with the reality of constant sweat and biting insects, and the realization that to see charismatic animals do interesting things, you have to get out there and fade into the forest, and then wait patiently for it to come back alive around you.

Some hate it. They cannot abide the lack of control, the discovery that nature is not a nature documentary. Most, though, find hidden strength and unanticipated freedom.

One afternoon on a tributary of the Amazon, a river with broad clay banks, a gloriously messy mud fight broke out between friends, while a few of us standing on the banks cheered them on. They were filthy and raucous and there were no books in sight. Students were exploring boundaries of all sorts, and it looked a lot like education to me.

Another evening, the students tried to give research presentations under a corrugated metal roof but a squall came up, and the rain was pounding the roof so noisily that we had to reschedule. We dispersed, some taking the opportunity to catch up on sleep, some wandering off into the forest to explore the warm, wet embrace of a tropical jungle at night. If education is, in part, preparation for an unpredictable and shifting world, teaching courage and curiosity ought to be a priority.

On domestic field trips in remote locations, my classes did field exercises and even, sometimes, endured lectures, but we also explored without explicit goals, cooked and shared meals, sat around campfires and told stories. In eastern Washington's scablands, high winds can make standing on mesas dangerous, and climbing up to them, through scree fields, is a challenge, too. Students unaccustomed to physical exertion, injured and on crutches, or just born-and-bred in the city and not familiar with how to navigate a slope of jagged, loose rocks, all faced the fields and took them on. On the scree fields of eastern Washington, facing an unpredictable and shifting world is a literal endeavor.

One brave student from the 2016 trip was injured in the boat accident in the Galápagos. The boat was destroyed, but she soldiered on. Then, three weeks later, she was nearly crushed when the five-story unreinforced masonry hotel she was staying in collapsed during a major earthquake. She was lucky: Almost everyone in the building died. She and another student dug themselves out of the rubble. Her recovery was long and painful. She — a serious ballet dancer — was wheelchair-bound for months. After a year of surgeries, crutches and other frustrations, she caught me off guard. Despite everything, she said, she would do it all again. The trip had been that important to her.

In advance of these study-abroad trips, I led long conversations about risk, how to assess it, what we perceive our own relationship with it to be. We discussed how risk is different in landscapes that haven't been rendered safe by liability lawsuits and in which medical help is a very long way away. We talked about the hidden hazards of the jungle — rising water, tree falls — compared with the familiar ones, like snakes and big cats, that people are primed to be scared of. In the tropical lowland rain forest — the jungle — you might get stuck in deep mud and perhaps need help to get out. Look before you reach for a tree for leverage. Some trees defend themselves with nasty spikes, and a branch might be crawling with bullet ants, so named for the intense experience of being stung by one.

But it turns out that risk and potential go hand in hand. We need to let children, including college students, risk getting hurt. Protection from pain guarantees weakness, fragility and greater suffering in the future. The discomfort may be physical, emotional or intellectual — My ankle! My feelings! My worldview! — and all need to be experienced to learn and grow.

Article 3: How To Rank College Ranking Sites

Willard Dix, contributor to Forbes Magazine
August 29, 2018

It's college ranking list time again and everyone but those who make them will lament their effect on students and parents trying to make informed decisions about which colleges to apply to and attend. I'm one of those who don't put much stock in rankings, no matter how "scientific" they are, since the imponderables of college are too great to measure meaningfully. And with students themselves being one of the top imponderables, no matter what the lists say, any indicators of "value" or "success" or "employability" will be strictly based on generalities, not realities. So, *caveat emptor*.

Regardless, the number of college ranking sites has proliferated since *U. S. News* started the first ranking list way back in the early '80s. It became a best-selling issue, which meant that over the years other publications have gotten in on the act. With so much time and money at stake, people want some guidance, *a la* Consumer Reports, about where to spend them, and publications are only too happy to partake of both. Which school will provide the biggest ROI? Where will I/my kid get the "best" education? Which one has the best track record for getting graduates into law/med/business school? And on and on.

You can look at the statistics for each school on each list to get an idea, but when you add the x of the student to the equation, it becomes a whole new equation. At best, lists and rankings of colleges and universities can only give static views of each institution and be about as on target as a crystal ball.

