

# The MEFA Institute: Helping Students and Parents Approach the College Choice Process Systematically



# ABOUT US

Dr. Sterk, Dr. Poynton, and Dr. Lapan have partnered together to bring research informed practices and data driven strategies to help students and families navigate the college-going process through a robust student workbook and corresponding curriculum.



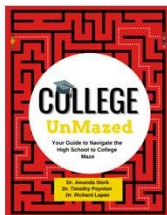
Dr. Timothy Poynton



Dr. Richard Lapan

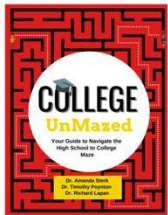
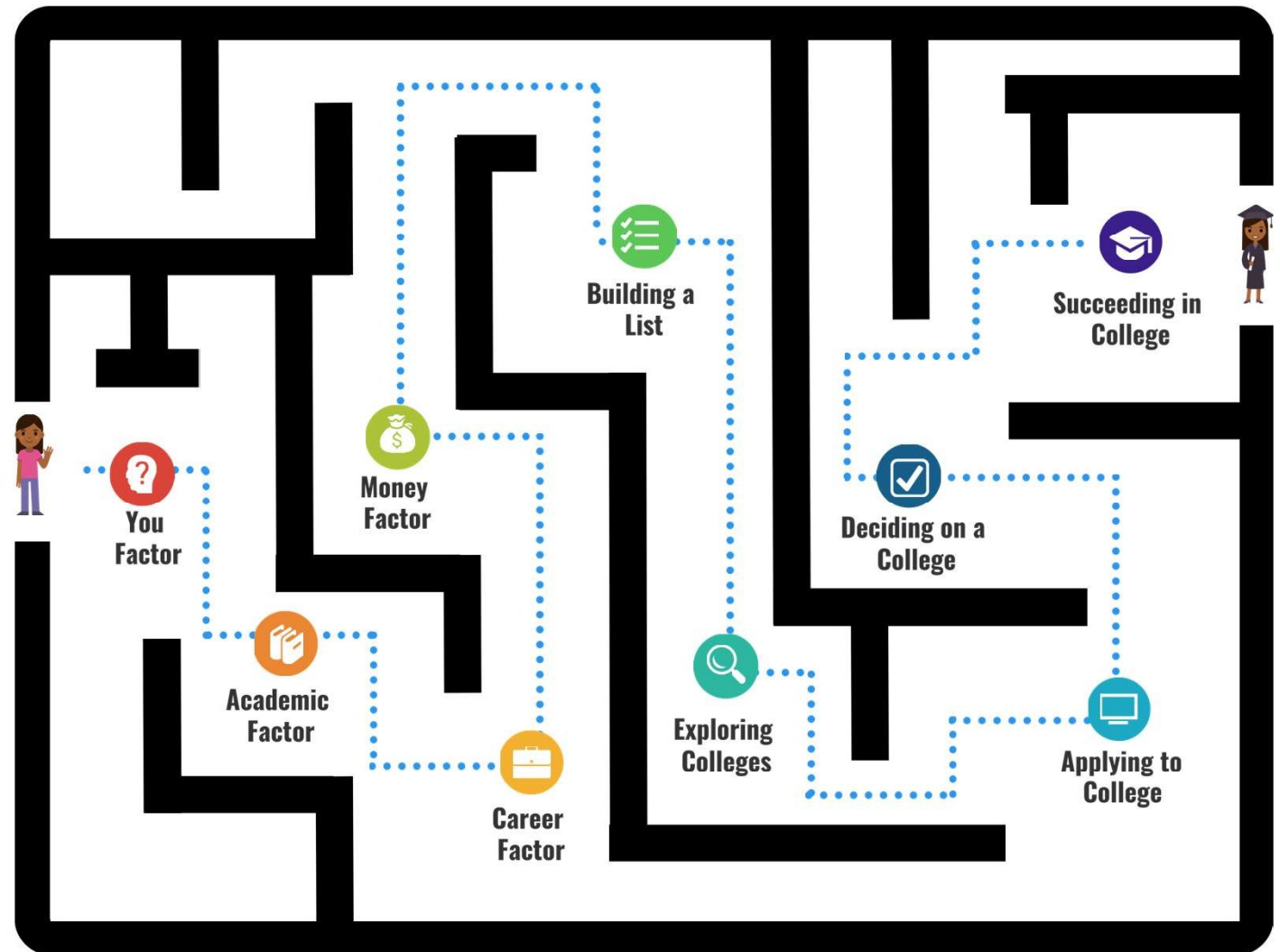


Dr. Amanda Sterk



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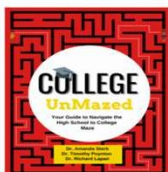
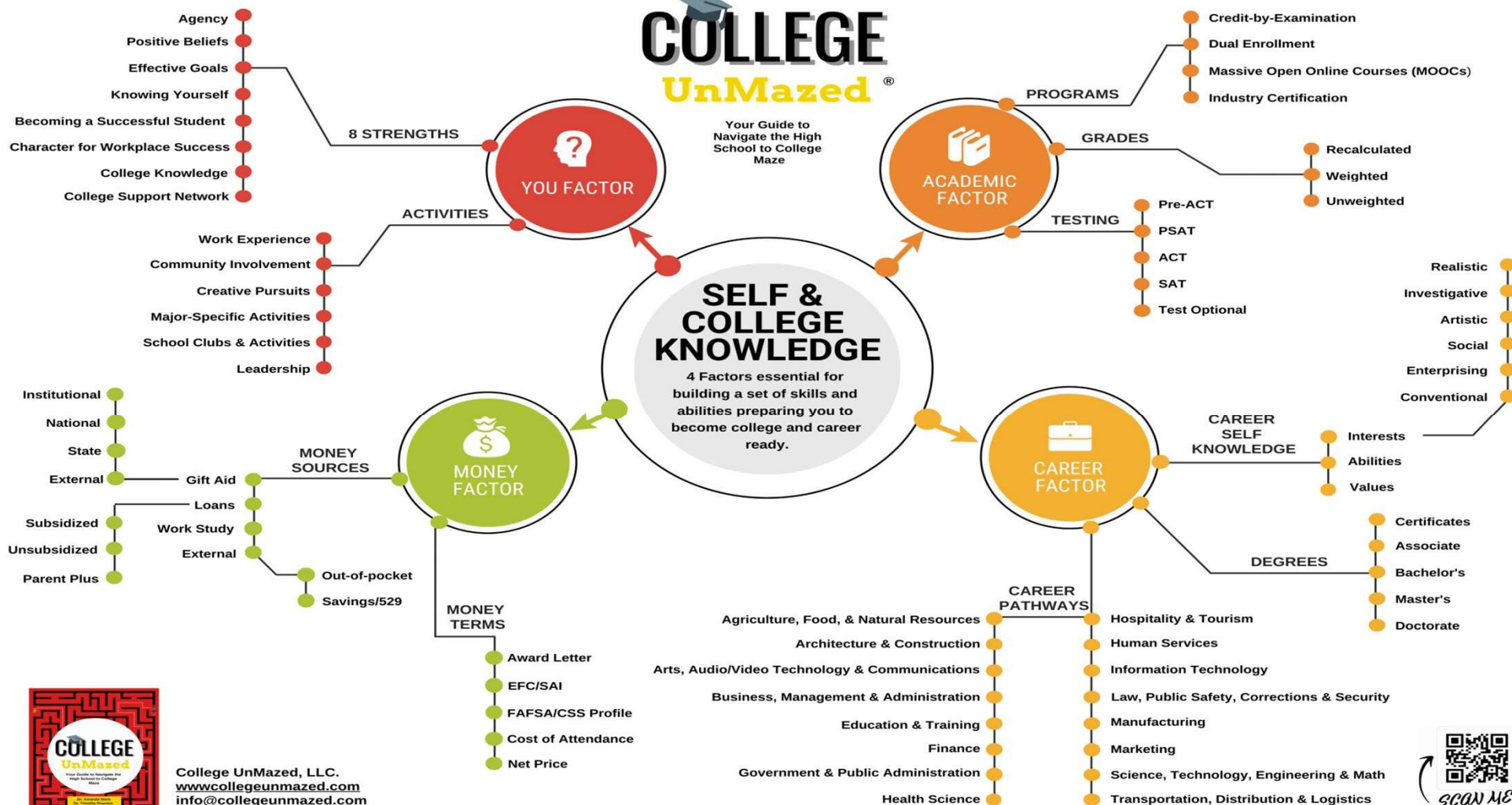
# COLLEGE UNMAZED



