

#1 COLLEGE ADVICE:
EVERY COLLEGE IS WONDERFUL FOR SOMEONE
NO COLLEGE IS WONDERFUL FOR EVERYONE

The Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities

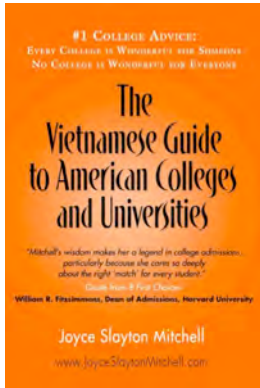
*"Mitchell's wisdom makes her a legend in college admissions,
particularly because she cares so deeply
about the right 'match' for every student."*

Quote from *8 First Choices*

William R. Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admissions, Harvard University

Joyce Slayton Mitchell

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by Joyce Slayton Mitchell

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**VIETNAMESE GUIDE TO
AMERICAN COLLEGES
AND
UNIVERSITIES**

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2012

First Edition

**VIETNAMESE GUIDE TO
AMERICAN COLLEGES
AND
UNIVERSITIES**

by Joyce Slayton Mitchell

ENDORSEMENTS

Duke University

Joyce Slayton Mitchell is one of the most thoughtful, perceptive, and experienced voices in American college counseling. Her books, and her personal advice, have helped thousands of students be particularly well prepared for the college admissions process. Her advice is always candid, useful, honest, and appropriate.

— Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions

Grinnell College

Joyce Slayton Mitchell, one of the best known experts on college admission in the United States, does it again with her new book, *Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities*. Offering insightful guidance to Vietnamese applicants, the book imparts insider knowledge sure to prove helpful to Vietnamese students considering attending an American college or university. This is a must read book by an acclaimed author.

— Christopher S. Allen, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

Vassar College

Joyce Slayton Mitchell is one of America's best and most knowledgeable college admission advisors, and her wealth of experience shines through in this special book designed specifically for Vietnamese students interested in studying in the U.S. Not only is Ms. Mitchell intimately familiar with the admission process at American colleges and universities, she also is an outstanding writer, capable of delivering both her professional wisdom and her common sense advice in a clear and easy to understand fashion. In a time when so much contradictory and inaccurate information on this topic is offered on the web, Joyce Slayton Mitchell's book is an authoritative, reliable, and essential guide for any

Vietnamese student seeking to better understand the intricacies of the American admissions process.

— David M. Borus, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

Boston University

For any student from Vietnam who wishes to attend college in the U.S., this is the definitive guide by a leading expert in college counseling. Joyce Slayton Mitchell has advised thousands of students about the college admissions process and her expertise and guidance will ensure that the process is seamless for you and your family.

— Kelly A. Walter, Executive Director of Admissions

Wesleyan University

Finally! Vietnamese students will now have special access to the wisdom and candor that Joyce Slayton Mitchell has shared with so many American students and families through her other books about the college process in the U.S.

— Nancy Hargrave Meislahn, Dean of Admission and Financial Aid

Vanderbilt University

An excellent resource for parents and students alike who are trying to navigate through the college admission maze in America! This guide, through its step-by-step instructions on each component of the application process, will prove to be one of your most valuable tools. Well done!

— Douglas L. Christiansen, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Enrollment Management and Dean of Admissions

Smith College

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities provides comprehensive, sound advice for any student applying to an American college or university. It outlines in clear and

direct prose the many components of the application process, highlighting the important differences the Vietnamese applicant must take into consideration when applying to an American college or university. It is a must read for any Vietnamese student (or parent) who plans to embark on this process.

— Audrey Smith, Dean of Enrollment

University of Southern California

A wise and practical guide to outstanding American colleges and universities written by an experienced college counselor.

— Jerome A. Lucido, Ph.D., Vice Provost for Enrollment

Boston College

This first guide to American colleges written exclusively for Vietnamese students helps the reader research colleges to find their own successful match. She succeeds in showing the wide diversity of U.S. colleges, and thus imparts an appreciation for differences in student spirit and educational philosophy. Selecting a college because of its fuller learning environment will yield dividends in achieving those critical thinking skills that will take students as far as they want to go in their education and in their careers.

— Robert S. Lay, Dean for Enrollment Management

Michigan, University of

This book shines important new light on the issues on how and what Vietnamese high school students should consider when applying to U.S. liberal arts colleges and universities. Joyce Slayton Mitchell gives many practical and easy-to-follow steps to help Vietnamese students understand holistic admissions.

