

# Comparing Colleges

Students will compare different types of colleges and aspects of college life including social, economic, and academic factors.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will

1. Learn about social, economic, and academic aspects that contribute to the college experience
2. Connect two colleges they are interested in with the MEFA Pathway website for research purposes
3. Evaluate academic, economic, and social aspects of two colleges of their choice
4. Create a written reflection about the college comparisons to indicate what they've learned through the process

## ACTIVITIES

### PART 1

#### Content Knowledge

Think-Pair-Share

Ask students to consider the following question: *What do you look for in a college or university?* After giving students a few minutes to consider their answers, ask them to share with a partner. When students are finished discussing with a partner, ask pairs to share one or more of the things they look for in a college or university. Make a list or web of student responses in a place where all students can see.

With the help of students, label their ideas “academic,” “economic,” and/or “social.” Talk to students about the importance of each of these aspects and how they can contribute to the overall college experience.

### PART 2

#### Applying Information

Tell students to choose two schools they are interested in learning more about. If they have previously completed the College Cost Estimator lessons, they may choose to continue researching one or more of those schools.

Grade Level: 10 - 12

#### MEFA PATHWAY LINKS FOR LESSON:

- College Compare

#### SUBJECT AREAS:

- Social Studies
- Career Exploration

#### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Internet connection to work with the MEFA Pathway website
- College Compare Research Handout

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)

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### PART 3

#### Evaluating Information

Students can use the College Compare tool to see which schools match up with their preferences and which are coming up short. If a student has used the College Search tool, colleges can be selected directly from their My College List for comparison, and saved preferences can then be applied. Preferences include test score range, GPA, tuition, and size and setting. Applying preferences to the comparison will alert the student if a college is not a match, therefore helping build out the list of target, reach, and probable schools. If an area on the comparison is highlighted in red, this means that the saved preferences do not match up to the school's criteria or requirements. For academic criteria, this could indicate that the school is either a reach or probable. In addition, students have the option to save as many comparisons as they like so they can easily come back and review. Have students complete the College Compare Research Handout.

### PART 4

#### Evaluating Information

After students have completed their College Compare Research Handout, they should write a reflection about the college comparisons to indicate what they've learned through the process. Additionally, students should indicate which of the two colleges they researched they would prefer to attend and why. Students should write using complete sentences and proper conventions. When students have completed the reflection, they should submit it to their instructor along with the completed research handout.

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College Compare Research Handout-College #1

Email any questions to:  
[info@mefapathway.org](mailto:info@mefapathway.org)

1. College #1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Type of College: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Location of College: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Admissions Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Total Undergraduate Size: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Student/Faculty Ratio: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Annual Tuition & Fees: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Room & Board Cost: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Books & Supplies: \_\_\_\_\_
10. GPA: \_\_\_\_\_
11. SAT Scores: \_\_\_\_\_
12. ACT Scores: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Admissions Rating: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Athletics Division: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Campus Activities of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Percentage of Out-of-State Applicants: \_\_\_\_\_
17. Academic Programs of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

College Compare Research Handout-College #2

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1. College #2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Type of College: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Location of College: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Admissions Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Total Undergraduate Size: \_\_\_\_\_
6. Student/Faculty Ratio: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Annual Tuition & Fees: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Room & Board Cost: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Books & Supplies: \_\_\_\_\_
10. GPA: \_\_\_\_\_
11. SAT Scores: \_\_\_\_\_
12. ACT Scores: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Admissions Rating: \_\_\_\_\_
14. Athletics Division: \_\_\_\_\_
15. Campus Activities of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_
16. Percentage of Out-of-State Applicants: \_\_\_\_\_
17. Academic Programs of Interest: \_\_\_\_\_

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CATEGORY	EXCELLENT 4	GOOD 3	SATISFACTORY 2	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT 1
Sequencing of Information	The information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Most information is organized in a clear, logical way.	Some information is logically sequenced.	There is no clear plan for the organization of information.
Effectiveness	The reflection includes all material needed to give a good understanding of the topic.	The reflection is lacking one or two key elements.	The reflection is missing more than two key elements.	The reflection is lacking several key elements and has inaccuracies.
Font Choice & Formatting	Font formats (size, bold, italic) have been carefully planned to enhance readability and content.	Font formats have been carefully planned to enhance readability.	Font formats have been carefully planned to complement the content. It may be a little hard to read.	Font formatting makes it very difficult to read the material.
Conventions. Student uses proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	The reflection has no misspellings or grammatical errors.	The reflection has 1- 2 misspellings, but no grammatical errors.	The reflection has 1- 2 grammatical errors but no misspellings.	The reflection has more than 2 grammatical and/ or spelling errors.