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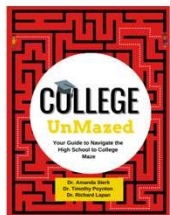
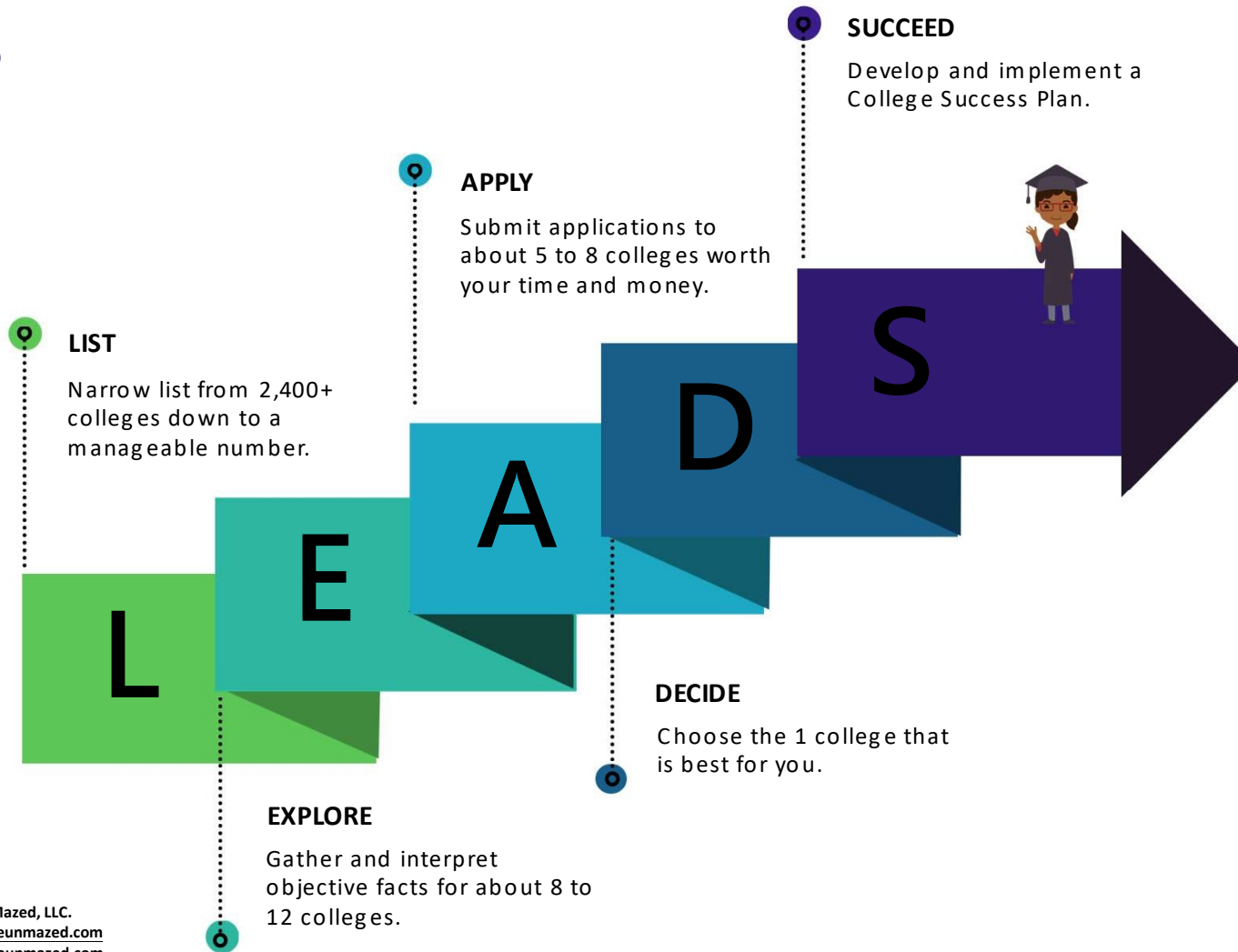
Your Guide to  
Navigate the High  
School to College  
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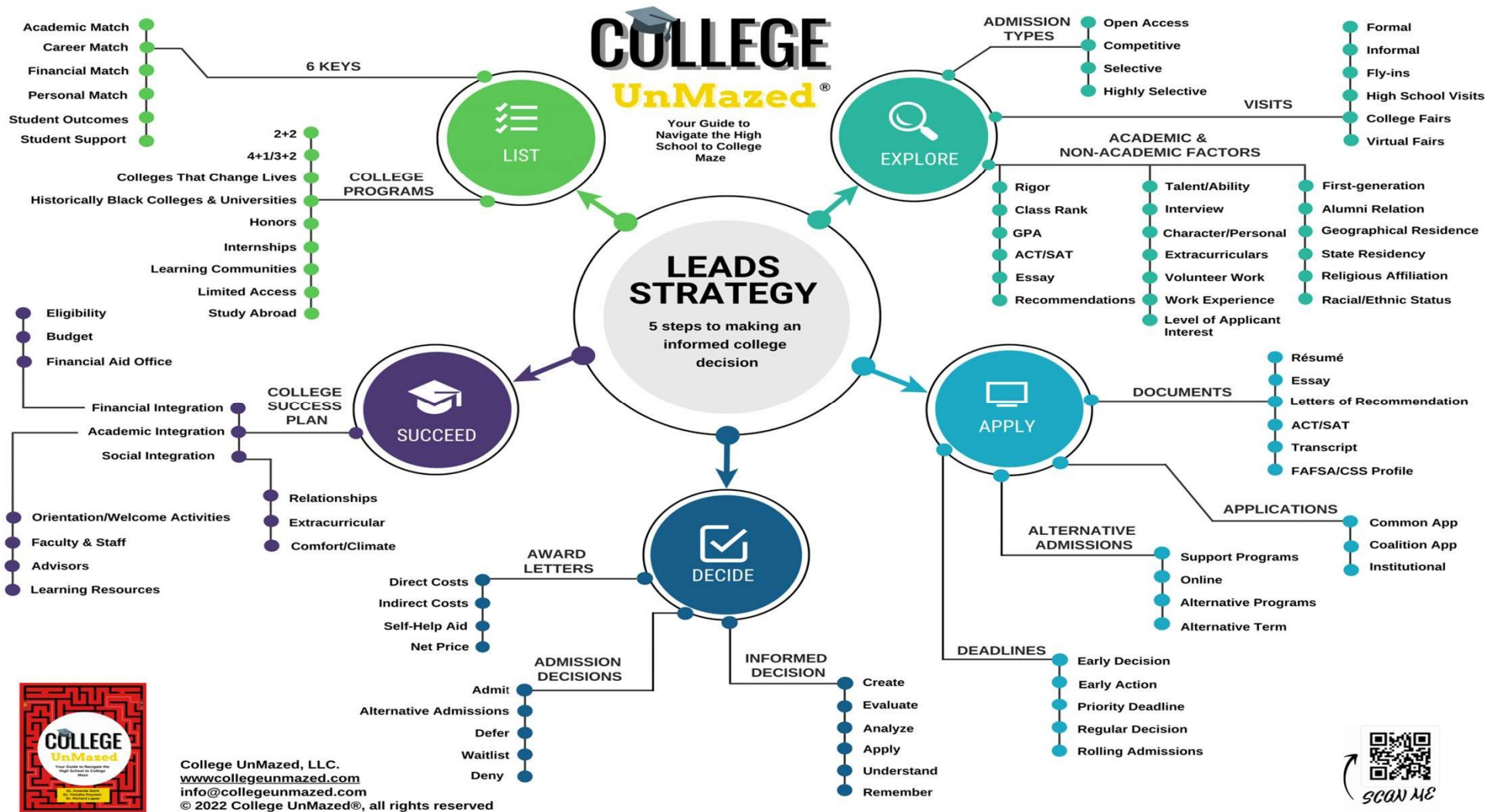