— Theodore L. (Ted) Spencer, VP, Director of Admissions

Williams College

Ms. Mitchell draws from her extensive professional experience to provide a handy roadmap for students to navigate a complex and often confusing American college admission process. Mitchell's many valuable insights include a most important point of emphasis: there are hundreds of outstanding U.S. colleges and universities across the country. To receive the best undergraduate education, it is not necessary to attend the most prestigious or most highly selective of these. Look beyond artificial rankings and perceived reputation to consider a broad range of colleges with the intent to find the best match academically, socially and financially. This is sound advice not only for Vietnamese students, but for American students as well.

— Richard L. Nesbitt, Director of Admission

Emory University

Joyce Slayton Mitchell will bridge the U.S. college admission scene to Vietnamese high school students as beautifully as she has done for years of working with American students. Her close working relationship with college admission deans in the U.S. will provide solid perspective to families in Vietnam. Vietnam will soon know what America knows... Joyce Slayton Mitchell is a wonderful guide and counselor on what should be a brilliant college search journey for Vietnamese students.

— Scott L. Allen, Director of International Recruitment

Indiana University

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities will provide you and your families a roadmap to the American college application process, information on how to research individual colleges and how to make sound decisions that fit you as a person based on personal and academic interests.

— Mary Ellen Anderson, Director of Admissions

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	i
INTRODUCTION	iii
Seven Basic Assumptions.....	iv
How This Book Will Help	vi
The College Selection Calendar	ix
Vietnamese Students: Welcome to College USA!	ix
PART I THE AMERICAN COLLEGE CHOICE PROCESS	15
CHAPTER 1 Self-Assessment.....	17
Goals and Values	17
Academics	19
The Student behind the Numbers	20
Activities, Interests, and Aspirations	21
Personality, Character, and Relationship to Others	22
CHAPTER 2 College Admissions Testing.....	25
IELTS and TOEFL English Proficiency Exams	25
The SAT and ACT Tests	26
SAT Prep.....	27
CHAPTER 3 What’s Out There? Researching the Colleges	33
Research Questions	35
Keep Your Options Open	39
Researching Campus Cultures	40
View Books, College Catalogs, and the Web.....	42
College Rep Visits: College Representatives Who Visit Your High School or City.....	45
College Visits.....	45
CHAPTER 4 The College Visit.....	46

Scheduling the College Visit.....	46
How to See.....	46
Collecting the Data.....	48
CHAPTER 5 Communications: Personalize, Personalize, Personalize.....	51
Personalize.....	51
Communication Means Personalizing.....	51
What’s the Dean Looking For?.....	51
CHAPTER 6 Final List: Ten First Choices.....	55
What Do I Like?.....	56
Ten First Choices: The Final List.....	56
One First Choice: Early Decision, Early Action.....	57
CHAPTER 7 Applying to College: College Essay.....	59
Who Are You?.....	59
Writing the Essay.....	60
What Deans of Admissions Look For.....	61
A Reflection of You.....	61
CHAPTER 8 The Applications.....	65
Organizing Applications.....	66
The Common Application.....	66
Number of Applications.....	66
Writing the Application.....	67
Supplementary Materials.....	69
Common Mistakes from Vietnamese Applicants.....	73
Application Deadlines: Early, Rolling, and Regular.....	73
Mailing Applications.....	75
CHAPTER 9 The Interview.....	76
The Spoken Word.....	76
Do Interviews Count?.....	76

Interview Tips.....	77
CHAPTER 10 Waitlisted!	80
CHAPTER 11 Applying for Financial Aid.....	82
How to Apply for Financial Aid	82
Ten Insider Tips from the Financial Aid Office.....	86
Important Financial Aid and Admissions Terms	88
CHAPTER 12 Applying for a Visa	92
How to Obtain a Visa in Nine Steps.....	92
Insider Tips on the Visa Process	95
Visa Terms.....	97
CHAPTER 13 A Word to the Wise Parents: A Parenting Challenge	98
The SAT Score	98
The Dean’s Point of View.....	99
Open Minds Win.....	101
The College Process Builds Character	102
Blessed Assurance.....	102
PART II BEST AND MOST INTERESTING AMERICAN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES	105
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY	107
AMHERST COLLEGE.....	107
ARIZONA, UNIVERSITY OF	108
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY.....	109
BABSON COLLEGE	110
BARD COLLEGE	110
BARNARD COLLEGE.....	111
BATES COLLEGE	112
BELOIT COLLEGE	113
BENTLEY UNIVERSITY	113
BERKELEY, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.....	114