Consider what you want from rankings. Is it a "guarantee" of some kind? Reassurance that your choices will perform as indicated? Do you want to be sure the family's status is maintained? Do you want to get plenty of bang for your buck (however you define that)? Check yourself before diving in.

Let's face it, though: The Ivy League will always have a patina no one else can ever match. Schools that are older and richer will always be so. Top athletic conference schools are unlikely to simply fade away. And some schools will be party schools no matter who is on their faculty. These elements and many more intersect like perverse Venn diagrams to make every college decision a lot more complex than you ever thought it could be.

Although the *U. S. News* list is the most famous, plenty of others are out there. Each one adopts (or tries to) a particular angle to differentiate itself from that one. Which one to use? Take your pick, but remember to approach each one with a huge helping of salt. Herewith, a list of college lists.

1. ***U. S. News's 2018 Best Colleges:*** The granddaddy of all the lists, it also is the most comprehensive in terms of data, which it collects from the institutions themselves. Over the years its methodologies have changed and a few schools have been caught fudging their numbers or gaming the rankings, but for pure information, it's pretty good. Outside the top ten or so on the college and university lists, it's always a struggle for schools to rise; lots of energy gets wasted figuring out strategies to do so. Unfortunately, some trustee boards put stock in the rankings and heads can roll if a school slips. This list and its creators have assumed an arrogance over the years similar to the College Board's. Their attitude is "Don't like our rankings? What're you gonna do about it?" Best thing is the interactivity and sortability of the online version: You can focus on data you're interested in.
2. ***Money magazine publishes its 2018-19 Best Colleges Ranking*** but unlike *U. S. News*, it limits itself to "the Best 727 Colleges in America." Why 727? That's for the *Money* people to say. They also focus, as you might imagine, on financial aspects of college. They "analyzed graduation rates, tuition charges, family borrowing, and alumni earnings (plus 22 other data points) to find the country's top values." If that's your priority, take a look.
3. ***Forbes' list*** only goes up to 650, so for some reason 77 colleges on *Money's* list were left out in the cold. *Forbes* began its list in 2008 with an Ohio University economics professor leading the team. (Did you know there IS an Ohio University? Yep. It's in Athens, Ohio and is pretty impressive.) This list doesn't use SAT scores or acceptance rates, counting them as "inputs" not "outputs." Their homepage asks: "How likely are [students] to find success in their chosen field, to earn enough money to pay their student debt, to win accolades like Pulitzer Prizes and Fulbright scholarships, to become leaders in private and public life?" A pretty ambitious survey, all things considered.

4. **Kiplinger** focuses even more narrowly, with only 200 "top values in liberal-arts colleges or private universities" being the focus. Its ranking also focuses on "value" as measured by cost, aid, debt at graduation and salary after graduation. They say, "All the schools in our rankings meet our definition of value—a quality education at an affordable price. We start by examining academic measures, including how competitive admission to a school is and how efficiently it gets students to their degree. On the financial side, we look for schools with affordable sticker prices, generous financial aid for students who qualify, and low student debt at graduation."
5. **Washington Monthly** takes a different tack in its rankings. It focuses on "schools based on what they are doing for the country." Their major categories are "Social Mobility (recruiting and graduating low-income students), Research (producing cutting-edge scholarship and PhDs), and Service (encouraging students to give something back to their country)." This method doesn't do much to diversify the university side (Harvard, Stanford, MIT, Princeton and Yale are the top ranked, surprise, surprise) but the college column provides a refreshing shock, listing Berea (in Kentucky), Washington and Lee, Harvey Mudd, Amherst and Bowdoin as the top five. You need to decide whether or not you agree with their definition of "what they're doing for the country."
6. **The Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education College Rankings 2018** purports to stand out: "Uniquely, it has at its heart the voices of more than 200,000 current American college students, collected through *Times Higher Education's* annual U.S. Student Survey." But as you'll note in #7, it's not the only ranking using student surveys; there are just more of them. They rank more than 1,000 institutions based on "15 individual performance indicators designed to answer the questions that matter the most to students and their families: How likely am I to graduate, pay off my loans and get a good job? Does the college have plenty of resources to teach me properly? Will I be engaged and stretched in the classroom and get good access to my teachers? Is there a diverse campus community?" And so on. But the top schools are no surprise...
7. **The Princeton Review's Best 384 Colleges 2019**, now in its 27th edition, "surveyed 138,000 students from across the country so we can tell you which college has the best food, best career services, happiest students, and more. Find out if your dream school made one of our 62 lists." There's something to be said for this method, which eschews "science" for the "inside scoop" on the things that do often matter for students. If you need to know the "social scene" or "town life" this list might give you some ideas. A subcategory of town life is "Town-Gown Relations are Great," with the top prize there taken by Loyola University New Orleans. (Town-Weather relations is not a category.) If you get through all 62 lists, good for you.
8. **Niche.com** does a nice job with its 2019 Best Colleges in America (although I think the 2019 refers to the year, not the number of schools ranked). It lumps colleges and universities together in its big list and gives grades (so an A+ for MIT and Stanford...who knew?) based on "dozens of public data sets and millions of reviews. Our data scientists and user researchers rigorously analyze data and user opinions to assess the key aspects of K-12 Schools..." Since Niche.com relies on student reviews, like a Yelp for colleges, this list seems close to what students might really want to hear.
9. **CollegeFactual.com** makes no bones about what you're doing in their online header: "College Shopping Simplified." They say, "Our Purpose is to Help You Fulfill Yours. Find your future faster using the hundreds of different fit factors that go into our proprietary matching technology to help identify the best fit college and major for you." They present themselves as hip and breezy, with categories like "In Crowd: Small and Selective," "Surf's Up: Beach Colleges" and, unfortunately, "Who Runs the World?: Girls." Two guys founded the company several years ago "With backgrounds in scalable online publishing, online