# LEADS

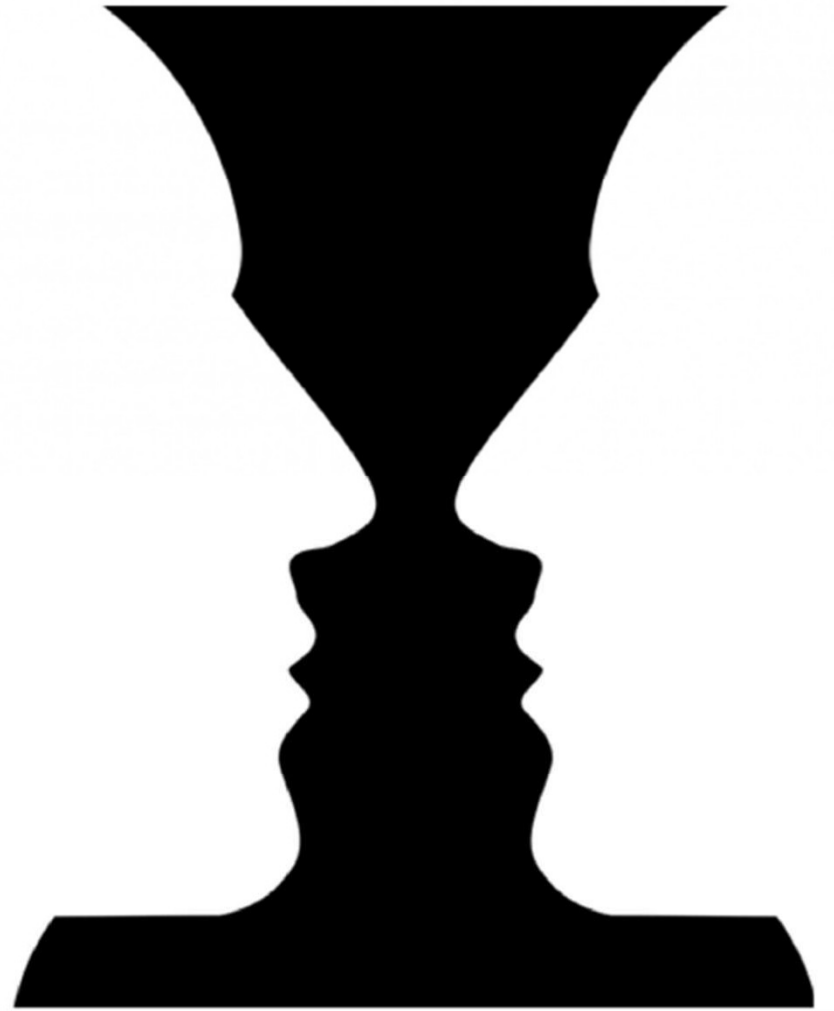


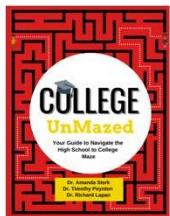
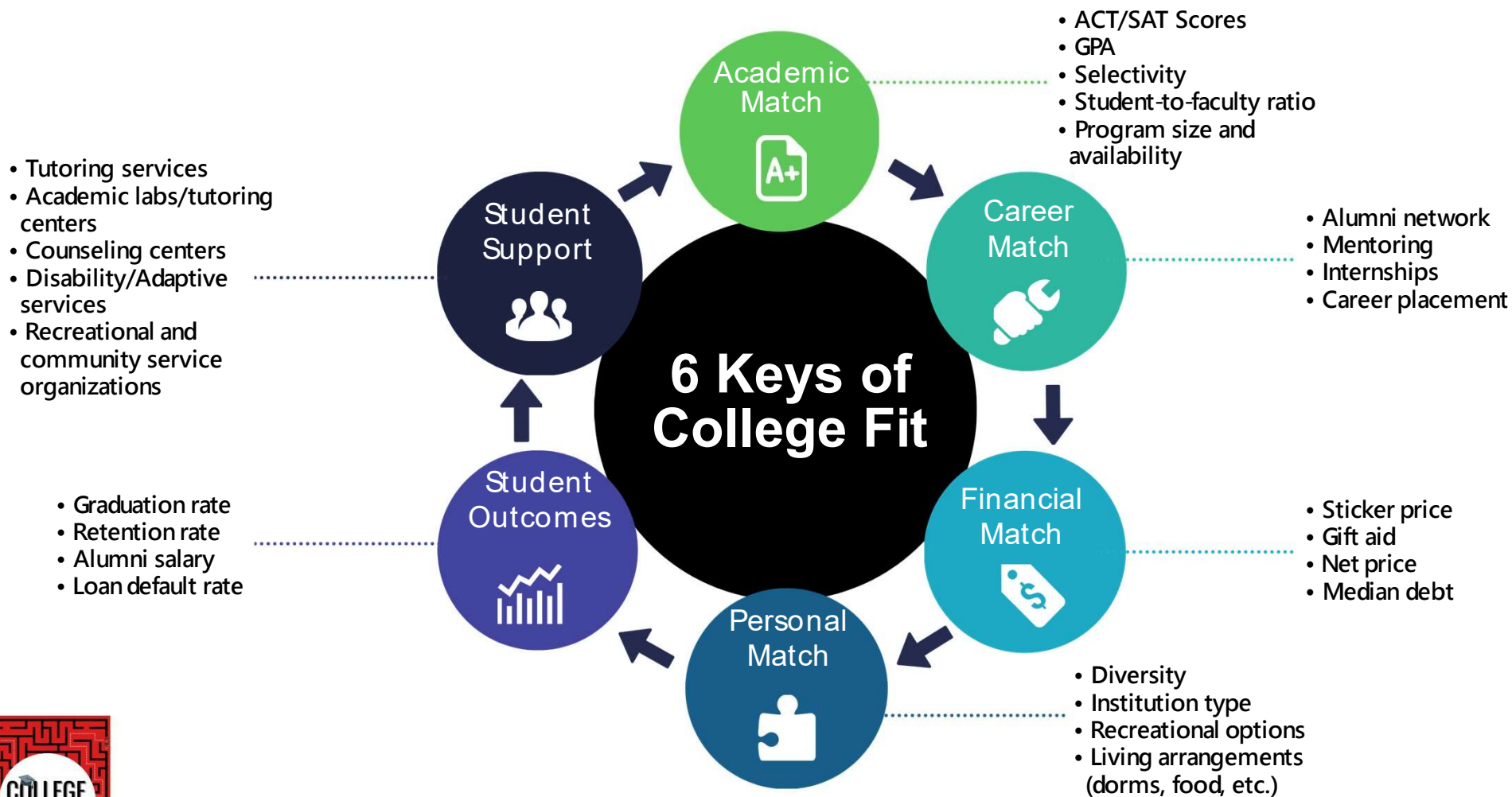
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# What is FIT?







# Identifying College Fit Priorities



Not all of the Six Keys of College Fit are equally important to every student/family

More formally discussing and assessing what is more and less important is not only helpful, but necessary IMHO:

- For students who are overwhelmed, this gives them focus
- For students who are not fully engaged, this gives them ideas

# Identifying College Fit Priorities

- Can be used in any way that makes the most sense for each individual student and your understanding of their needs
  - If ‘everything’ seems important, you might use a more structured approach to ‘force’ distinctions between things that are more and less important



- If you get the ‘I dunno’ response to your question asking what is important in a college, you might use a less structured approach