BOSTON COLLEGE	115
BOSTON UNIVERSITY.....	116
BOWDOIN COLLEGE	117
BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY	117
BROWN UNIVERSITY.....	118
BRYN MAWR COLLEGE.....	119
BUCKNELL UNIVERSITY	120
CALIFORNIA, UNIVERSITY OF	121
CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	121
CARLETON COLLEGE.....	122
CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY.....	122
CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY.....	123
COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON	124
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO	125
CLAREMONT COLLEGES	126
CLARK UNIVERSITY	128
CLARKSON UNIVERSITY	129
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY.....	130
COLBY COLLEGE	130
COLGATE UNIVERSITY	131
COLORADO COLLEGE	132
COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES	133
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO.....	134
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY	134
CONNECTICUT COLLEGE	135
COOPER UNION.....	136
CORNELL UNIVERSITY	137
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE.....	138
DAVIDSON COLLEGE	138
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: DAVIS	139

DENISON UNIVERSITY.....	140
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER.....	141
DICKINSON COLLEGE.....	142
DREXEL UNIVERSITY.....	143
DUKE UNIVERSITY.....	144
ELON UNIVERSITY.....	144
EMERSON COLLEGE.....	145
EMORY UNIVERSITY.....	146
EVERGREEN STATE UNIVERSITY.....	147
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.....	148
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY.....	149
FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE.....	149
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY.....	150
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY.....	151
GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY.....	152
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA.....	153
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.....	153
GETTYSBURG COLLEGE.....	154
GOUCHER COLLEGE.....	155
GRINNELL COLLEGE.....	156
HAMILTON COLLEGE.....	157
HARVARD UNIVERSITY.....	157
HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE.....	158
HAVERFORD COLLEGE.....	158
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII.....	159
HOLY CROSS, COLLEGE OF THE.....	160
CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK: HUNTER COLLEGE.....	161
ILLINOIS, UNIVERSITY OF: URBANA-CHAMPAIGN.....	161
ILLINOIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.....	162
INDIANA UNIVERSITY.....	163

ITHACA COLLEGE.....	164
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: IRVINE	165
JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY	166
JULLIARD SCHOOL.....	166
KENYON COLLEGE	167
LAFAYETTE COLLEGE.....	168
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY.....	169
LEHIGH UNIVERSITY	170
LEWIS & CLARK COLLEGE.....	171
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: LOS ANGELES (UCLA).....	171
MACALESTER COLLEGE	172
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND.....	173
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	174
UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI.....	175
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN	175
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY	176
MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE	177
UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI	178
MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE.....	179
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY.....	179
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL.....	180
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY.....	181
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY	182
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME	183
OBERLIN COLLEGE.....	183
OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE	184
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY	185
OLIN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING	186
UNIVERSITY OF OREGON	187
PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN	187

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.....	188
PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY.....	189
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH.....	190
PITZER COLLEGE.....	191
POMONA COLLEGE.....	191
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY.....	191
PURDUE UNIVERSITY.....	192
REED COLLEGE.....	193
RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE	193
RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN.....	194
RICE UNIVERSITY.....	195
UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND	196
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER.....	197
ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.....	197
ROLLINS COLLEGE.....	198
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY	199
ST. LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY	200
UNIVERSITY CALIFORNIA: SAN DIEGO.....	200
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: SANTA-BARBARA	201
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA: SANTA CRUZ	202
SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ARTS AND DESIGN.....	203
SCRIPPS COLLEGE.....	204
SKIDMORE COLLEGE	204
SMITH COLLEGE	205
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.....	206
STANFORD UNIVERSITY.....	206
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK: BINGHAMTON.....	207
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK: BUFFALO	208
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE	209
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY	210

