

School Selection for Homeschooled Students

When looking at college options for your high school student, it is important to understand the differences among college options. Below we have summarized some of the characteristics of certain types of colleges. In doing so, we have made generalizations that may not be completely accurate for every school of a particular type, but they are often the case. It is always best to test your understanding of a particular institution by asking questions of admissions personnel and thoroughly exploring the college website.

TYPES OF COLLEGES

Community Colleges

Community colleges exist to provide access to higher education for all high school graduates. They use “open enrollment” in their admissions policies. Open enrollment means that any student will be admitted as long as he/she has graduated from high school (or is in a dual-enrollment program). These schools will often use placement tests to determine whether the student is capable of college-level courses and, if not, will place students in remedial courses to prepare them for college-level work. They use a rolling admissions process which allows students to apply for admission at any point and enter the school when convenient for the student. Most community colleges offer associate degrees or certificate programs only. They may offer college preparatory associate degrees (either Associate of Arts or Associate of Science) which are designed to be the stepping stone to a bachelor’s degree at a four-year institution, or they may offer Associate of Applied Science or Technology, which is designed to be the full preparation for a particular type of career option (i.e. Medical assisting, stenographer, etc.) Many four-year institutions have agreements with community colleges concerning the way that their students will transfer credits from the community college to the four-year college. Regent has agreements with both [Virginia](#) and [North Carolina community colleges](#).

State and Private Colleges

These institutions will often offer bachelor’s degrees in the liberal arts and sciences, meaning that they are less likely to offer degrees in certain technical fields such as engineering or architecture, etc. They may have specific deadlines for admission applications and may enroll most of their new students for the fall semester, reserving a few spots for transfer students at other times during the year. Some of these colleges may be very selective in their admissions, meaning that they have many more applications than available spots in the class, making it very competitive to gain admission. You should always ask about admissions procedures and deadlines.

State and Private Universities

Each one of these institutions is a collection of colleges. They will have different schools within the university, i.e. The School of Architecture or the School of Communication and the Arts. Often they will have a College of Arts & Sciences or Liberal Arts, which is often the school to which most undergraduate students initially apply. Once admitted the student will take some general education and introductory courses from the College of Arts & Sciences and then at some point apply for admission to the upper level school of their choice (the school which offers the major which the student desires). These schools may use admissions deadlines or they may have rolling admissions. These schools are often somewhat selective in their admissions guidelines, and entrance into the College of Arts & Sciences does not always guarantee admission into the upper-level school of the student’s choice.

Elite Colleges or University

These schools are very selective in their admissions. They have many more applications than available spots in the class. They may use two admissions deadlines, one which they may call Early Decision or Early Application and is for students who have chosen that school as their number one choice. It is always best to discuss admissions guidelines in detail with the admissions representative of these schools.