# Online Card Sort

- <https://www.collegeunmazed.com/mycfponline>
  - Uses H5P, a platform for making engaging content, primarily for education
  - Best done on tablet or larger-sized screen
    - Works fine, just hard to read...

College UnMazed - My College Fit Priorities Card Sort Activity

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Place each of the 24 Priority cards into one of the columns (Very Important, Somewhat Important, or Not Important). Hovering over a card displays additional information about the priority. You can only rate 5 cards as 'Very Important', but feel free to move them around as much as you like. When you are done, be sure to take a screenshot to save your results. For best experience, complete this activity on a computer-sized screen and place into full-screen mode by clicking on the blue arrows in the upper right.

At the *ideal* college, it is important that...

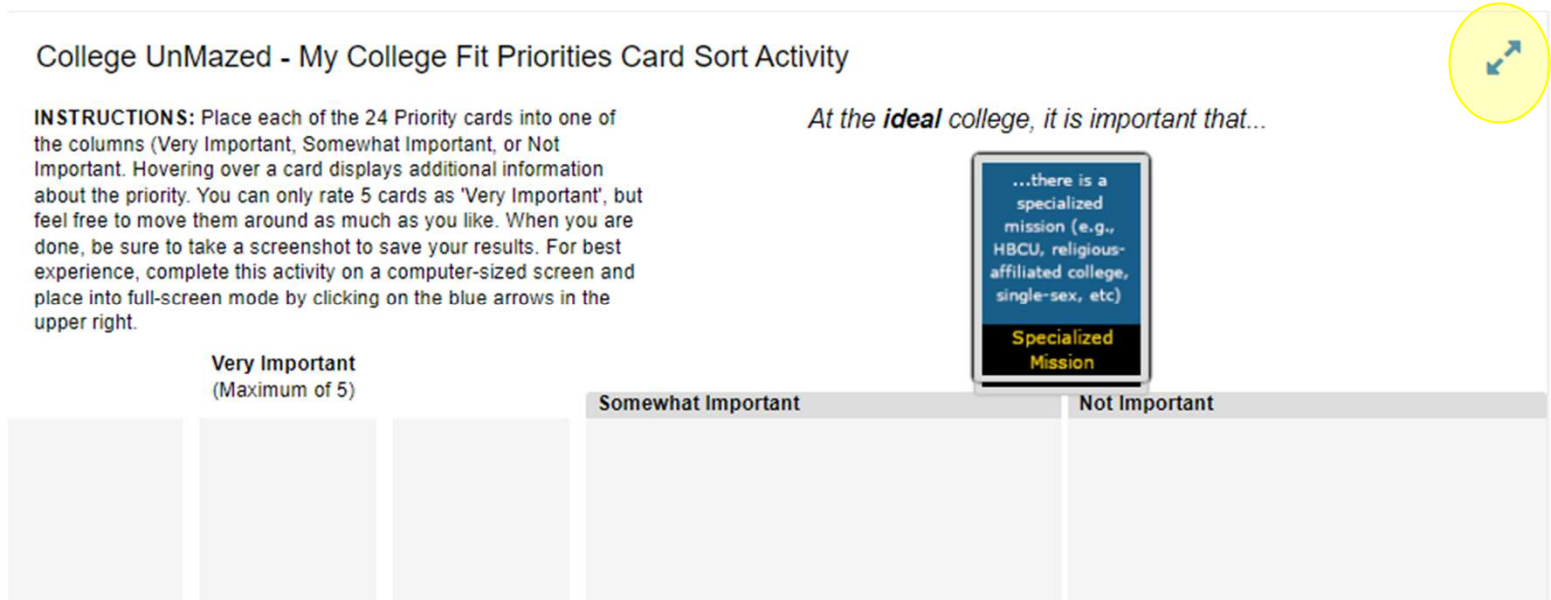
...there is a specialized mission (e.g., HBCU, religious-affiliated college, single-sex, etc)