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS: AT AUSTIN	211
TEXAS, A&M UNIVERSITY	211
TRINITY COLLEGE	212
TUFTS UNIVERSITY.....	213
TULANE UNIVERSITY.....	214
UNION COLLEGE.....	215
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY	216
VASSAR COLLEGE.....	216
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT.....	217
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.....	218
VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE.....	219
WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY	220
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON	220
WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY	221
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI	222
WELLESLEY COLLEGE	223
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY	224
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY	224
WILLIAMS COLLEGE	225
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN.....	226
WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE	227
YALE UNIVERSITY	228
APPENDICES	229
Appendix A College Admissions Talk.....	231
Appendix B Annotated Resources.....	239
Books	239
Websites	240

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The primary resources for *Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities* are the voices of my college-bound high school students from America and the Asian students I have met, listened to, and heard in their classrooms. The statistics used in the college and university descriptions are the current figures cited on the college websites, or by direct query to the college admissions deans. The campus culture categories of preprofessional, collegiate, intellectual, artistic, or enterprising are all from direct observations on college campus visits and opinions of the author. The numbers of international students and the amount of dollars spent for financial aid to international students as cited in each college description comes from the College Board International Student Handbook 2010 for undergraduate students. These numbers are often rounded upward to an even number. Given the economic crisis and flux in college budgets, these numbers do not necessarily reflect what will happen in the next few years. On the other hand, you can determine which colleges spend the most and least, and you can be sure that a rough estimate is better than none. The author takes full responsibility for the numbers cited and the college descriptions as outlined in this guide.

I am indebted to Dr. Jenny Rickard, Dean of Admissions and Financial Aid, Bryn Mawr College, for her contribution of the financial aid and visa chapters that add the necessary information to provide a complete guide for getting into college in the USA.

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities is dedicated to the brave and courageous high school students of Vietnam who are planning to continue their university education abroad in another culture, in a land far away from their families and friends. You are the hope of the world as you strive in your college and career for understanding toward a global economy with peace and harmony within our cultural differences.

Joyce Slayton Mitchell
New York City, USA

CHAPTER 3

What's Out There? Researching the Colleges

How can you learn about all of America's colleges? How do you find the best match—the best college for you? Big or small, preprofessional or liberal arts, conservative or liberal, private or public, East or West—there are many things to consider. Looking at categories such as size, program offerings, philosophical or religious orientation, or location can be helpful, but categories and perceptions can at times be deceiving. In this chapter we'll look at ways to broaden categories and widen perceptions so you can find the best school for you.

Research skills are essential for making a good college decision. That means collecting data from a broad range of sources, looking at the data, and not being judgmental before you learn for yourself about the college. It's easy to go on what others say ("Someone told me that Colorado College is too small, someone told me that Michigan is too big, someone told me that Rice is too hot, that Carleton is too cold, someone told me..."). Every college has something for someone. Every college is wonderful for someone. There is no college that is wonderful for everyone. Not even Ivy! Just because you have heard the name of a college does not mean it will be a good place for you. Just because you have not heard the name of a college does not mean that you will not like it. Knowing you as you know yourself, there are many colleges where you will be happy (fit in with the other students, find the level of education you need and want, be productive, feel good on campus). Researching the colleges means finding several colleges where you really want to go. Of course you will want to go to some colleges more than others, but your research will open your eyes to new possibilities and options.

So, how can you learn about the colleges? To get into a particular college, you will have to know that school well enough to express in your application why you are the best match for that campus culture. You are going to learn to research colleges from a great variety of

sources. Living so far away from the U. S., most of you will learn about the colleges from college guides, students you know who are there, and online through its website. Colleges have details about their program, their student life, and their admissions requirements online. Many of you will also have the opportunity to learn about colleges at college fairs in your school or city, and others will meet graduates of colleges who work or travel in Vietnam and a few of you will visit the colleges in the summer before you apply. Having someone tell you where to go to college or giving you a college list is not researching the college. That is giving you names of colleges for you to research. Anyone can give you names of colleges for you to look up. The more colleges on your list to research, the better you will know what's there for you to consider, and where will be the best place for you to study and learn. A major factor in the success of your college selection process is how well you learn how to trust your own research. When you read or hear something about a college, notice who said it. Was it the college? What's their bias? Was it a student? What's his bias? Was it a college guide? Who wrote the guide: an educator, a student, an entrepreneur? If so, consider what's in it for them? Why do they have a particular view of the college?

