

Investigate one college at a time.

Record evidence, sources, and unanswered questions. This worksheet does not score a college.

COLLEGE NAME

HOW TO USE THIS PDF

- 1. Type into the fields or print and write by hand.
- 2. Use importance and confidence in your own words, such as High and Mixed evidence.

Supportive

Can students get useful help when they need it?

Look for: assigned advising, tutoring access, appointment processes, and early-alert support.
Ask: Who notices when a first-year student is struggling? How long does help take?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

Close-knit

What repeatedly brings students into real relationships?

Look for: residential communities, recurring cohorts, program-level class sizes, and shared spaces.
Ask: Where do students see the same people? What happens on ordinary weekends?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

Flexible

How much room is there to explore or change direction?

Look for: curriculum rules, major-entry policies, cross-school enrollment, and elective space.
Ask: What becomes difficult if I change direction? Are any majors capped?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

Collaborative

Do structures reward students for helping one another?

Look for: peer tutoring, study groups, team projects, grading practices, and program-entry rules.
Ask: Where does collaboration happen? When does competition become more visible?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

Career-connected

Can students connect learning with possible paths after college?

Look for: early career access, internship support, experiential learning, and contextual outcomes.
Ask: When can first-year students begin? Who gets access to funded opportunities?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

Self-directed

How much ownership and navigation does the college expect?

Look for: advising requirements, independent pathways, and clear opportunity-entry processes.

Ask: Which decisions must students make alone? Is independence empowering or friction?

IMPORTANCE

CONFIDENCE

EVIDENCE I FOUND

SOURCE OR LINK

WHAT IS STILL UNANSWERED?

STEP 2 | SUMMARIZE WHAT YOU KNOW

Strongest evidence

Biggest unanswered question

Next research step

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Keep this checklist for one school. Complete another copy before comparing schools.

Research aid only. Not a score, ranking, or admissions recommendation.