**Specialized Mission**

**Very Important**  
(Maximum of 5)

**Somewhat Important**

**Not Important**





*Primary objective of List phase is to identify options that generally fit you without getting overwhelmed and missing any good options. Should ideally have about 10-15 colleges. California has 233 four-year colleges, Texas 129, Massachusetts 91. Wyoming has 3 four-year colleges.*

## Personal Match

- Location
- Distance from home
- Size of campus (small, medium, large)
- Sports teams
- Religious affiliation
- Special mission (HBCU, tribal, single sex)

## Career Match

- Majors & programs offered

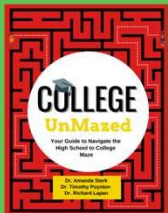
## Academic Match

- Online/distance learning options
- Availability of weekend classes
- Credit for life experience
- Available degrees (certificates, Associate, Bachelor's)
- Type of college, 2- or 4-year
- Public or private

# Developing a List

1. Career pathways
2. Housing available on or near campus
3. Distance from home
4. School size
5. Varsity athletic teams
6. Institution type
7. Level of award

***What is not considered  
at this stage?  
Cost, Chance of Admission***



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**COLLEGE**Navigator

English | Español | About

## Find the right college for you

[Guide Me](#)

**Name of School**  
Type name of school here

**States** (use map for more than 1 state)  
No Preference  
Alabama  
Alaska  
Use Map

**ZIP Code** Miles from

**Programs/Majors**  
0 Items Selected  
[Browse for Programs](#)

**Level of Award**  
☐ Certificate ☐ Associate's  
☐ Bachelor's ☐ Advanced

**Institution Type**  
☐ Public ☐ 4-year  
☐ Private non-profit ☐ 2-year  
☐ Private for-profit ☐ < 2-year

**MORE SEARCH OPTIONS**

**Tuition & Fees**  
Maximum State you live in

**Undergraduate Student Enrollment**  
Minimum to Maximum

**Housing?** ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Campus Setting**  
☐ Rural ☐ Suburban  
☐ Town ☐ City

**% of Applicants Admitted**  
Minimum to Maximum

**Test Scores – 25th Percentile**  
SAT Reading/Writing: Min Max  
SAT Math: Min Max  
ACT Composite: Min Max

**Varsity Athletic Teams**  
☐ Men ☐ Women  
No Preference

**Extended Learning Opportunities**  
☐ Distance learning only  
☐ Weekend/evening  
☐ Credit for life experience

**Religious Affiliation**  
No Preference

**Specialized Mission**  
No Preference

[Show Results](#)

[Guide Me](#) | [Clear Search](#)

**College Affordability and Transparency Center**  
Browse lists of institutions with the highest and lowest tuition & fees and net price. [GO](#)

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Preparing for your Education**  
Find out what you need to do to prepare for education beyond high school. [GO](#)

**Financial Aid**  
Apply for Federal Student Aid on FAFSA. [GO](#)

**Postsecondary Education Outcome Measures: ED, DOD, and VA**  
ED, DOD, and VA have identified a set of potential education outcome measures for Veterans and service members. [GO](#)

**Careers**  
Deciding on a career? Consult the [bls.gov](#) Occupational Outlook Handbook. [GO](#)

**Refine your search with More Search Options** to select additional search criteria.

**Build a list of schools using My Favorites** for side-by-side comparisons.

**Pinpoint school locations with an interactive map.**

**Export search results into a spreadsheet.**

**Save your session** including search options and favorites.

**Add College Navigator** to your browser search bar.





*All 6 Keys considered in Explore; primary objective is to get to about 8-12 colleges you Explore more deeply through visits and further investigation with Six Keys.*

*Here is where you begin to consider cost and chance of admission.*

### Academic Match

- ACT/SAT Scores
- GPA
- Selectivity
- Student-to-faculty ratio
- Program size and availability

### Career Match

- Alumni network
- Mentoring
- Internships
- Career placement

### Personal Match

- Diversity
- Institution type
- Recreational options
- Living arrangements (dorms, food, etc.)

### Financial Match

- Sticker price
- Gift aid
- Net price
- Median debt

### Student Support

- Tutoring services
- Academic labs/tutoring centers
- Counseling centers
- Disability/Adaptive services
- Recreational and community service organizations

### Student Outcomes

- Graduation rate
- Retention rate
- Alumni salary
- Loan default rate

*We can better estimate chances of admission if we know how a particular college views the importance of the academic and non-academic factors they consider when making admission decisions*

Figure 6.2



### MALLEABLE NON-ACADEMIC FACTORS

- Talent/ ability
- Interview
- Character/ personal qualities
- Extracurricular activities
- Volunteer work
- Work experience
- Level of applicant interest



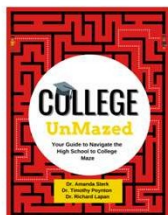
### LESS MALLEABLE NON- ACADEMIC FACTORS

- First generation
- Alumni relation
- Geographical residence
- State residency
- Religious affiliation/ commitment
- Racial/ ethnic status

#### C7. Basis for Selection: Relative Importance of Factors in Admission Decisions

Please indicate the relative importance of each of the following academic and non-academic factors in your first-time, first-year degree-seeking general admission decisions (not including programs with specific criteria): *select from the dropdown menus.*