You've been in science classes, at least two or three with lab work, right? You've taken social science, at least history, is that right? Our model for learning about the colleges will be as a scientist—a social scientist, an anthropologist to be exact. An anthropologist studies human societies—different cultures, their daily behavior, ceremonies, language, food, families, relationships. All of these things come together and are called ethnography.

You are going to be an ethnographer in the field of anthropology and use the scientific collection of data to learn all you can about all of the campus cultures on your final college list. You have learned in science that you don't know the answer before you collect the data. You don't know the conclusion until you've done your lab work. Sometimes you work in teams, sometimes you take field trips. I take my high school class on a field trip where they learn to "see" the college campus, the campus culture. Even if you can not visit a college,

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities

you must research the opportunities and find out what colleges are in the USA and what they are like. You can learn about the many of the top colleges using *Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities*. It won't take you long to read the descriptions. As soon as you have a list of about twenty colleges that sound good to you, then start looking at each one of them online. When one college sounds possible for you in that it sounds like a place you would like to be with the kinds of students you want to be with, then be sure and read the descriptions of the other three colleges listed at the end of each description. Just like you, my students have already heard the names of these well-known, brand-named colleges. Because you have heard of it does not make it better. Because you have heard of it does not mean you will like it. Try hard to keep an open mind as you explore the colleges in the book. Try to put what other people have told you aside, as you go from one website to the other to collect the data. Keep your answers and observations in a notebook—no one can possibly remember collected data for twenty different campus cultures. Keep in mind that until you collect the data for your entire list, you are going to try not to judge the colleges. It's from your collected data that you will decide which ten or twelve colleges will be the best environment for you.

Research Questions

We start with four research questions: What's it like? Can I get in? How much does it cost? What will become of me? Let's look at each one of those questions now.

1. What's it like?

Here are the questions that you are going to be concerned with, the data that you are going to collect in order to decide where you are going to apply to college. This is the anthropologist part—the questions to help you measure the campus culture. You will look at size, location, number of students, percent of Asian-American students, percent of international students, percent of residential students, self-contained campus, beauty of campus, types of programs offered, athletic division, who you know there. You will try to

figure out what type of campus culture you want. Do you think you'd fit in better if it's a collegiate campus culture (big sports, fraternities, students talk about sports, parties and friends between classes and in the dorms)— such as Wisconsin, Indiana, Duke, Northwestern, Vanderbilt, also smaller and preppy such as Colgate, Connecticut College, Davidson, and Denison; intellectual campus culture (students talk about books they've read, class discussions, and argue and debate between classes and in the dorms)—such as Bard, UC:Berkeley, Chicago, Grinnell, Pomona, Swarthmore, and Wesleyan); artistic campus culture and performing arts majors (students talk about the arts, practice sessions, upcoming performances talk between classes and in the dorms) —such as conservatories, Julliard, Oberlin Conservatory of Music, Rhode Island School of Design, Savannah School of Arts and Design; enterprising campus culture (students talk about the stock market, start-up companies, business newspapers such as Financial Times and Wall Street Journal outside of the classroom and in the dorms) —such as Babson, Bentley, Wharton at the University of Pennsylvania, Case Western, and state universities in their college of business); preprofessional campus culture, a research university (students talk about GPAs, MCATs, GREs, LSATs, engineering, graduate schools and internships between classes and in the dorms) —such as Cornell, Purdue, Rochester, Syracuse, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute. You will check out how large the freshman classes are, and who teaches freshmen. How accessible are the colleges' libraries, labs, and computers? Is math or foreign language required to graduate? Is there a core curriculum? Is there a freshman seminar? What are the distribution requirements? Is there an internship program? How many freshmen stay for sophomore year (retention rate)? What percentage of the freshmen will graduate? What's the percent of students in sororities and fraternities on this campus? Is there an advisor for international students?

2. Can I get in?

How selective is the college? Is my course load more demanding than most of the freshmen accepted? Is my record as good or better than most accepted? What score is required for the IELTS or TOEFL? What is the SAT range of accepted students? Has anyone from my high school been accepted at the college? If so, what was their academic record like? Never email and ask the dean of admissions what SATs are needed to get in—it's the number one question that they hate. Instead, ask the dean if your SAT scores are in the range of scores that they accept.

