

YOUR FIRST LIST:

Begin with institutions that offer the degree you seek in the broad subject area in which you wish to study. Consult reference guides in the USIEF reference library to determine your major and select schools that offer programs in this area. Select schools that award the degree you wish to earn, whether it is an Associate, Bachelor's, Master's or PhD degree.

Revise your first list considering the following selection criteria, eliminating those that are of no importance to you.

- **COST:** Look at tuition and fees, room and board. You will need additional funds for books and miscellaneous living expenses.
- **SIZE:** Size affects the atmosphere of the school. A large institution may offer a greater variety of sub-fields within a given discipline, but at the same time, professors may be too busy with their own research to help you. While a small university or college may offer smaller classes and more contact with professors, the department in your field may be too small.
- **FACULTY AND THEIR RESEARCH:** It is important for graduate students to consider this criterion if they have done substantial research work and are interested in continuing it in the USA. Students can substantially benefit from making direct contact with researching professors. Students applying for a graduate degree should keep in mind that they are evaluated and recommended for admission by a group of faculty members, rather than a central admissions office. The reputation of the department and its faculty is the thing to look for.
- **SELECTIVITY OF THE PROGRAM:** This is the point at which you should try to be as objective concerning your own academic background and intellectual potential as possible. They will determine how strongly you can compete for a very demanding program.
- **FINANCIAL AID:** Usually goes to applicants with strong academic qualifications, high GRE/GMAT scores, significant research, teaching or work experience. PhD students are favored for funding.
- **LOCATION and HOUSING:** Consider which state the school is in and whether it is located inland or on the coast. What is the climate in that area of the country? Is the campus setting an urban area or a city, a small town, or a rural area?

YOUR SECOND LIST:

Eliminate those institutions that do not meet your criteria. For example, if you cannot afford more than \$25,000 annually, then eliminate those institutions whose combined tuition and fees, room, and board come close to this amount, unless you are especially interested in that institution and you plan to seek financial aid (if available). If you are determined to attend an institution in a particular state or area of the country, eliminate those institutions that do not fit that category.

Select 20-35 institutions that appear to meet your needs. Check out the University website for applications, general descriptive information, and the course catalog. Be sure to keep in mind your area of interest. Request information on extracurricular, cultural, and religious activities of importance to you; inquire about financial aid (if needed) and any international student services that are available; and ask if there are alumni of the college living in your area.

While you wait for the answers to your requests for further information, check with an adviser about which admission tests you are likely to need and register for them. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is generally required of all international students whose native language is not English. The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General and GRE Subject tests are usually required from students applying to a graduate school, if they select majors other than Business. For those applying to graduate business school there is a specific test - Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT). The combination of tests required for admission depends on the universities admissions policy and may vary.

YOUR THIRD LIST:

After the test scores are received, check out the kind of scores required by the universities chosen in the second list. Also, go through profiles of past students at the USIEF library. Reduce your list to a few institutions by using the above-mentioned criteria.

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