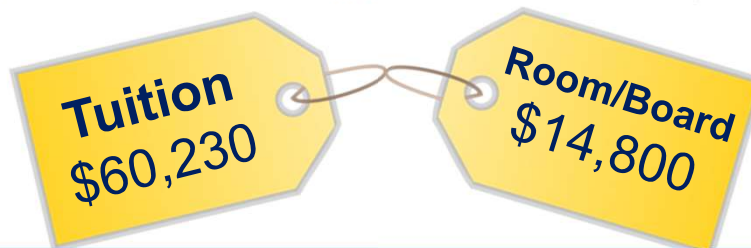
ACADEMIC	
Rigor of secondary school record	Very Important
Class rank	Important
Academic Grade Point Average (GPA)	Very Important
Recommendations	Important
Standardized test scores	Considered
Application essay	Important
NONACADEMIC	
Interview	Not Considered
Extracurricular activities	Important
Talent/ability	Important
Character/personal qualities	Important
First generation	Considered
Alumni/ae relation	Not Considered
Geographical residence	Not Considered
State residency	Considered
Religious affiliation/commitment	Not Considered
Volunteer work	Considered
Work experience	Important
Level of applicant's interest	Not Considered



## Use Scholarship Information to Better Estimate Cost

TYPE OF AID	NUMBER AWARDED AID	PERCENT AWARDED AID	TOTAL AMOUNT OF AID AWARDED	AVERAGE AMOUNT OF AID AWARDED
Any student financial aid <sup>1</sup>	488	99%	—	—
Grant or scholarship aid	484	98%	\$20,165,838	\$41,665
Federal grants	98	20%	\$605,015	\$6,174
Pell grants	98	20%	\$478,182	\$4,879
Other federal grants	82	17%	\$126,833	\$1,547
State/local government grant or scholarships	71	14%	\$180,615	\$2,544
Institutional grants or scholarships	481	97%	\$19,380,208	\$40,291
Student loan aid	392	79%	\$2,997,498	\$7,647
Federal student loans	392	79%	\$2,022,101	\$5,158
Other student loans	56	11%	\$975,397	\$17,418

67% AVERAGE tuition discount!



*You will find this in Financial Aid section of College Navigator*



[Admissions >](#) [Discover Lasell >](#) [Tuition and Aid >](#) [Academics >](#) [Campus Life >](#) [Athletics >](#)

**September 20, 2022**

Lasell University today announced plans to reduce tuition and room and board costs to bring greater transparency to its pricing and make a Lasell undergraduate education accessible to a broader group of students.

At its recent meeting, our [Board of Trustees](#) approved the rate of \$26,000 for tuition and \$13,500 for standard room and board, making Lasell [housing and meal plan](#) rate among the lowest in the Boston area and in all of New England. [This reduction in price better reflects the actual out of pocket costs that the majority of current Lasell students pay after scholarships are factored in.](#)

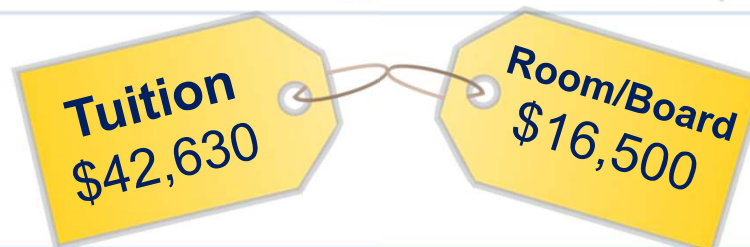
For the **2023-2024** academic year, the combined tuition and standard room and board price will decrease from \$59,130 to \$39,500, [a 33% reduction from the 2022-2023 published rate.](#)

[According to research conducted by Sallie Mae, 60% of high school students won't consider a college or university— even if it meets individual academic, geographic, and social criteria— if the published price is deemed beyond their means. These decisions are often reached without a real understanding of the scholarships and generous financial aid packages that school's like Lasell offer, financial support that can make the cost of attendance more accessible.](#)



TYPE OF AID	NUMBER AWARDED AID	PERCENT AWARDED AID	TOTAL AMOUNT OF AID AWARDED	AVERAGE AMOUNT OF AID AWARDED
Any student financial aid <sup>1</sup>	314	100%	—	—
Grant or scholarship aid	314	100%	\$10,965,131	\$34,921
Federal grants	152	48%	\$803,695	\$5,287
Pell grants	141	45%	\$781,395	\$5,542
Other federal grants	11	4%	\$22,300	\$2,027
State/local government grant or scholarships	92	29%	\$377,350	\$4,102
Institutional grants or scholarships	314	100%	\$9,784,086	\$31,160
Student loan aid	252	80%	\$1,952,395	\$7,748
Federal student loans	252	80%	\$1,365,432	\$5,418
Other student loans	28	9%	\$586,963	\$20,963

**53% AVERAGE discount**  
on tuition, room, and board



*You will find this in Financial Aid section of College Navigator*





## Use Net Price Information to Better Estimate Cost

Full-time beginning undergraduate students who paid the in-state or in-district tuition rate and were awarded grant or scholarship aid from federal, state or local governments, or the institution.

	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Average net price	\$17,291	\$22,291	\$22,954

Full-time beginning undergraduate students who paid the in-state or in-district tuition rate and were awarded Title IV aid by income.

AVERAGE NET PRICE BY INCOME	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
\$0 – \$30,000	\$6,061	\$10,858	\$11,103
\$30,001 – \$48,000	\$7,647	\$11,824	\$13,259
\$48,001 – \$75,000	\$11,340	\$15,768	\$16,738
\$75,001 – \$110,000	\$17,540	\$22,651	\$24,016
\$110,001 and more	\$24,211	\$29,809	\$31,297

*Net Price for low-income student at UMA = \$11,103, high income = \$31,297*

*You will find this in Net Price section of College Navigator*

Characteristic	SUNY at Albany	SUNY Empire State College	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	SUNY Cortland	Syracuse University
Student-to-faculty ratio (Explore)	19	18	17	16	15
% admitted (Explore)	57%		57%	52%	69%
% admit who enroll (Explore)	18%		15%	20%	16%
SAT Reading 25th Percentile (Explore)	550		620	550	
SAT Reading 75th Percentile (Explore)	620		720	610	
SAT Math 25th Percentile (Explore)	540		680	550	
SAT Math 75th Percentile (Explore)	630		780	610	
ACT Composite 25th Percentile (Explore)	22		29	22	
ACT Composite 75th Percentile (Explore)	28		34	26	

Academic Match

Student Outcomes	Retention rate (Explore)	83%	65%	91%	85%	89%
	4 year graduation rate (Explore)	54%	18%	61%	53%	71%
	6 year graduation rate (Explore)	64%	25%	86%	71%	83%
	Cohort default rate (Explore)	4%	4%	1%	4%	3%