3. How much does it cost?

Most private colleges in America cost about US \$55,000. Most students get a portion of that money in financial aid. You won't know what it will cost your family until you have been accepted and they send you your financial aid package if you have applied for aid. If it's a state university, it will cost about half of the private universities. Talk to your parents and find out the amount of money they will have to spend. What are your parents willing to spend? If your parents cannot afford the university, read Chapter 11 to learn more about merit scholarships and financial aid.

4. What will become of me?

If you meet a college rep who comes to your school in Vietnam or at a college fair or in an alumni group in Vietnam, ask about their graduates. It's a perfect question for the admissions rep. Most students are so intent on getting in that they never ask what will become of them if they attend a particular college, especially one they can't wait to go to. College deans love this question—it shows a lot of confidence on your part. You've gotten beyond the level of "Can I get in?"

Here are some more questions—you will think of others—to get you started in exploring what will become of you after graduation: What do the graduates do? How many go on to graduate school? Which graduate schools do they go to? What kinds of jobs do the

students get when they graduate? How many companies recruit on campus? How many graduates go into start-up companies? What percentages of graduates go to med school, business school, law school, schools of education or into Ph.D. programs? Where do they go and what are their fields of specialization? How many Vietnamese students go back to their own countries for graduate school and jobs? How many stay in America or go to other countries for jobs?

What about the music and arts colleges? If you are looking for a professional career in the arts—say theatre, music, film, photography, or visual arts, then there are special considerations such as the audition, CDs of your work, and portfolios (often accounting for 80% of your chances for getting in). Curriculum, grades, and SATs, even with the top letters of recommendation, can't begin to provide the assessment of students with special talents. Students with extensive musical training who are looking to major in music have two basic categories from which to choose: music conservatories and schools of music at 4-year universities. Music conservatories tend to be small (200-900), students major in performance or composition only, the faculty for each instrument often defines the institution, and the student will earn a Bachelor of Music Degree (as opposed to B. A. or B. F. A. The conservatory admission is highly selective according to the opening each year by instrument, the audition is the primary criterion for admission, SATs are usually not required, and scholarships are based on merit rather than on financial need. The Schools of Music in a university have a wide range of university sizes, a great variety of music majors available such as jazz, sound engineering, musical theatre, and music education. Students study the liberal arts as well as music, and they can have a traditional collegiate experience. Admissions to the university school of music is based on both music and academics. A website to get you started on your options for art schools is found at www.artschools.com.

Keep Your Options Open

Big or small, East or West, hot or cold—where in America are you going to begin to look for a college? Look and learn about all the best places that fit the description of the college where you want to go. Forget the geography. If you think that you want only to go to Harvey Mudd on the West coast and you want a major in engineering, then look everywhere! Look at MIT, Cornell and Olin in the Northeast, Rice in Texas, Columbia in New York City, Swarthmore, Union, and Brown in the East that all have engineering schools, Case Western in Ohio, and Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh. Don't limit your research by geography after you have decided to go that far from home to go to college.

Thinking about size, don't cut your initial possibilities too quickly by size. Numbers don't always tell the truth. Many juniors come in and say, "I want a medium-sized college, one with around five or six thousand students." Look through the guides and you will see that the majority of American colleges are small liberal arts colleges or big state universities. Stereotypes can be very deceiving. Big Indiana, Texas, and UNC at Chapel Hill students are not all numbers! The students on those campuses relate to each other and to their professors, and quickly break into small manageable friendship groups through living and learning groups and their special interests. A big university soon breaks down into friends from the international students club, music and theater groups, dorm-floor pals, suite-mates, sink-mates, political science class, lab partner or freshman seminar, so that you are not dealing with the whole university at once. The size of your high school has less to do with the ideal size of your college than your personality and what adventures you are ready for. Sure, you may have to take more initiative with that student-to-faculty relationship at a large school, but loads of eighteen-year-olds are ready for and capable of that! If a "family" community is important to you, think two thousand students and under. If diversity, high energy, big-time sports, fraternities, both very difficult and very easy courses offered, and big-time fun are important to you, think over fifteen thousand.