marketplaces and behavioral science..." They position themselves as "Armed with this perspective and a world-class team..., a plan was hatched to disrupt higher education for the betterment of students, educators, and the world." A brief survey of the site doesn't find anything too "disruptive" or original, however. Just more of the same.

10. **WalletHub.com** has a ranking site that looks at nearly 1,000 schools over 26 different "key measures" and is very similar to the *U.S. News* list except with breezier prose.
11. **BestColleges.com** focuses on online opportunities provided by established institutions as well as online schools. "We began with minimum criteria like accreditation, annual reporting, and availability of online degrees. We then delved deeper into each school's overall value by considering aspects like academic quality, affordability, and the breadth and depth of programs available online." Its list of campuses has no surprises but its emphasis on the online aspects of higher education stands out.
12. **CollegeRaptor.com** is dazzled by the Ivies: "The Top 50 Best Colleges in the U.S. list is our most-selective and most prestigious. The schools in this category are the best of the best." No surprises here. My biggest question here is, with a name like "raptor," why is your logo an animal that looks like a friendly gator? (Okay, a raptor can be "a small-to-medium-sized predatory dinosaur [such as a velociraptor or deinonychus]" according to Webster, but it's a bird of prey for most of us. Otherwise, nothing too distinguishing here.
13. **CollegeAtlas.org** is the only list I've found that explicitly rejects automatically putting Ivy League and related institutions in its top-ranked schools. "Instead of highlighting elite, exclusive, expensive schools that cater to the few, we have created a revolutionary algorithm that provides a fresh, unbiased look at the concept of a college ranking list and rewards colleges and universities for factors that are most important to you. Those factors are: Academic Quality (a great education), Affordability (low tuition costs), and Accessibility (high acceptance rates)." According to them, the Universities of Colorado--Boulder, Wisconsin--Madison, Indiana University and the University of Iowa are the best in the nation. Whether you can design an algorithm that's "unbiased" is another matter, but it's refreshing to see some effort put into swimming upstream in the college ranking game.

You've probably noticed by now that there's not all that much difference in the rankings with some notable exceptions. The usual suspects are at the top of most of the lists and all the others can be shuffled around in no particular order. Although all the rankings tout their methodologies, there's really no way to measure things like college quality, atmosphere and outcomes objectively. Data can be collected and inferences made from the percentage of graduates going to med school or teaching, but these are only generalized guidelines. You still need to do the legwork yourself.

The National Center for Education Statistics predicts that approximately 19.9 million students will attend colleges and universities this fall, so the market for rankings is huge. Despite institutions' best efforts, however, including playing up to the rankings, college students still end up attending college an average of 260 miles from home. So your decisions may end up being the same whether you use ranking lists or not.