Tuition and fees, in state (Explore)	\$10,160	\$7,630	\$57,012	\$8,677	\$55,926
Tuition and fees, out of state (Explore)	\$27,750	\$17,540	\$57,012	\$18,587	\$55,926
Living arrangement - Room and board, On Campus (Explore)	\$14,620		\$15,954	\$13,100	\$16,356
Living arrangement - Room and board, Off Campus (not with Family) (Explore)	\$9,994	\$11,600		\$13,100	\$16,356
Living arrangement - Other (On Campus) (Explore)	\$1,720		\$1,608	\$2,860	\$1,806
Living arrangement - Other (Off Campus, with family) (Explore)	\$2,050	\$1,226		\$3,260	\$1,806
Living arrangement - Other (Off Campus, not with family) (Explore)	\$2,050	\$2,226		\$2,860	\$1,806
Avg. overall Net Price, from IPEDS (Explore)	\$17,486	\$12,059	\$40,661	\$17,743	\$47,177
Avg. Net Price (income \$0-\$30,000)			\$22,878		\$17,250
Avg. Net Price (income \$30,001-\$48,000)			\$20,738		\$19,737
Avg. Net Price (income \$48,001-\$75,000)			\$29,788		\$23,533
Avg. Net Price (income \$75,001-\$110,000)			\$31,589		\$28,653
Avg. Net Price (income over \$110,000)			\$43,003		\$47,284
% of students receiving institutional aid (Explore)	70%	56%	83%	58%	85%
Avg. amount of institutional aid (Explore)	\$3,860	\$649	\$31,461	\$2,185	\$24,390

Financial Match



*Primary objective of Apply phase is to identify colleges worth your time and money (5-8), and then develop strong applications with highest likelihood of success.*

1

This college has a **little** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

**17 or lower = Low Fit**

2

This college has **some** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

3

This college has **much** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

**18–23= Moderate Fit**

4

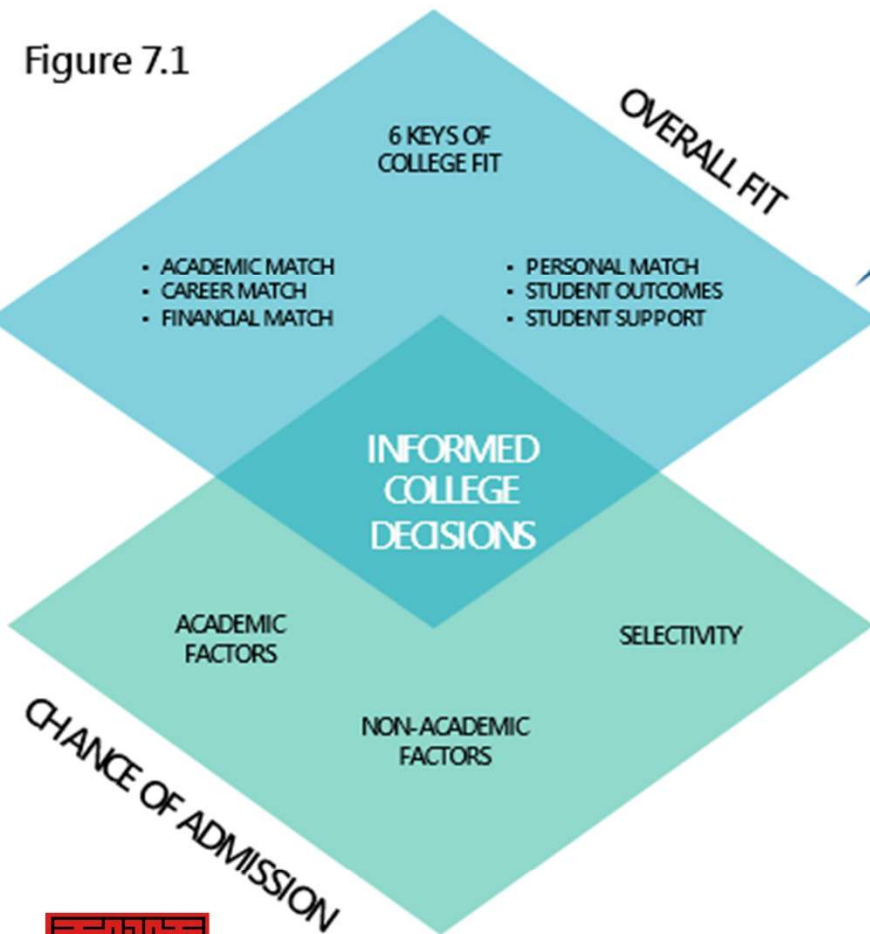
This college has **most** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

5

This college has **everything** I want and need to be satisfied and successful

24-30 = High Fit

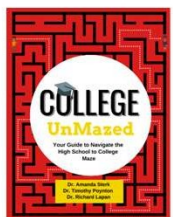
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~~SAFETY, TARGET REACH~~

**Figure 7.5**

My Overall Fit by Chance of Admission		Chance of Admission		
		High	Moderate	Low
Overall Fit	Low			
	Moderate			
	High			





*Primary objective of Decide phase is to choose which college to attend. You again attend to Six Keys but now more strongly weight Desirability, the emotion-based side of informed college decision making.*

1

This college has a **little** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

17 or lower = Low Fit

2

This college has **some** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

3

This college has **much** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

18–23= Moderate Fit

4

This college has **most** of what I want and need to be satisfied and successful

5

This college has **everything** I want and need to be satisfied and successful

24–30 = High Fit

College	Student Outcomes	Academic Match	Personal Match	Career Match	Financial Match	Student Support Services	Total Key Score	Overall Fit