If you want to check out majors by computer programs, you will miss the colleges who send the most students to business, law, and medical schools. The Ivys and most selective colleges don't have majors called premed and prelaw. In fact, graduate school deans get tired of reading all of those applications from chemistry and biology majors. They love to see an English major or an art history major who has taken enough chemistry to do well on the MCATs to be a shoo-in for competitive medical school programs, or a Spanish or religion major who takes the LSATs and pops out of a pool of government, political science, or history majors for the best law schools. Besides, choosing a college by program is often misguided; students leave college because they don't fit in, which has nothing to do with program. Most important, "If the college does a good job with your education," says Theodore O'Neill, former Dean of Admissions at the University of Chicago, "you will change your mind three times freshman year about what you want to study!" Let's take a closer look at all of the places you can research to learn more about what's out there.

Researching Campus Cultures

You will gather general data from outside the college before you turn to learning more specifics from the particular college sources.

College Guides Online

The Internet sells all of the U. S. college guides. Begin your search with the best. Here they are:

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities by Joyce Slayton Mitchell (publisher, Vietnam, 2010). You already have this guide whether you bought it, borrowed it, or found it in your school office or library. It is designed specially for Vietnamese students in national schools, who often do not have access to meeting the U.S. college representatives. This guide describes the college admissions process so that you can be in full control because you will learn how it works. It also describes top U.S. colleges to

Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities

include the collegiate, intellectual, preprofessional, arts, and enterprising kind of campus cultures found in America. It will tell you how many students are on campus, how many are Asian American, and how many are international. It will also tell you about visas, financial aid and merit scholarships especially for Vietnamese students. The website and email address for the admissions office is included in every college description. It is the only guide written especially for Vietnamese students in high school in the 21st Century!

The Fiske Guide to Colleges by Edward Fiske (Random House, latest edition). This essay-style guide does not describe the process for getting in, but it is the best guide providing interesting information and evaluations for about 350 of the most selective and most interesting undergraduate colleges. The essay about the campus culture is the important information in this guide. You'll start to get an idea of differences in campus environments as soon as you read about several colleges. It's a great place to get an idea of what's out there while you are collecting data. The 350 plus selective colleges in this guide represent the top 10 percent of America's colleges. They are all exceptional, and you'll see that you have a lot to choose from in terms of campus culture and selectivity.

The College Handbook (The College Board, latest edition). This is one of the most accurate and up-to-date "big" college guides available. The College Board collects the data each year. Every college in the country is in this guide. Mitchell and Fiske describe the most selective and interesting colleges in America. The College Handbook will tell you some information about all of the rest of the colleges in the USA. If you can't find a college in the other college guides, you will find it in this one. When you read the College Handbook, be sure and read the Student Life section; check out the percentage of students living in the dorms, the percentage of international students, and the percentage belonging to fraternities, and the athletic division.

View Books, College Catalogs, and the Web

The first thing you receive from a college is their view book when you make an inquiry, visit their campus, and sign a card at a fair.

View Books

Please keep in mind when you read view books, watch videos, and go online to college Websites that you are seeing through the marketing eye of the college and university. Don't even think of choosing your college because some college sent you a brochure and personal letter inviting you to apply! Go ahead and read them. Just remember this: Always question where your sources come from and what's in it for them. Some homepages on the web are not produced through admissions, and often the student newspaper is on the college website. So explore those homepages to see what students say, and what they are doing and thinking about on campus.

College Catalogs

The catalogs are often online. They provide you with the list of courses and faculty at each college without pictures. A college catalog helps to answer the application question, "Why do you want to come to Bard College? Or University of Georgia? Or Pitzer?" It's to your advantage to know the college in depth and to be able to explain to the dean why it's such a great match.

When I meet with my students to talk about researching the colleges, I take the first three college catalogs in sight and run through one department with my group. Let's do it. Imagine this: You're sitting there in a seminar room; we're all around a conference table. A couple of you are seated on the windowsills. In front of me are three catalogs: Gettysburg, Goucher, and Grinnell. Chances are that you may not have heard of any of these colleges, if so, good! That's the point: to get you to see many of America's outstanding colleges that you've never heard of. Let's say you are interested in theater arts. You know about the

musical theater program at Syracuse, the acting program that takes only twenty students a year at Carnegie Mellon, and you have a friend at the Tisch School of New York University who says, "Come here!" O.K. First we look at Goucher and we learn that it offers a theater major with six concentrations: general theater, performance, design and production, dramaturgy, directing and stage management, and arts administration. Next we learn that there are two professors doing all of that. Read through the course list and you will learn that there are twenty-four different courses offered in the department. Let's take a look at Grinnell's theater program, which is in the humanities division. There are six professors, although two are away on leave according to the catalog. Theater is an interdisciplinary major offering twenty-two courses including dance. Third, our last "G" catalog is Gettysburg's, where its theatre arts curriculum includes acting, directing, stage design, and the history of theatre. Reading through the catalog you can also learn how many courses are offered and check out related courses in business. Do you see what's in the catalogs?