*Revisit 6 Keys with additional information such as Award Letters*



Figure 8.1

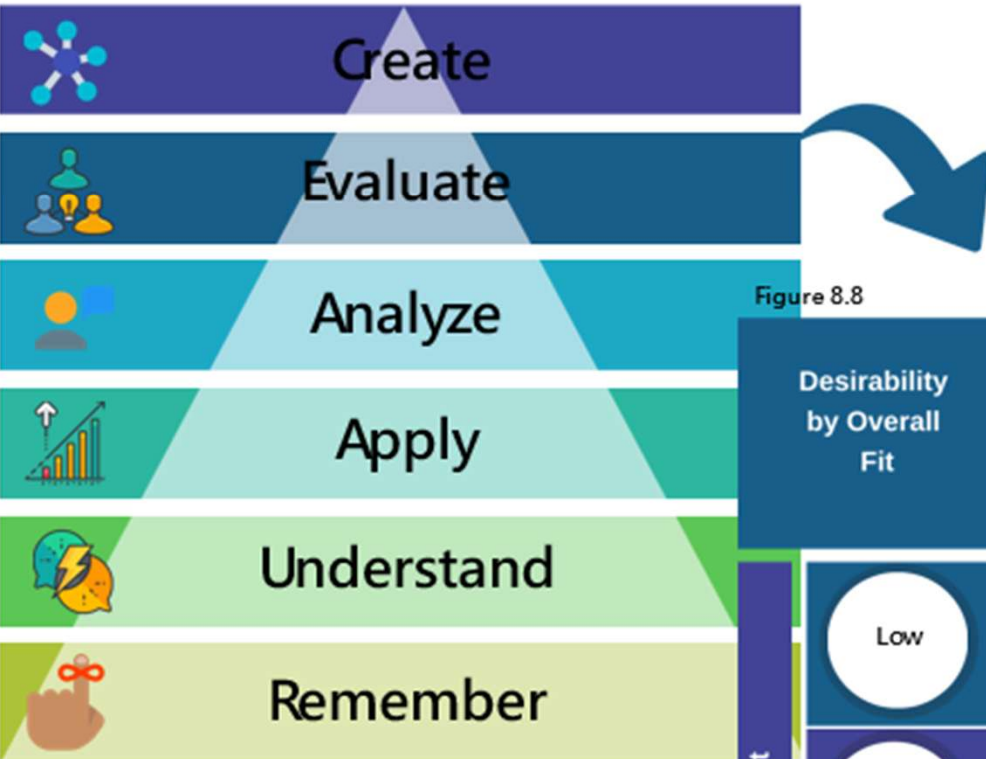
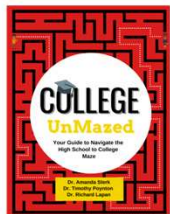
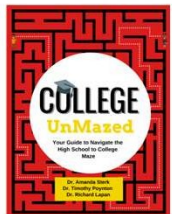
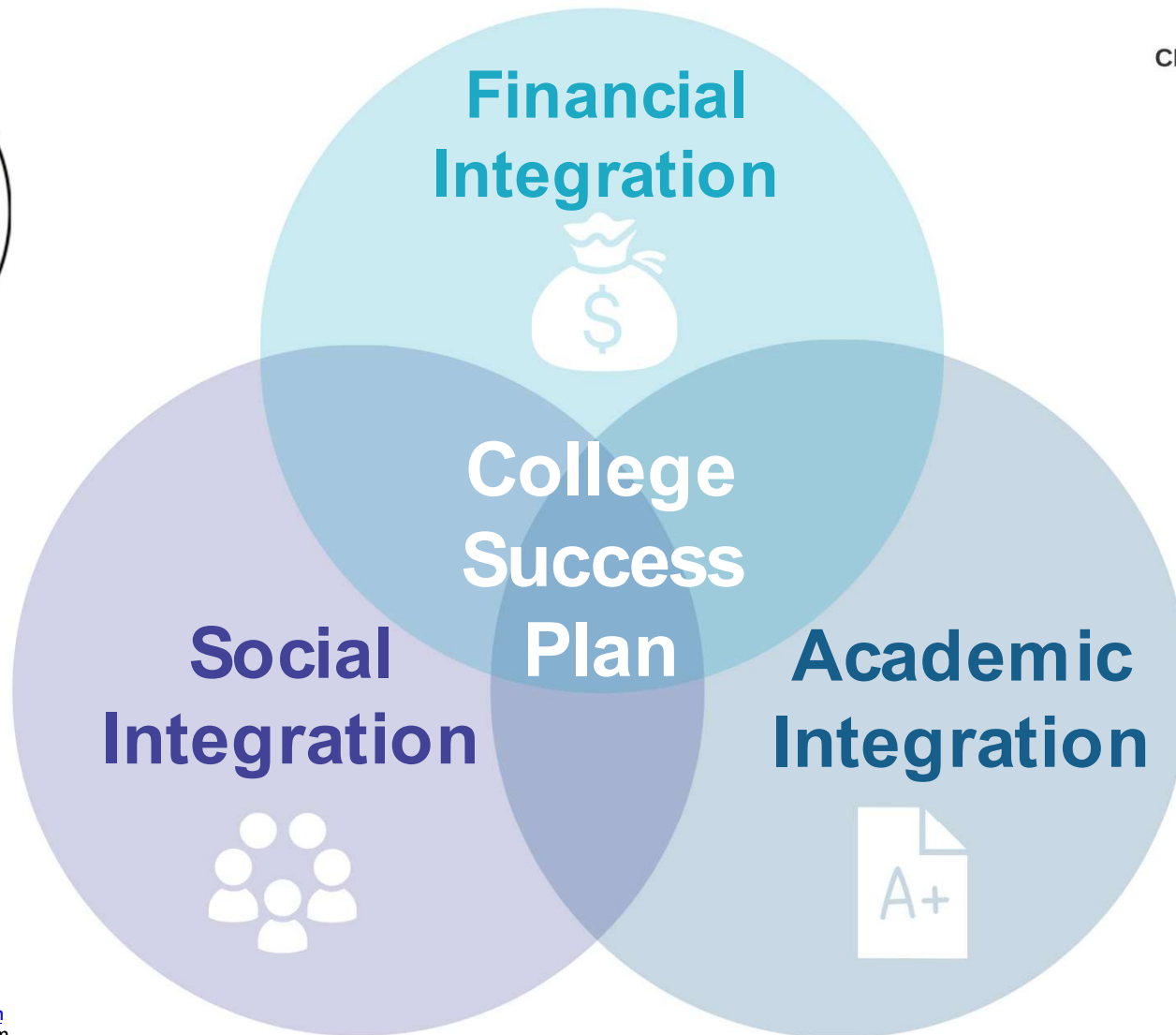
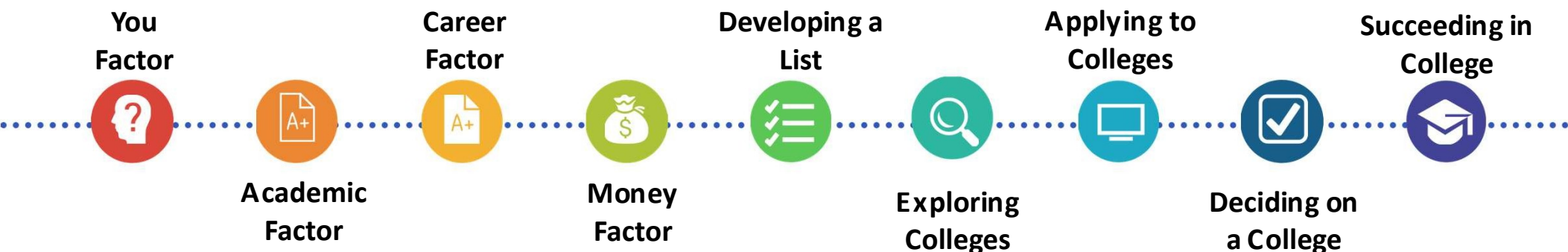


Figure 8.8

Desirability by Overall Fit		Desirability		
		Low	Moderate	High
Overall Fit	Low			
	Moderate			
	High			







# Questions?

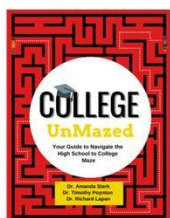
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