There is no better resource for writing why you want to go to that college than the college catalog of a particular college. You don't need to know what your major is going to be to profit from the catalogs. Take the school subjects that you like best and look at the course offerings in Asian studies, environmental studies, and global development studies. What's that? Global development studies? Oh yeah, I see, at Grinnell they combine anthropology (We've heard of that before!, English, French, history of South Africa, political science, religion, Spanish, and economics. WOW, I'd like that. Go ahead and tap the most underused, remarkably helpful resource in your college research: the college catalogs.

Online

And now the website online. You'll find everything on the internet from registering for college tests to searching databases for a college list to scholarships to online college tours and international applications. Let's begin with a tour of a general list of colleges. Start with these two websites to look at many colleges that you can choose for your short list of

applications: 1. www.campustours.com, and 2. www.youniversitytv.com. If you don't have the website of the college you want to research and the college is not listed in *Vietnamese Guide to American Colleges and Universities*, then first try Google. Simply write in the name of the college and you will quickly get the homepage for the college. Once you have the homepage, check out undergraduate students. Many websites have an international students navigation choice on their homepage, and others have international students under the admissions category. Check out the international students and admissions for undergraduates first. As you well know, one thing leads to another and you can learn a lot from the college homepage on its website. Most often there will be an email address for the admissions office. Think before you email! Read the website carefully before you ask your question. Don't let your anxiety about getting into college take over and drive the admissions officers crazy before you even apply! I have met so many Vietnamese students who are so eager to get in that they send too many emails to the admissions office and that kills their chances for getting in before they even apply! If you don't have the college website address, a good bet is this address: www.nameofcollege.edu. You'll come up with all kinds of information to get your search started. If your college is not listed in this way, try one of the college search groups and see what you get.

High school students like the Princeton Review site. Just Google Princeton Review and choose "Best Fit School Search." You can enter your preference, courses, grades, SATs, and the college search will come up with a college list for you. Here are some: The Princeton Review (www.review.com) has the easiest online application via Apply! Division; it also offers information about each college on your list. Check out U.S. News & World Report (www.usnews.com) for the latest ratings and message boards. The biggest and most up-to-date is the College Board (www.collegeboard.com), which has all the general information you want to know, online applications, and college searches.

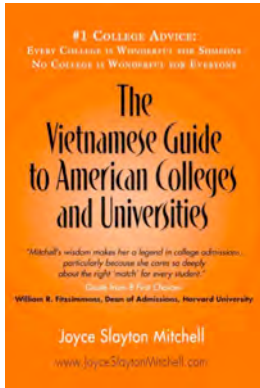
College Rep Visits: College Representatives Who Visit Your High School or City

Each year American college representatives travel to Vietnam and a few will visit your high schools and have college fairs in your city. They come to talk about their colleges and to talk to you. Go to those meetings if you have access to them. One Vietnamese student wrote to me from my 21st Century college column and said that the American college reps came to his school but only a few students were allowed to meet them. His question was, "How can I meet the college reps if my school doesn't choose me?" My answer to him and to all of you is this: If you hear that the rep from Tufts or George Washington University is coming to your school and you are not selected to meet those reps, then email the university and ask if anyone is coming to your city from their college to meet with students. Ask for the email of the person coming. Email that person and ask if you can meet her outside of school as you are very interested in Tufts or George Washington or any other colleges that you know are coming to your high school. You will see that they are very eager to meet you. They spend a lot of money to meet students, and they can only go to a few places. You can be sure they will be happy to find a time to meet with you outside of your high school.

College Visits

A few of you will be fortunate enough to visit colleges in America during your summer and winter vacations. You don't need to see all of the colleges on your list, as seeing a few different types and sizes of colleges will give you an idea for searching further. Third year, however, is too late for your college visits. Colleges usually have students on campus the last week of August and the first week of September, a perfect time to see colleges with students there if your school hasn't yet started.

In the next chapter, we'll focus our attention on how to visit a college campus.



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